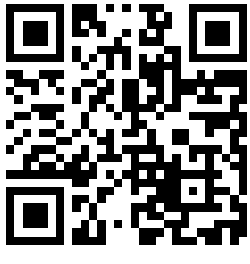
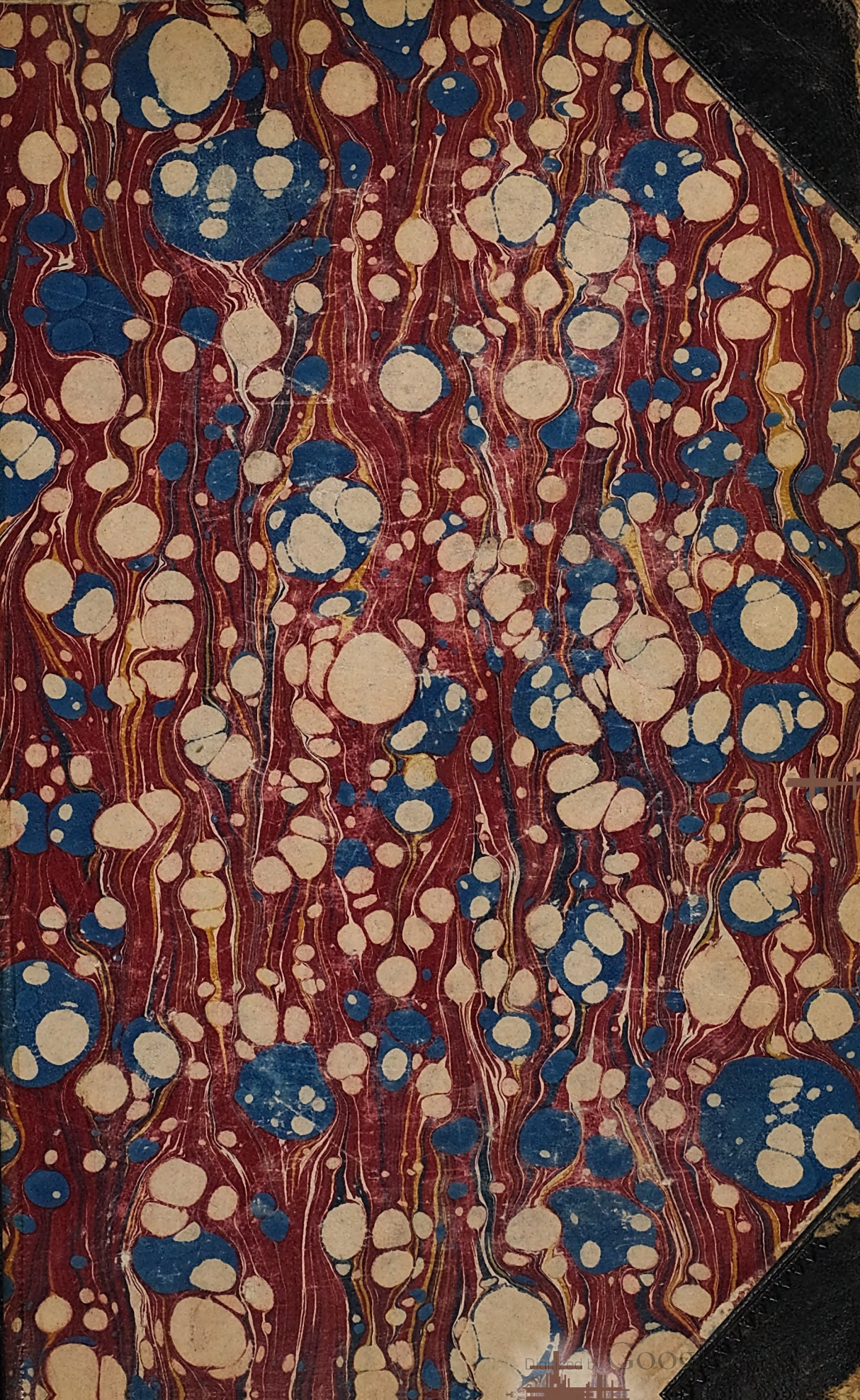
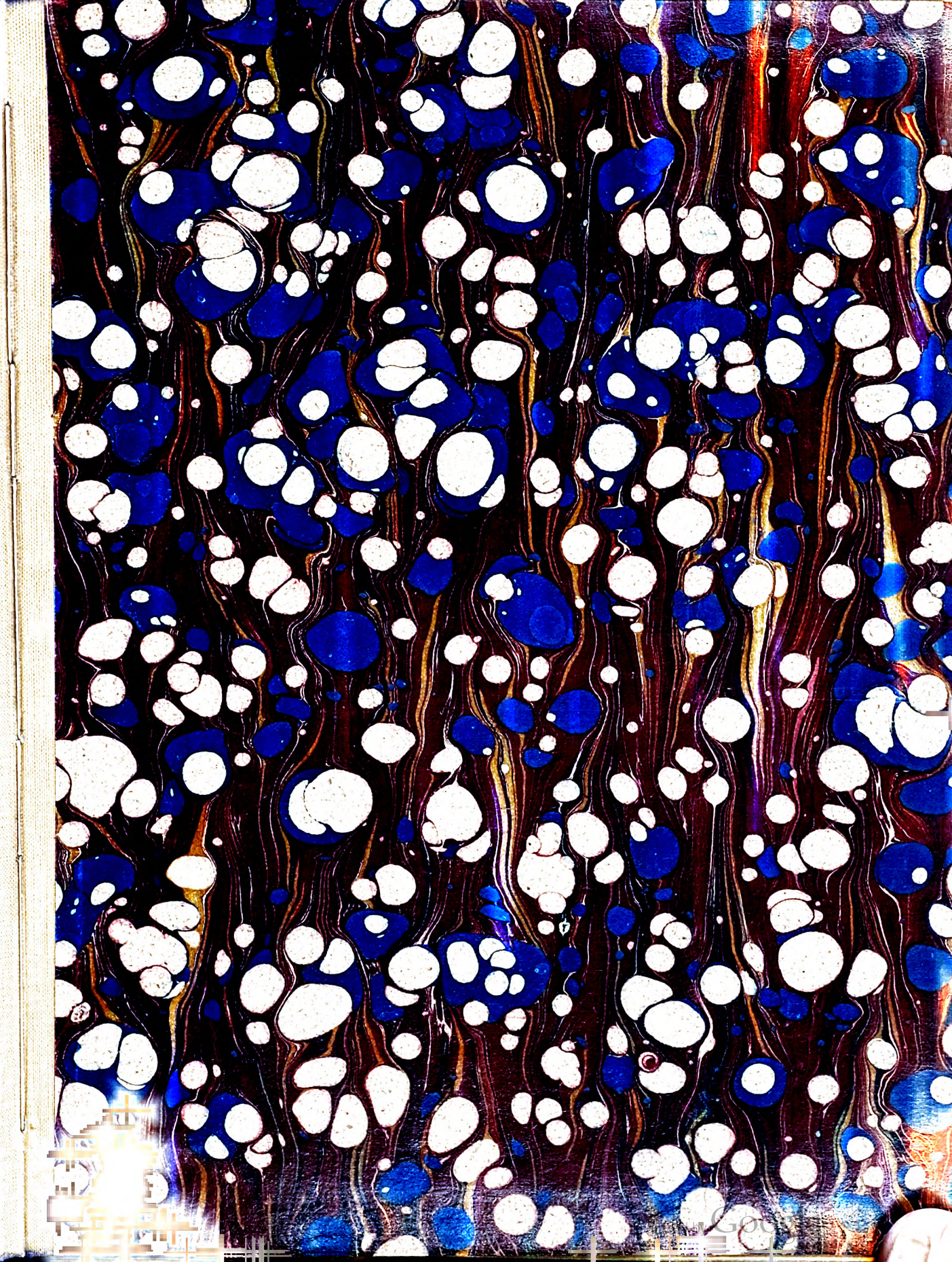
This is a reproduction of a library book that was digitized by Google as part of an ongoing effort to preserve the information in books and make it universally accessible.

Google™ books

https://books.google.com




Digitized by Google



Digitized by Google

PRIZES FOR EASY PUZZLES.

SHORT STORIES

A WEEKLY MAGAZINE FOR HOME AND TRAIN

No. 601. FOR WEEK ENDING JULY 7TH, 1900. [ONE PENNY.

Allen Foster & Co.

THE LONDON MANUFACTURERS

Buy direct by Parcels Post from the Manufacturers.

DESIGN NO. 256

10/6

A special line of **COSTUME SKIRTS** in Black and Navy Serge, lined throughout. Price only **3/11**. Car. 5d.

Colours in Specialite Serge and Venetian Cloth are: Black, Navy, Grey, Fawn, Brown, Myrtle, Purple, Electric, New Blue, Cardinal, Dark Grey, &c. Full dress length of 6 yds., 52 in. wide, in either cloth, for **7/6** carriage 8d. extra.

LADIES' PLAIN & FANCY

BLACK ALPACA SKIRTS.

From **6/6** each. Carriage, 5d.

DESIGN NO. 257

10/6

Design No. 256. 10/6.
LADIES' CHESTERFIELD COAT AND SKIRT, cut in the latest shape, and made in all the shades of **Allen Foster & Co.'s Venetian Cloth**, or in their **Specialite Serge**—two splendid wearing fabrics. The Coat can be worn open or closed. The Skirt is cut full, with inverted pleat at back. Price only **10/6**; carriage paid, 6d. extra. The Coat can be lined through for 3/6 extra; and Skirt lined linenette for 2/6 extra. This coat and skirt made in Allen Foster and Co.'s New Melton Coating will be **17/6**.

Design No. 257. 10/6.
An attractive Costume, with a tight-fitting bodice, full pleated front, with pretty lappels, trimmed with two rows of bead gimp, collar and sleeves trimmed to match. Made in our Specialite Serge and in the lighter-weight Venetian Cloth. All colours, price only **10/6**, carriage paid, 6d. extra. Satisfaction guaranteed. Skirt can be lined good linenette, 2/6 extra.

IMPORTANT NOTICE.
ALLEN FOSTER & CO.'s **Illustrated Sketch Book and Catalogue** will be sent **post free**, together with **patterns and self-measurement forms**, on application. Ladies' **White Pique Coats and Skirts** in Reefer and Chesterfield Designs. Complete Costume, **8/11**, postage 6d. extra; or Skirt alone, **4/6**, postage 5d. extra. **Splendid Value! Write at once for this list of bargains.** Prompt attention paid to all letters and orders. Money returned if goods not approved.

ALLEN FOSTER & CO.,
47 Golden Lane, Barbican, London, E.C.

Liver Troubles.

When the Bowels are confined, the Tongue coated with a yellowish-brown fur, when you have a splitting frontal Headache, and the Appetite is either depraved or altogether lost, when you are irritable and peevish, and sleep badly at night, then your liver is out of order.

Now when you feel like this, and that it is with you not an uncommon occurrence, do not delay, but tone up the Liver and Digestive Organs by a few doses of Guy's Tonic, and you will find prompt and permanent relief.

Guy's Tonic has a stimulative power on a Sluggish Liver, and exerts a Tonic and corrective influence in all cases of Disordered Liver.

And while providing for present benefit, Guy's Tonic attains more lasting good by so strengthening and invigorating the Stomach and its Digestive powers, that the Liver is relieved of the overwork that is probably the cause of all the trouble.

We invite attention to the following letter received from Mr. J. H. Kight, of Albert St., Wednesbury, Staffordshire:

"Having suffered from severe Liver Complaint "for the last three years, with Pains in the Back "and Mental Depression, I have tried nearly every-"thing without benefit, but after taking three doses "of your Guy's Tonic the Pains in the Back have "entirely gone, and *I feel as I have not done before "for several years.* I shall recommend Guy's Tonic "wherever I go."

Biliousness Corrected.

Miss Janet Dickson, of Milburn, Southwick, Dumfries, writes:

"Please send me another bottle of Guy's Tonic. "I feel much better already from taking the one I "got. I have been a Martyr for Years to Indiges-"tion and Biliousness, and at times very sick, "vomiting everything I ate, and sometimes the "sickness would continue for weeks at a time. *I was "beginning to give up all hopes of ever getting any "medicine to do me any good*, and so when I saw "Guy's Tonic advertised, I resolved to try it, and "I am happy to say it has had the desired effect."

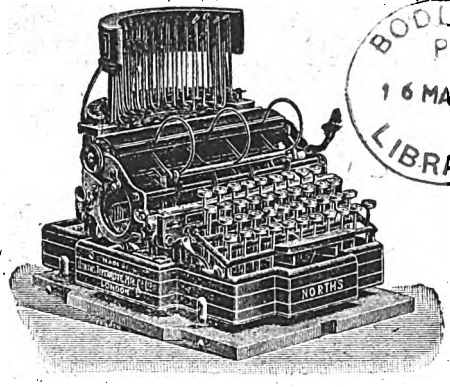
A new size (Six Ounce) Bottle of Guy's Tonic, price 1s. 1½d., is now on Sale at all Chemists and Stores.

Advertisements should be sent to "Short Stories" Advertisement Department, Henrietta Street, London, WC.

Digitized by Google

NORTH'S TYPEWRITER.

THE PREMIER MACHINE OF ENGLISH MAKE.



BODLEIAN P 16 MAR 1981 LIBRARY

CATALOGUES—Apply

27a LEADENHALL STREET, LONDON, E.C.
35 TITHEBARN STREET, LIVERPOOL.

THE BEST OF ALL BEVERAGES AND THE CHEAPEST.

GOOD! IT'S MASON'S Extract of Herbs

8 Gallons Prime Beer for 6d.

Sample Free for 9 Stamps.
AGENTS WANTED EVERYWHERE.

NEWBALL & MASON, NOTTINGHAM.

ALL FAT PEOPLE

can safely **Reduce Weight and cure Corpulency permanently** by taking **TRILENE TABLETS** (Regd.) for a few weeks. They are small, agreeable, harmless, and never fail to IMPROVE both HEALTH and FIGURE without Change of Diet. An English Countess writes: *"Your Trilene Tablets act admirably."*

Send 2s. 6d. to **THE TRILENE CO.**, Sole Proprietors, **66 Finsbury Pavement, London.**

SAMPLES OF TESTIMONIALS.

Princess Liechtenstein writes from Landsberg, Austria: "Pray send your excellent tablets directly." Mr. Canham, 87 Alexandra Road, Norwich: "Tablets cured my wife of extreme stoutness; it has never returned." Mrs. H. Cox, 28 Watnall Road, Hucknall Torkard, writes: "The Tablets reduced me 1½stone." Mrs. S. Alexander, 102 Dixon Street, New Swindon, says: "They reduced me 23lb., and I am cured." Mrs. Darnley-Smith, of Landscove Vicarage, Ashburton, says: "Tablets have reduced me very much." Mrs. Crossley, of Rose Hill, Torver, Comston, says: "I weigh much less and can breathe so much easier; I am delighted."

IMPORTANT TO WEAK MEN

And those suffering from nervous exhaustion, loss of vigour, Varicocele, &c., can be successfully and permanently cured without operation or detention from business by THE DR. COLLINS most improved and rational method medical science has ever yet produced.

Particulars and proofs of successful cures sent free on receipt of address.

THE COLLINS REMEDY CO.,
Gothic House, 9 Erskine Street, Liverpool.

THE MOST NUTRITIOUS.

EPPS'S

GRATEFUL—COMFORTING.

COCOA

BREAKFAST—SUPPER.

KEATING'S POWDER

KILLS BUGS FLEAS MOTHS BEETLES

TINS 3d 6d & 1s
THE NEW BELLOWS 9d

ESTABLISHED 1851.

BIRKBECK BANK

Southampton Buildings, Chancery Lane, London.

2% on CURRENT ACCOUNTS, on the minimum monthly balances when not drawn below £100.

The BIRKBECK ALMANACK, with full particulars, post free.
FRANCIS RAVENSCROFT, *Manager*.

SEVEN PRIZE MEDALS.

These series of pens neither scratch nor spurt. They glide over the roughest paper with the ease of a soft lead pencil. An assorted sample box for 7 stamps from the works, Birmingham.

To Economical Mothers!
FOR HOME DYEING

MAYPOLE SOAP

NO MESS NO TROUBLE

DYES
CURTAINS, FROCKS, SILKS, SATINS
COTTONS & In fact EVERYTHING
COLOURS 4d BLACK 6d

Digitized by Google

No. 601.] [PRICE ONE PENNY.

For the Week Ending July 7th, 1900.

What I Owe Michael Ragsdale.

It was never my good fortune to meet Michael Ragsdale, although once his existence and mine touched one another very nearly.

A man who had come in contact with him at a club in town once told me that he never encountered a more charming and courteous gentleman, and that Ragsdale was as great a genius in his way as Napoleon and Goethe were in theirs. Another individual, who had had in Paris some experience with Mr. Ragsdale's methods, assured me that no greater villain ever went unhanged. So much depends upon the point of view.

The time to which I refer when this interesting person crossed my path (to use a good old theatrical phrase) was in March three years ago. I was then playing a rather unimportant part in a highly successful piece which had run all the season at the Frivolity Theatre.

At the time I speak of the theatre was closed temporarily. I was glad of the rest, for the season had been a long disappointment to me. This was because I had not been allowed to play the part of the Cardinal. Only an actor who knows himself to be well fitted to interpret a strong *rôle* and sees it given to someone else, can appreciate my feelings.

The whole of London was then ringing with the famous Blemworth-Dally diamond robbery, and had been for a week. But not the most brilliant jewel in that whole superb collection seemed as bright to my mind as did the lost opportunity to play the Cardinal. This is one of the bitter experiences associated with my profession.

On Tuesday of the week before Easter, I was reminded that other people beside myself had their troubles. At four o'clock in the afternoon I received by special messenger the following strange note:

MY DEAR CROWSMITH,—I find myself suddenly in deep trouble, and you can help me if you will. I am at present in Croydon, at Norman's Hotel. I must keep out of town for a while, and it is highly important that I should not be seen and recognised. Will you come down here this evening and bring me one or two of your wigs and a beard. Also, please bring a revolver, if possible, as I would feel safer with it. This sounds very mysterious, but I will explain all when I see you. Do not disappoint me, old friend—this is a matter of life and death.

Yours in distress,

H. WILLEY.

Destroy this.

All rights reserved.]

Harry Willey was a clever comedian, whose erratic nature had more than once caused him to be entangled in the meshes of the law. But he had a big heart, and had often proved his friendship to me. I could not neglect him in this extremity, and while making all manner of conjectures regarding the nature of this latest scrape of his, I set about carrying out his instructions.

I packed a handbag with a few articles of clothing I thought he might want, and put in two wigs, a false beard and a cavalry revolver I owned. Then, as a further aid to disguise, I added a pair of green goggles. It is necessary to my story that I relate my subsequent movements in some detail.

I left the Berkshire where I was then staying, at 5.30 o'clock, and as I went out I received my last correspondence, which included a paper, from the clerk at the desk with whom I left the key.

I then went to London Bridge and caught the train for Croydon. On my way I opened my letters, which were unimportant, and turned to the paper, which was addressed to me in a strange hand. It was a copy of an illustrated weekly publication issued that day. As I turned the leaves I came suddenly upon a full-page portrait of myself.

Pleased as I was of this mark of recognition of my artistic merit, I could not think how the editors had obtained the picture. I had not been asked for one, nor could I recall the photograph of which it was a reproduction. From the picture my eyes wandered to the lettering beneath it, and I gave a great start as I read:

"Michael Ragsdale, bank-robber, forger, counterfeiter and expert thief, the man who committed the great Blemworth-Dally diamond robbery, and for whom the entire police force of the city is searching."

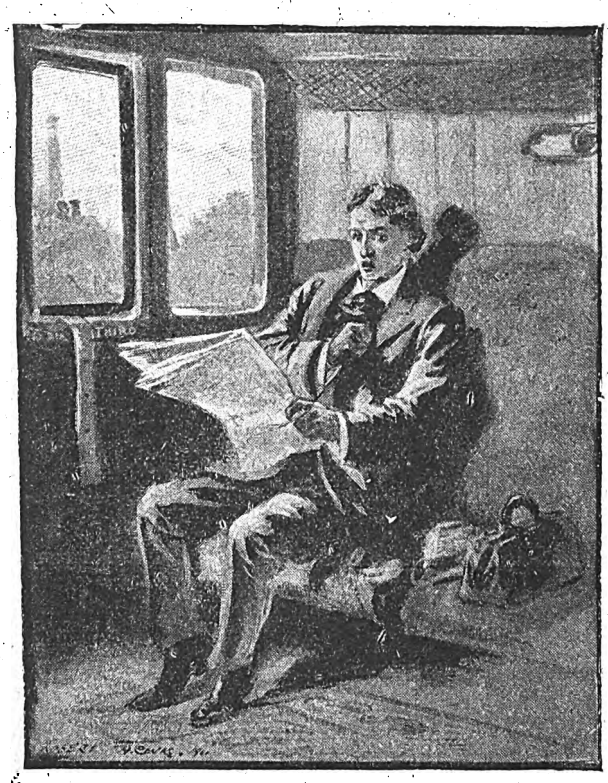
Digitized by Google

With the realization that this was not my likeness at all, but that of a vicious criminal, came a decidedly disagreeable sensation.

This Michael Ragsdale, then, looked so much like me that I, myself, was deceived by his picture. The resemblance was certainly amazing. After a further contemplation of the face of this worthy, I turned to a sketch of his life on the opposite page.

No one knew whence this wonderful man, with the face of an ascetic, and the soul of an arch-fiend, had come. He was believed to have been born in New South Wales. It was certain that long before he was twenty he was fairly launched upon a life of crime in that colony. He appeared in England in 1876, and was concerned in several daring robberies. He went successively to Paris, Vienna and Berlin, with always the same story of successful knavery. Twice only was he captured on the Continent, and both times made his escape under such remarkable circumstances as to suggest the supernatural.

Then he went back to America. In San Francisco he



I came suddenly upon a full-page portrait of myself.

directed the celebrated Wattles Bank robbery in which a clerk was d ugged and a watchman killed. In Chicago he turned up as the head of a gang of counterfeiters.

There, after months of successful operation, he was captured, but on the very evening of his arrest he knocked senseless, with the handcuffs which bound him, the detective who had him in charg , and vanished like a wraith.

In New Orleans he was again taken, and escaped from a prison yard, to have egress from which he must have scaled a wall forty feet high. No trace of rope or ladder was found. Many other such instances were given.

His reappearance in London in 1891, and his part in the great robbery by which Duhamel and Co., the jewellers, lost £50,000, were well remembered. On that occasion, too, he was arrested, and this was the only time on record that Michael Ragsdale was ever brought to trial. The great sensation which his acquittal on a technicality caused would not soon be forgotten. From the day he bowed politely to the judge, who frowningly discharged him, up to the night of the Blemworth-Dally diamond robbery, Michael Ragsdale had not again been seen in London.

Then followed a graphic description of the famous sensation. No more brilliant feat of robbery from a second-storey room had ever been attempted.

The success of Ragsdale's plans were imperilled at the last moment, but again his wonderful pluck saved him.

Mr. Dally had forgotten his opera glasses, and sent his man back for them. The servant, ascending the stairs, saw the thief in the hall, and made a leap for him. Ragsdale had recourse to no noisy firearms, or tell-tale knives, but a blow from his powerful arm sent the man backward down the flight of stairs.

Stunned, and with a broken arm, the plucky fellow staggered to the front door, and shouted an alarm. It was answered promptly, but Ragsdale had vanished into the night, and the jewels with him. Within twenty minutes the full story of the robbery was at the police headquarters.

Mr. Dally's man had obtained a good view of the burglar in the brightly lighted hall, and when he said "he looked like a gentleman, and something like a clergyman," Mike Ragsdale was the name which sprang to the mind of every detective who heard the description.

It was a splendid case by which to test the merits of the Detective Department.

From that night on, every means of escape from the city was watched by lynx-eyed men, each of whom had the features of Michael Ragsdale burned into his brain.

When I had finished reading this entertaining sketch, I turned again to the portrait.

"Well, Ragsdale, my double," I said, "we are both artists in our way, it seems, only you are recognised as such, while I—ah, if I only had the part of Cardinal!"

I sighed as my thoughts returned to the grievance which beset me.

With my penknife I cut the picture from the paper and put it in my pocket. We were now at New Croydon station. I took up my bag and leaving the station walked towards the hotel.

Suddenly I felt each arm grasped from behind by a pair of strong hands. I turned and saw a grim face and stalwart figure on either side.

"What does this mean?" I demanded.

A third figure appeared in front of me and slipped a pair of steel bracelets over my wrist. Then I had my answer.

"It means, Mike Ragsdale, that we want you."

In vain I declared I was not Mike Ragsdale, but only an innocent actor named Crowsmith on his way to see a friend.

The detectives hurried me along through the streets

Digitized by Google

without heeding my words, intent only upon escaping the crowd which had begun to gather. When I found that I must go with them I protested against the indignity of the handcuffs, but without avail. Silently they took me to another platform where we got into an up-train which was about to start. A detective sat on each side of me while two others sat opposite. I was certainly an important capture.

After I had recovered from the first shock occasioned by my arrest and saw that the detectives were considerably aiding me in concealing my manacles, I even felt a grim humour in the situation. I promised myself that this false arrest should be dearly paid for, and the thought even crossed my mind that it would be a good advertisement for William Crowsmith, comedian.

When we arrived at London Bridge Station the news of an important arrest had evidently preceded us. The barrier was surrounded by newspaper men.

I was hurried into a cab and driven to Bow Street, where I was taken at once into the private room of Inspector Fitzallen, the senior officer on duty. He was a tall fine-looking man, who sat at his desk with an appearance of great composure, which seemed, I thought, not quite genuine. He gave one quick glance at me and then addressed the man who still held me firmly by the right arm.

"Detective-Sergeant Canby," he said, "you are deserving of great credit for having effected the capture of one of the most dangerous criminals of the century. I confess I did not attach much importance to that anonymous letter. Your judgment was better than mine, and I shall recommend you for promotion. Well, Mr. Ragsdale," addressing me in a tone of light raillery, "I suppose you are ready to tell me now where the jewels are."

"I am not Mr. Ragsdale," I said, with what dignity I could command, "but an actor of the Frivolity Theatre Company. My name is William Crowsmith, and I am the victim of an outrageous blunder for which someone shall suffer."

The Inspector raised his eyebrows slightly, and said:

"What is in that bag?"

Sergeant Canby forced the slight lock and enumerated the articles as he took them out:

"One brown wig, one light wig, one brown beard and moustache, a pair of green goggles, one large revolver," the rest of the articles were clothing.

"Mr. Ragsdale pays a high compliment to the London police," said the Inspector in the same mocking tone, "in not deeming it worth while to assume these clumsy disguises here. He was doubtless reserving them for 'the road.'"

Then my pockets were searched. I had no letters, having destroyed Willey's, and my pocket-book contained no cards. The only thing of interest found here was the portrait of Ragsdale.

"Ah, the picture in this week's *Illustrated London News*—an excellent one it is, too," said the Inspector; "it seems to have struck his fancy. How many were there in the gang, Ragsdale?" this in an easy, confidential tone.

"I belong to no 'gang,'" I said, my voice shaking with anger, "and I repeat that I am not Ragsdale."

Inspector Fitzallen paid not the slightest attention to what I said. He beckoned to Canby and the other detective, and the three held a long whispered consultation. It was interrupted by a sharp rap at the door, and a policeman hurried in.

"Walters is here, Inspector," he said, saluting

Inspector Fitzallen turned to me and said in a hard voice:

"Ragsdale, I am going to take off your handcuffs."

The handcuffs removed, I was placed against the wall in line with half-a-dozen men in plain clothes. At a signal the policeman who had saluted returned, bringing a man who had a discoloured circle round his left eye and carried one arm in a sling.

"Walters," said Inspector Fitzallen, "if you see here the man whom you saw on the night of the 21st—the man who knocked you downstairs, put your hand on him."

Walters glanced along the line once. His face was very pale as he took two steps forward and pointed at me.

"That is the man," he said.

"Touch him," said the Inspector.

The man came nearer, put a finger on my shoulder and stepped back quickly.

"That is all, thank you," said the Inspector.

His face indicated the greatest satisfaction.

"Inspector Fitzallen!" I burst out, feeling myself possessed of sudden fury, "do you mean to ignore me utterly? I have told you again and again that I am not Michael Ragsdale, and have told you who I am. I, an innocent man, have been dragged through the streets in a most humiliating manner, and have been threatened by you and your men because of my resemblance—a very strong one I admit—to a vile criminal. The resemblance is so striking as to have deceived even myself, for when I saw that picture this afternoon I thought it was my own. You must not treat me like this—you must listen to me."

My words had had an effect, I could see, and I followed up my advantage, speaking earnestly but more calmly:

"I know from the papers that you have not been long in your present position. To have effected the capture of this celebrated thief, who has eluded justice for all these years, would make your name famous on both sides of the ocean. But to let it go forth to the world that you have made this brilliant catch, and find out in the morning that you have bagged only a harmless actor, will make a laughing-stock of you. Surely you will lose nothing by moving carefully, and I can prove my identity in thirty minutes."

The Inspector was visibly interested. He paused a moment before he said:

"How can you prove that your claim is true?"

"By simply sending a line to the manager of the Frivolity Theatre, or to one of my friends at the Berkshire, where I am staying. Please give me some paper and a pencil."

The Inspector hesitated, again eyeing me closely. Then he took a pad of paper from his desk.

"It seems ridiculous under the circumstances," he muttered, "but I will do it."

I wrote two notes both to the same effect, that by a singular mistake I had been arrested as the man who had committed the Blenworth-Dally robbery, and begging the recipient to come at once to the Police Station and identify me.

"One of these notes is to Mr. Hopkins, manager of the Frivolity," I told Inspector Fitzallen. "The theatre is closed, and your messenger may not be be able to find him easily. The other note is to my friend, Mr. Rostyn, who is staying at the Berkshire. He is almost sure to be there at this hour. Should he not be, have your messenger show the note to the proprietor, or the

Digitized by Google

A blow from his powerful arm sent the man backward down the stairs.

clerk at the desk. Everyone about the hotel knows me."

The officer took the notes, read both of them, and pressed a button on his desk for a messenger.

After the man had gone he did not speak to me again, but I caught him looking at me in a peculiar manner two or three times, and I felt that in spite of the identification made by Mr. Blenworth-Dally's man he was not altogether satisfied with the night's work.

I do not think he relished my presence in the room during the wait, for calling in the two principal detectives, he gave them some whispered order, and I was marched out between them.

I was taken to a large, brightly lighted cell, and a comfortable chair was handed in to me. The two men did not leave the cell door after I was locked in.

The time of waiting seemed very long, but at length the summons came to bring me in.

I walked between the two men back into the Inspector's room.

The Inspector sat at his desk, and beside him stood the messenger. Detectives in plain clothes and men in uniform were all about.

After a rapid glance round the room I looked at the Inspector, expecting his apology for arresting and detaining me. He was looking at me sternly. I became suddenly aware that the detectives retained a tight hold on my arms. The voice of the Inspector in harsh, staccato tones broke the silence:

"Well, Ragsdale, perhaps you will be good enough to tell me what that trick of yours meant."

"Why do you continue to address me by that name?" I said. "As for your insulting remark, I don't know what it means."

"It means," he said, speaking slowly and distinctly, "that Mr. William Crowsmith, the actor, whom you claim to be, is at home in bed."

"It is a lie!" I burst out, "for I am William Crowsmith, and it is you who have tricked me. You did not send the messenger, so sure were you of your game."

The Inspector smiled indulgently.

"Riggs," he said, "will you repeat for Mr. Ragsdale and the gentlemen of the Press all that you told me a few minutes ago."

P.C. Riggs stepped forward, and, with evident appreciation of the importance of his story, began:

"I first went to Mr. Hopkins' house in Lincoln Street. He wasn't there, and his whereabouts wasn't known. Then I went up to the Berkshire and found Mr. Rostyn in. He is a tall gentleman, with reddish face and hair white on the temples. I gave him the note, and after he had read it he said:

"'Why, this is very strange, I can't understand it. Mr. Crowsmith was here a little while ago, and is in his own apartment now, unless I am very much mistaken.'

"He asked me what time the man was arrested. I said, 'Six o'clock.'

"He said, 'It was nearly half-past, I know, when Crowsmith came in here. He was suffering from toothache. He had started to go to Croydon to see a friend, he said, but turned back because his tooth was so bad. I gave him something to put on it, and he left, saying he was going to bed.'

"Then Mr. Rostyn looked at the note again and remarked that it did look like Crowsmith's writin'."

"Mr. Ragsdale is an expert penman, as we all know," interjected Sergeant Canby.

"And then," continued Riggs, "he said he'd go and see, and told me I could go with him if I liked. I followed him down the hall and turned into another little hall about thirty feet away, and he rapped on a door. He had to rap twice before he got an answer, and then the gentle-

Digitized by Google

man inside said very cross-like, "'Well, what do you want?'

"'It's me, Crowsmith,' said Mr. Rostyn, 'I want to speak to you a minute.'

"'What is it, Rostyn?' he said, still quite impatient-like.

"'You're not in any trouble, are you?' asked Mr. Rostyn.

"'Yes, I am, in a lot of trouble with this infernal tooth,' and the gentleman swore a little; 'did you wake me up to ask me that?'

"'No,' says the other one, 'but I've got a note from you here saying you've been arrested and that you're in prison. You haven't been arrested, have you?'

"Then Mr. Crowsmith swore a good deal more, and we could hear him punching his pillows. He told Mr. Rostyn he thought it was a mean trick of him coming and waking him up when he knew he was suffering, just to play a poor joke on him. Mr. Rostyn seemed to feel pretty bad about it himself, and told me to come back and tell you, sir, that Mr. Crowsmith was in bed and that he guessed you'd caught a 'sharp one.'

I listened to this amazing recital first with indignation and then with astonishment. The man was telling the truth—that was evident.

Then, suddenly, I felt the half-hypnotic influence of all those eyes fastened upon me. Every man in that room believed me to be a clumsy liar, and had it not been proved that I was one?

The test I myself proposed had resulted that the man I claimed to be was at his home, while the friend I had appealed to had pronounced me a "sharper." What could I say? I had no longer strength or indignation left for another outburst. My only feeling was one of shame, and muttering something, I did not know what, I bowed my head.

The papers of the following morning somehow got to know about my interview, and described this scene far more graphically than I can.

"When Ragsdale was brought in," they said, "his appearance surprised those who had never seen him before.

"He is of medium height, but his figure is upright and commanding. He has a fine tranquil eye and a scholarly mouth and jaw.

"He gazed about the room with an air of conscious inborn superiority to the men who held him prisoner. His expression of intense astonishment as he listened to the recital of Inspector Fitzallen's messenger was more admirably acted than the finest histrionic effort of Mr. William Crowsmith.

"When it was over, however, the realisation that the game was up seemed to strike him suddenly. The charmed life had come to an end. In Inspector Fitzallen this master-thief and arch criminal had at last met his match. A deep blush succeeded by a greyish pallor o'erspread his face. The flexible mouth moved, but no words came. Then the thin lips were drawn back tightly, exposing the strong white fangs. A baleful gleam shot from the narrowed eyes. The expression was that of a wolf which sees vanishing the last hope of escape from the trap which clutches him, Michael Ragsdale lowered his head. He owned himself beaten at last.

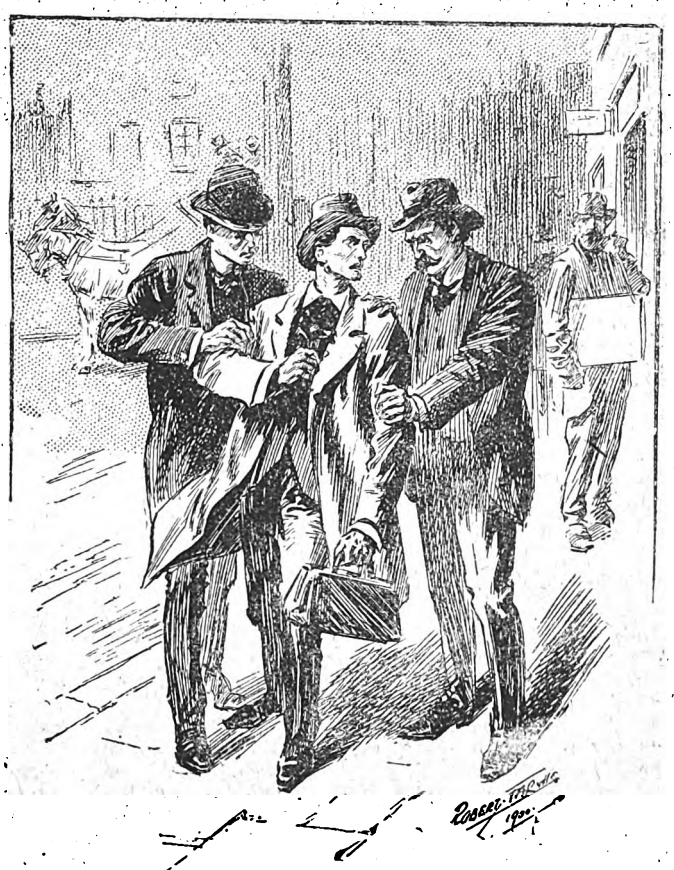
"What his object was no one can guess. The scheme was a clumsy one, for the resemblance to the actor is not in any way marked, and this is probably the first time in his career that Michael Ragsdale has ever been accused of clumsiness. He wanted to gain time, evidently, but whatever his hope it perished miserably, and one could not suppress a feeling akin to pity for the man as he was led back to his cell in almost a state of collapse.

"Inspector Fitzallen probably suspected an attempt at suicide, for he ordered a double guard to be placed over Ragsdale for the night."

That night of horror I shall not attempt to describe. Before morning I was half persuaded that I was, in fact, Ragsdale, and that I had been leading some hideous dual existence of which I was only now becoming dimly aware. I wondered what my punishment would be, for I saw no possible hope of escape now. It seemed useless to send for any more of my friends, for was I not at home asleep?—and to-morrow I would be walking about among them. I thought that possibly William Crowsmith would come to the prison or the court-room to look at me, and I felt a vague curiosity to see him.

I even remembered poor Willey waiting for me in Croydon. He would be greatly disappointed, but perhaps the other Mr. Crowsmith would go when his tooth got better.

Next morning, Bow Street Police-court contained an



Suddenly I felt each arm grasped from behind.

Digitized by Google

interested assemblage. Of course Inspector Fitzallen was there, and so were Mr. Blemworth-Dally, and half-a-dozen of his aristocratic friends.

Outside the rail every inch of space was filled with the great public, and the doors were surrounded with hundreds of others clamouring for admission. All knew from the morning papers that Michael Ragsdale had been taken the night before, and that he was to appear in Court this morning.

I knew nothing of all these people until afterwards, for I paid little attention to externals then. I was only anxious to get away from that crowd, whose eyes I could feel staring at me as at some caged beast.

Mr. Dally told his story and Mr Dally's man again identified me. Inspector Fitzallen and Detective-sergeant Canby also talked but I listened to none of them. It all seemed such an old story now, and its truth as far as I was concerned was practical, if not actual.

The magistrate addressed one or two questions to me, but I shook my head.

I heard the magistrate say, "I must adjourn the examination till Friday," and then Inspector Fitzallen, who now treated me with the greatest consideration, asked me if I had thought of engaging counsel.

I was about to reply that I did not consider it necessary when I caught sight of something — the only real, tangible thing I had seen since I entered upon this strange world of unreality. It was the florid face and white hair of Rostyn, who was forcing his way through the crowd towards the railing. I caught his eye, and held my breath while I waited.

"Crowsmith, old man, what must you think?" he said, as he grasped my hand.

After this I did not care. I knew who I was and knew that I should soon be free. I felt faint and dizzy, for I had eaten nothing since my arrest, and I leaned heavily against the railing. I caught only fragments of what followed.

"But, your worship," Inspector Fitzallen was saying, "this is the very man who sent me word last night that he had seen and talked to Mr. Crowsmith after the time that the prisoner was arrested."

"That is true," replied Rostyn, "but early this morning I went to Mr. Crowsmith's room and found him gone, and the bed not slept in. I thought, in view of the note I had received, something strange must have happened, and I came down here to investigate. All I know is that I can swear that is Mr. Crowsmith standing there."

"Your worship, this may be some new trick of this dangerous man. The people cannot accept any such absurd identification. Who is this Mr. Rostyn?"

"You vouch for the prisoner being Mr. Crowsmith, Mr. Rostyn; can anyone vouch for you?" said the magistrate.

Rostyn looked round the court-room.

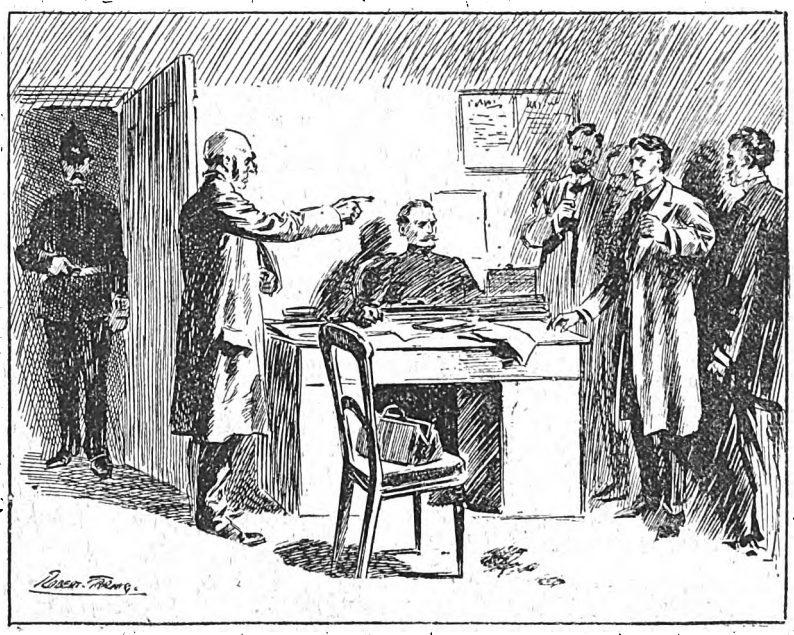
"Yes; I think I see someone," he said, smiling.

Mr. Hopkins, the Frivolity manager, was pressing toward the magistrate's bench, and just behind him came Harry Willey.

Both seized my hands, and while Mr. Hopkins began to explain that he had received my note only an hour ago, Willey interrupted with a question about why I had written that strange letter begging him to come up to London yesterday. Everything seemed to be in a muddle, and the next thing I heard was the magistrate's voice saying:

"There can be no doubt, Inspector Fitzallen, that your men made a blunder. This gentleman has been unmistakably identified as William Crowsmith. The question now is, who was the man in Mr. Crowsmith's room last night?"

No one replied to the question. I looked at Inspector Fitzallen's face and then I began to understand.



He took two steps forward and pointed at me.

* * * * *

Somewhere, it may be in New York, Hamburg or Buda Pesth, that demoniac, dynamic force is still at work, and wherever it appears the power of evil triumphant is demonstrated anew. When the story of that strange life is written there can be in it no more wonderful chapter than that which tells how he eluded the entire London police force after the Blemworth-Dally diamond robbery.

Ragsdale was imprisoned in the city as a lion is imprisoned in a wood which the hunters have surrounded. He might rove to and fro in this forest of brick and stone for a greater or less period, but his ultimate capture was certain. He knew when not to tempt Fate too far, and he acquiesced in the inevitable—Michael Ragsdale must be taken.

At some time, it may have been months or years before this, he had learned of a rather obscure actor who bore a marvellous resemblance to himself. That

Digitized by Google

man was then marked as his own, to be used in a possible day of need. The day had come, and the man was here. He should act as a vicarious Michael Ragsdale, and be taken in his stead.

He gleaned some particulars of the actor's friends and habits and then the plot was formed. The decoy letter, purporting to be written by a friend in trouble and asking the actor to come with disguises—the letter getting the friend himself out of the way, and the anonymous note warning the police—all were his work. So was the paper containing his portrait—posted to arrive in the nick of time, and with the wigs and fire-arms made a nice accumulation of presumptive evidence.

The plan worked like a charm. We moved in accordance with his will like the pieces on a chess-board, and Crowsmith, hastening to the relief of his friend, was caught with the incriminating evidence upon him.

Thus far, however, the plot was one which could have been devised by almost any clever intelligence. Only a Ragsdale could have conceived the act of sublime daring which followed.

It was highly probable that Mr. Crowsmith would be able to prove his identity within an hour after his arrest. Then all the cunning scheming would go for naught. The thing must be fixed up properly, and the news go forth throughout the city and the country that Ragsdale had been caught. Then the detectives would be called off, and the way would be clear for escape. Mr. Crowsmith would send, naturally, to his manager and his hotel.

The former was difficult to find at this time. The main reliance would be placed on his friends in the house where he lived, and there he must be found.

Accordingly, within twenty minutes of the time when Michael Ragsdale was arrested at Croydon, William Crowsmith, attired in the long, light overcoat and soft hat he always wore, walked leisurely into the Berkshire. He asked for his key at the desk, and spoke a few words to the clerk on duty. Then he went to his own room, stopping on the way to speak to his particular friend, Rostyn.

Mr. Crowsmith had the toothache, and kept a handkerchief pressed to his lips for the greater part of the time. This was also his reason for retiring early.

When the messenger from the Court arrived with a ridiculous forged note Mr. Crowsmith was in bed—apparently.

But sometime in the dead of night Mr. Crowsmith left the room and the house unseen. His pockets were filled with letters and papers by which he could easily prove his identity in case he should be stopped. And since the hour when William Crowsmith vanished into the night, Michael Ragsdale has never been seen.

As for me, with the disappearance from the scene of that marvellous personality, I became the central figure in this nine days' wonder. My picture was in every shop window. People came from miles round to see the man who had been so potent a factor in the escape of the famous criminal, and who bore so startling a resemblance to him.

And thus it was that I came prominently before the public, for when the theatre reopened—and this is what I owe to Michael Ragsdale—I played the part of the Cardinal.

FRANCIS LIVINGSTONE.

THE YELLOW PERIL

IN to-day's issue of the ILLUSTRATED WEEKLY NEWS appears the first instalment of Mr. M. P. SHIEL'S Great War Story,

"THE YELLOW PERIL."

At the present moment the eyes of the whole world are turned to China. What has the future in store? Is this the spark that will set the world in flames and bring about the death struggle of the nations? In this great story,

"THE YELLOW PERIL,"

the author endeavours to show, in the form of a romance, how China, ably led, could fight the world, could over-run Asia and Europe, could, by the mere weight of numbers alone, wipe out of existence every "foreign devil" in the two continents.

Let us beg of you not to miss reading the opening chapters of this great story. Go to your newsagent now and say the paper must be obtained for you, and kept for you till you call for it.

"THE YELLOW PERIL."

starts this week, fully illustrated, and here are the chapter headings to give you some faint idea of its interest.

Chapter 1, The Nations and a Man; 2, The Heathen Chinee; 3, Rumours of War; 4, First Blood; 5, How England took the News; 6, Hardy; 7, In the Channel; 8, The Battle; 9, John Hardy gives an Order; 10, John Hardy among Women; 11, John Hardy among the Nations; 12, The Awakening; 13, John and Yen; 14, The Vanished Fleet; 15, The Suicide of Europe; 16, The Love which Foo-chee bore to Ah-lin; 17, The Chinese Iron; 18, Sin-wan; 19, 'The Hundred and Eighty'; 20, 'What a Face!' 21, Murray's Diary; 22, Murray's Diary (*continued*); 23, The Frown of England; 24, Before the Battle; 25, The Greater Waterloo; 26, The Yellow Peril; 27, The Three Gospels; 28, The Yellow Terror; 29, The Weak Point; 30, The Chinese Scream; 31, The Meeting; 32, 'To-day'; 33, The 'Crime' of Hardy; 34, The Black Spot

---

This story appeared in - - -

SHORT STORIES

some years ago under the title,

"Empress of the Earth."

Digitized by Google

A Lover's Scheme.

I HAD been in Athens three or four days when the steamer from Brindisi brought in an English tourist named Burns and an American gentleman and his daughter named Wallace.

Mr. Wallace, as I soon came to understand, was a gentleman of wealth and leisure, and his daughter was as handsome a girl as had ever landed in the country of tombs, mosquitoes, beggars and brigands.

As for Burns, I believe he was some sort of Civil Service *employé* on leave, but he had some money and greater expectations. The three had become acquainted while doing Italy.

More than that, Burns had fallen head over ears in love with Miss Wallace. I am inclined to think she was a bit of a coquette and that she encouraged him out of a spirit of adventure. The father was a dignified, quiet-spoken man, who probably had his own plans for his daughter and trusted her not to go too far with the Englishman.

While he treated Burns in a courteous manner, there was a reserve which the latter did not dare approach too closely. I thought I saw through the whole thing at a glance. It was love and dollars on the Englishman's part, and on the part of the girl a desire for flirtation and a half hope that the man would make a fool of himself.

We all became acquainted in a day's time, and after the expiration of another day young Burns gave me his confidence. He was in love for the first time in his life. He had never dreamed that there were angels on earth until he met Miss Wallace. The man who charged him with a mercenary feeling wronged him in the most terrible manner. He had somehow heard that her father was a millionaire and that she was an only child, but he begged me to understand that he was loving her with his whole soul before that news reached him. I believed him, and he added:

"And now comes the question, 'Does Miss Wallace love me in return?' There are times when I think she does, and my heels lift off the ground; and there are other times when I doubt it, and I feel as if a house had fallen on me."

"Why not ask her?" I suggested.

"I'm afraid it's too soon," he replied, "and then the old gentleman somehow always manages to show up just as we get sentimental. I don't think he appreciates me. If I went to him and said I loved his daughter, I believe he'd keep on reading his newspaper and smoking his beastly black cigar—I really do! If I only had someone to sound him for me!"

"You ought to do something heroic to win the girl's admiration and love, and the father's gratitude and esteem," I said after a long while.

"Well, I just about think I will!" he promptly replied—"that is, I would if there were a chance. I was ready to save them both if the steamer went down, but she simply rolled about like a log in a pond and refused to sink when I prayed for it."

"But there may be other opportunities."

"How can there be unless to keep the mosquitoes and beggars off? My goodness, but I suffer!"

I didn't see how I could help him except to advise him to learn his fate on the morrow and have it done with, and then go up to Marathon and see the ruins and the tombs and get out of Greece. Loverlike, he went out into the balmy evening to commit suicide, and I saw him no more until next afternoon.

He not only still lived, but there was a look of happiness on his face as I saw him talking to a man I would not have cared to meet a mile out of town at noonday. That evening Mr. Wallace informed me that he and his daughter and Burns were going over to Marathon by rail next day to be gone for a couple of days, and at a later hour the lover sat down beside me to say:

Digitized by Google

"I've got a fine game on foot, old chap."

"Going to become a hero?" I asked.

"If I don't, then you may call me a donkey. Yes, sir, I've taken your advice, and there'll be something happen within a day or two. Thanks, awfully, for the hint. I hope to come back arm in arm with the old gent and to have matters all settled with the daughter, my boy."

As I had been at Marathon I had declined to make one of the party. They got off in good time next morning, and Burns was in high spirits and acting like a young man who felt solid ground beneath his feet.

To my surprise, Mr. Wallace and his daughter returned by the evening train, and they had an adventure to relate.

From Marathon you make a tour of the tombs on the backs of donkeys, and it is a rough road and full of ambushes.

The trio had started out by themselves and made fair progress when a couple of picturesque villains suddenly pounced out upon them. The escort of a man and his two boys fled at once, and the villains were about to lead the donkeys up into the hills when Burns came to the rescue. He alone was armed. He descended from his saddle and began shooting, and after tumbling over themselves the scoundrels left him in possession of the battle-field.

He had saved the party, and he was a hero, entitled to admiration and gratitude, but before the father could pat him on the head or the daughter announce that his love was returned something else happened.

Shots were fired from behind a ruin, and the donkeys ridden by father and daughter started off into a gallop followed by the others. Burns was not hit, but in his confusion over the new attack he lingered and was captured.

Thus the hero of one moment became the captive of the next.

When the others had reached a place of safety, they learnt that their saviour had fallen into the hands of regular brigands, headed by old Beppo, and, though a show of pursuit was made by a detachment of soliders, the fellows were not overtaken.

As soon as I had heard the story I saw the little scheme Burns had worked.

He had hired a couple of rascals in Athens to go over to Marathon and play brigands for him, but after becoming a hero, a gang of the genuine article swooped down on him and carried him off.

The only man in Marathon or Athens who was at all disturbed over the matter was the landlord of the hotel, who feared he might not get his bill settled. Mr. Wallace and his daughter seemed to have a suspicion after their return that a little job had been put up, but the father came forward and guaranteed the hotel bill, and not a great deal was said. Two days later an ugly faced native presented Wallace with a note from Burns. He had not only been carried off, but the brigands wanted five hundred pounds in gold for his ransom. In his trunk he had about fifty pounds, but they had refused that. The rascals took it that he was a rich man's prospective son-in-law and that the five hundred pounds would be forthcoming at once, but the American carried the note to the British consulate.

The minister was away for a holiday, and the official in charge had no intention of disturbing himself in the matter.

He said he would notify the Greek government and that in due time the matter would be settled.

Two days later there was a second note.

Burns said if the messenger came back without the cash he would lose one of his ears.

When this was handed in at the consulate, it was greeted with the remark:

"The case must take the usual course, and he was an ass to go and get captured."

Two days passed again, and this time the messenger handed Mr. Wallace a bulky letter. Its bulk arose from the fact that one of Burns' ears was inclosed.

In the letter he stated that unless the cash was raised he would lose the other.

The sight of the ear stirred them up at the consulate—that is, another demand was made on the Greek government, and the Greek government replied that the case would be taken up in its regular order.

Then Wallace did a handsome thing. The messenger had been detained to see what the minister would do, and, as it was plain that nothing would be done until too late, the ransom was paid.

It was three days before the prisoner was handed over. His right ear had been sliced off beautifully, and he had had a hard time of it moving about on the mountains in the company of the villains. He did not come to the hotel, but sent for me to come to the lodgings he had secured. While his gratitude to Wallace was unbounded and he said he would speedily arrange to repay him, he did not want to meet him.

"Egad," said he, "but don't you see how it is? The hero is no hero, but an ass! He must have seen through my little game. The fact is, the two terrible villains I had hired for the little comedy began to fall down and beg for their lives before I had fired a shot. I believe the old gent was smiling when the donkeys started to run. The brutes overdid it, you see. No, I can't see him. It would quite upset me if he took my hand and pressed it and said: 'Hero, I thank thee for thy gallant conduct.'"

"But the girl?" I queried.

"Egad, but that's worse yet. I saw her looking at one of the villains to see where he was hit, and I heard her ask her father 'if the fellow wasn't running rather fast for a wounded man.' I couldn't face it, you know. She might fall on my neck and call me a hero and declare that I saved her life, but it's more likely that she'd welcome me as the prize donkey of the century. Really, but I couldn't take chances, absolutely."

"And how about your volcanic and overwhelming love, angels on earth and so forth?"

"Why, hang it, man, can't you understand the situation? Haven't I lost an ear and made an ass of myself, and does a one-eared ass love like a two-eared man? Can't you see that the rest of my life will be spent in feeling for the ear that's probably been thrown to the dogs of Athens? And when I'm not feeling for the ear I'll be training a lock of hair to fall down where it ought to be, and if there's any time left, I'll put it in kicking myself, d'ye see?"

I saw and sent his belongings over to him and gave him my sympathy, and that evening when I told Miss Wallace that he was going by the next boat, a small grin hovered round her mouth as she replied:

"Papa must find me that ear as a souvenir!"

C. B. LEWIS.

Digitized by Google

Mr. Bowser's Tribulations.

XIII. HE COMES HOME GOOD-NATURED AND GOES TO BED HAPPY.

WHEN Mr. Bowser let himself into the house the other evening he did something which almost made Mrs. Bowser jump out of her shoes.

He called out in a cheery voice:

"Where is that blessed little wife of mine! Why isn't she here to receive a dozen kisses?"

"You—you are home?" she faltered, as she met him at the door of the sitting-room, and wondered if she had heard aright.

"Of course I'm here, old sweetheart!" he exclaimed as he gave her a kiss on the cheek and a pat on the head. "Glad to see your hubby, eh? How's dinner? Of course you've got something delicious to eat."

He kissed her again, and then putting his arm round her in a loverlike way escorted her to the dining-room.

The meal was no better and no worse than the average, but Mr. Bowser praised everything sky high and uttered a jolly laugh between every sentence. Mrs. Bowser was puzzled from the start. It wasn't the weather for sunstrokes. He had no shares in any gold mine. He couldn't have been hypnotized or lost his identity.

She looked at him furtively, and puzzled and wondered, but could not make things clear. He called her dear and darling, asked her after the health of her mother, and as dessert was brought on he took a five pound note from his pocket and tossed it over to her and hilariously exclaimed:

"There you are, best of all women, and you can have forty more if you want 'em—yes a hundred. Whoop! By George, but I am a happy man!"

Mrs. Bowser took a long look at him, and it ended with a painful suspicion creeping into her heart.

Mrs. Bowser took a long look at him.

He had often charged her with attempts to murder him, and on a hundred different occasions had threatened separation proceedings.

Suppose he had at last determined to go to the courts. Suppose, driven to the last resource, he had determined to murder her. Such good nature, hilarity and liberality must surely cover some sinister motive. She was almost afraid of him as they returned to the sitting-room and he danced her about and laughed till the tears stood in his eyes. When he finally let her go he said:

"Come, now, let's talk of old times—of the days of our courtship and honeymoon. You must have a lot of my old love letters put away. Get 'em out and let's read 'em over."

Digitized by Google

"But you'd be ashamed of 'em and get angry," she replied.

"Not at all, sweetheart. I remember that I used to write you some splendid old love letters, but why should I be ashamed? Weren't they written to the dearest, sweetest, bestest, darlingest little woman in all this world? Mrs. Bowser, do you know that I love you even more than on the day we were married?"

"Do you? Why, sometimes I—I——"

"Yes, sometimes I come home and make a row and threaten to get a separation, but it's all wind, and doesn't count for anything. There are times when I ought to be taken out and kicked. Please forgive your old hubby for being a crank. You won't get a separation from me, will you? You'll give me a chance to redeem myself—you surely will?"

"I never thought of separation," she said as his eyes filled with tears and his lip trembled.

"I thought you were going to get one and wreck my life. Do you know, I couldn't live without you? If you should get a separation and get rid of me and marry again I'd—I'd——"

And Mr. Bowser was overcome by his feelings, and the tears rolled down his cheeks and he began weeping.

Mrs. Bowser now abandoned the theory that he might be plotting separation proceedings, but would not a husband who meditated a cold-blooded midnight murder adopt just this course to disarm suspicion?

"It's so good of you not to want to get rid of me!" he continued, after a minute. "Shome wives would want to get rid of their husbands right out and not give them a chance. Mrs. Bowser, do you want er fifty pounds to buy shoes and stockings?"

"No, not so much, dear. The five pounds you have given me will be plenty for the time being."

"You jest shay zhat because you love me—you love me—but I'm goin' ter make you take fifty pounds. Yes, I want you to buy five hundred pounds' worth of shoes and stockings. Shometimes I have come home and made a fuss about the gas bill. Will you forgive me for it? If you will you may burn a thousand pounds' worth of gas and I won't say a word."

"Mr. Bowser," she said, as she got an altogether new idea and began to look at him more closely, "what were you doing this afternoon?"

"What er I doing?" he repeated as he looked at her in a vacant way. "I want er doing nozzings 'tall."

"Didn't you meet an old friend?"

"Ole fren'? Yes, I er met ole fren'. Ole fren' asked me to go out and play er game billiards wiz him, and I went. Shay, Mrs. Bowser, I beat that ole fren' seven games straight off, and he had er buy fo—fo—four bottles of wine. Shometimes I come home and make a fuss about er coal bills, but I won't never do it again. You can buy forty trucks of coal and I won't shay a word."

"Do you mean to tell me that you helped drink four bottles of wine this afternoon!" demanded Mrs. Bowser as she sprang up.

"Course I did. I beat ole fren' at billiards, you know, and ole fren' he had to buy four bottles of wine. Mishus Bowser, you orter be proud of a husband who can beat ole fren' at billiards seven times straight off."

The truth was out at last.

Mr. Bowser was in that condition known as "lively." His share of the four bottles had proved too much for him.

Never before had Mrs. Bowser seen him in that condition, and she didn't know whether to laugh or cry. As she stood looking him over he fell to weeping again and feelingly exclaimed:

"Mishus Bow—ow—owser, don't get rid of me. Be good to me and lemme shtay. If you will I'll see er ole fren' to-morrer and beat him sheventeen times straight off. Tell me you love me as I love you. Tell me—tell me——"

"I'll tell you to go to bed. Mr. Bowser, you are intoxicated!"

"Toxshicated? Toxshicated? How can I be toxshicated? I jest met er ole fren' and beat him seven games straight off. Mishus Bow—owser, zhat ain't being toxshicated. What er going to do?"

"Going to put you to bed."

"Puz me in my little bed? All rize—all rize. You my ole fren', you are. You shtick by me and I'll shtick by you. Whazever mazzer of floor, Mrs. Bowser? Keeps jumpin' up, you know.

"You ought to be ashamed of yourself!" she said as she pushed and pulled by turns and got him upstairs at last."

"Had I? Had I?" he queried, as he sat on the floor. "Shay, now Mrs. Bowser, I met er ole fren', you know—ole fren'. Zhat ole fren' he shays—he shays——"

And then Mr. Bowser's head fell back on the pillow provided for it, and he knew no more. M. QUAD.

"You ought to be ashamed of yourself."

NEXT WEEK: **"He Tries Horseback Exercise to Cure His Many Ailments."**

Digitized by Google

The Strange Story of Jean Joseph.

SILENCE fell upon the room at Dr. Bourgneuf's entrance—that silence well-known to frequenters of the assizes that hushes immediately alike the rustling of the briefs on the bench of the barristers and the murmured whisperings of the public.

The deposition of Dr. Bourgneuf would be the "nail" of the process. The people knew this and that at the fate of the accused was in the doctor's hands.

But the appearance of this witness at once reassured all the crowded audience, conscious of an inner shrinking against a responsibility so heavy in human hands.

At the call of the usher the doctor had advanced to the bar without even a glance for those eager assistants through whom the pronouncement of his name had sent a chill and stir of subdued excitement.

His scientific works were known to all; his spotless probity had passed into a proverb; and now that they saw him, his serious attention and simplicity, the gravity of his oath and manner, the firmness with which he faced the jury, as if utterly alone with them, without a gallery of crowded heads and listening ears to catch his lightest syllable, more than corroborated the pleasing impressions of Dr. Bourgneuf's character.

"Gentlemen of the jury," he began slowly—his whole deposition continued without hurry and with the same clear, precise utterance with which he spoke these opening words—"Gentlemen of the jury, I must ask permission to rehearse once more before you the story of this unhappy crime, the method, it seems to me, most favourable to the proper exposition and understanding of my own testimony.

"When selected by you to examine into the mental state of Jean Joseph, the criminal before us, I desired, if you remember, before giving my diagnosis to the public, to see and personally inspect the framing—nothing else so well expresses my meaning—that surrounded this crime. Why? Because numberless experiences have led me to believe, and to assert with conviction, that nothing so much and so quickly enlightens a physician as exact knowledge of the setting of a crime.

"I found, then, at the side of a desolate highway, fully half a mile from the village or other habitation, an ordinary country house standing in its own grounds. A casual inspection of the entrance doors and window shutters, which were adorned with a superfluity of bolts and iron bars and bells, convinced me at once that the occupant of this house had been of a timorous nature, who doubtless exaggerated the peril that the isolation of her dwelling compelled her to run.

"In the rooms of the house I made a still more detailed survey; everywhere finding a crowd of images, of statuettes, bearing upon or constituting objects of piety till one could readily have believed himself in the walls of a monastery.

"Indeed, the bedroom of Madame Piquet, as the murdered woman, I believe, was called, was so arranged as to perfectly resemble a Saint Joseph's chapel, pictures and figures of that holy saint tapestrying the walls and crowding the brackets, while twelve of the score of volumes lying upon bookshelves and tables were devoted to the life and virtues of that worthy man.

"I call your attention to this special form of devotion holding it, as I do, to be an important factor in this case, as showing the ascendency which the widow had been able to exercise over her domestic; the attic of the servant—to-day the assassin—showing an incumberment of ornament and literature precisely similar in religious character to that in the chamber of Joseph's mistress.

"These details and particulars gathered on the spot and from the lips of those who personally knew the widow Piquet lead me, keeping in mind the character of the deceased, to the following opinion:

"She was an emotional, exalted, and excitable person, whom the abuse of practical religion and the fear of the supernatural dragged into constant apprehensions of an origin clearly morbid.

"On the other hand, putting personal cowardliness out of the question, the dominant characteristics of the widow Piquet on all other points were energy, obstinacy, and inexorable despotism.

"Joseph, on the contrary, presents himself to us as a lad of natural docility, one of those plastic, characterless beings to whom education, good or bad, gives its only imprint.

"We cannot know or trace Joseph's hereditary traits, for the reason that he is a foundling taken from a public asylum by the Widow Piquet to bring up for domestic service. Nevertheless, all that I have been able to discover of the criminal's temperament shows a sensitive *nervosité*, exceedingly rare in a peasant, and which seems to have been fostered and increased by the fear in which Jean Joseph lived of displeasing his mistress and of exposing himself to her reprimands.

"Such was the reciprocal attitude of the Widow Piquet and her servant when one day, during the month of November last, something happened of which Jean Joseph, unskilled in the art of self-defence, has failed to apprise judge and jury, but which he has minutely and honestly described to me.

Digitized by Google

"It was evening and at the close of dinner. Jean Joseph, who had dined facing his mistress, had risen to clear the table, when suddenly, in a tone of horror, Dame Piquet called him to return.

"'Hear this, Jean,' she cried, 'just hear this!'

"And from the columns of the journal she had spread out before her she read to him the details of an assassination of a woman by her servant.

"'The sheet trembled in her hands,' Jean Joseph told me in relating this incident, 'and as she read she constantly turned upon me a strange fixed gaze, seeking to judge of the effect produced upon me by the detailed recital. The article finished, seeing that still I did not speak, she turned to me with the demand to know what I thought about it.

"'"And his name, Jean," she continued, "what do you think it was?"

"'"I cannot divine, madame," said I.

"'"It was Jean—Joseph—the same as yours!"

"'She did not say another word and during the evening did not again address me a syllable, and when bedtime had come and she mounted to her chamber I heard her, contrary to her habit, close and lock her door with a double turn.'

"Gentlemen of the jury," pursued Dr. Bourgneuf, with a deliberation that dwelt upon and seemed to weigh every word, "this was the point of departure of the accomplished crime!

"As the result of that scene Jean Joseph in his turn ascended to his chamber and there passed a night of insomnia and reflection.

"'How,' he asked himself, 'had that other murderous servant been able to commit such a cowardly assassination of an aged woman who had sheltered and nourished him beneath her roof?'

"Step by step his excited fancy traced every circumstance of the crime. In the absence of precise details he invented and had recourse to comparisons; before long, for instance, placing the action of the crime into the framing of his own dwelling.

"It was himself whom now he saw upon the boards instead of the other murderer; himself and his benefactress, and he thought he heard outside his door the timorous step of the widow Piquet, come to turn upon him the key of his *mansarde*.

"He passed those night hours in a wakeful nightmare. He got up a murderer, and his gaze, which at the first morning encounter had sought that of his mistress, seemed to read in it a growing consciousness of his hideous thoughts that more and more unnerved him.

"Though no allusion was made to the reading of the previous evening, he felt the abyss that had suddenly opened between himself and Dame Piquet, and he no longer dared lift his eyes to her face in the terror of his suspicions.

"'Ah! the relief I should have experienced,' Jean Joseph has confessed to me, 'if only madame, my mistress, had given me an occasion to discuss the crime with her. It would have been a relief to both of us, and that which happened would not have come to pass. But it was not possible for me to speak of it to her first, because of the uneasiness of her eyes, which clung to me always, of her leaps and starts at the least brusque movement, of the atmosphere of fright and suppressed terror that perpetually hovered over the house. Time and again I longed to throw myself on my knees before her and cry aloud: "Swear to me, madame, swear to me that you do not believe me capable of—that!"

"'The fear that I read on her features strangled the cry in my throat, as the fear that I myself felt strangled all thoughts of flight—the fear of accusing myself if I did, as I had thought of doing, run away—of adding conviction to the belief of my mistress that her suspicions were in truth well founded, I remained. It was that which lost me!'

"Gentlemen of the jury, this existence of hallucination and madness with Jean Joseph endured a week. At the end of that time the two unfortunates talked to each other no more. They lived on the watch, facing each other, eye to eye, like beast enemies inclosed in the same cage and who spied upon each other before leaping to the end.

"It was the eighth day and after dinner, the time this thing had first begun, when Jean Joseph got up from his meal and went out to work in the woodhouse. Unable to sleep if he went to bed, he proposed to split wood, and through the fatigue of this rough duty to win the rest that for a week had fled his seeking.

"He had already sharpened his axe and was in the act of attacking with sturdy strokes a log of oak, when suddenly the sound of footsteps caught his ear in the courtyard. He stopped, listened, still with uplifted axe—the steps came nearer—close to the door, which now swung slowly back, and Dame Piquet, her clothes disordered as if preparing for bed, a lighted candle in her hand, stood shivering on the threshold.

"The shriek she uttered as the raised blade fell heavily upon her skull was heard by passing carters, truck farmers returning late from market; the voice was followed and Jean Joseph found, axe still in hand, bewildered and wild-eyed beside his bleeding victim!

"Gentlemen of the jury"—the doctor's tones had dropped lower and lower, till it seemed as if, perhaps, he did not wish the hall to hear his words—"Jean Joseph killed his mistress, as all of us know, but, heed well what I say to you now, it is the key to everything; Jean Joseph killed his mistress, yes, but killed her only because of that mistress' will!

"The dread and hallucination that led him to commit the deed, the dread and hallucination that constantly led her to suggest the deed, could end but in one way. If Jean Joseph is guilty of the murder of his mistress, he is guilty through obedience alone!

"Messieurs—decide the rest—I am done!"

N. Y. T.

Digitized by Google

On the Long Trail.

It was a proud day for Lorne, the young foreman of the Circle Bar ranch, when he started on his first "drive" with a herd of five thousand cattle for the shipping point. His orders were to take the herd to St. Louis, and pass through the Ozark mountains or foot hills.

The herd was tractable during the earlier days of the journey, but as the cattle went on they became more nervous, and it was with difficulty that the herders could keep them within the lines of the nightly round-up.

Once when they had been compelled to ride constantly round the herd from evening far into the night, Lorne went to the head of the herd to see what was the disturbing cause.

As he sat on his horse he heard the call of a wolf off to the right, answered by another from the left. Something about the sound was unnatural, and he listened closely. Again they came, and soon there was a second movement among the cattle—something had been thrown into the herd to startle them.

He knew then what was the matter—someone was annoying the herd to make him trouble. But when daylight came he could see nothing of the disturbers, and again he waited for night.

He took his own position far on the outskirts that night, and waited for developments. Soon there was another wolf call; then another, then a whizzing sound and another movement of the cattle. He rode furiously at the point where he thought the sound originated, and was not surprised to catch a glimpse of a dark form which he took to be a man on horseback,

"Halt!" he cried, "or I will shoot you!"

There was no stopping. Faster and faster he rode, and gained on his annoyer. Then, before he was aware of what was happening, he was seized from behind, and went rolling to the ground, a lariat coiled round him having jerked him from the saddle. It had not caught over his head, and his second assailiant went rushing past and away before he could regain his feet.

But not quick enough for the rider to escape notice, and one glance at the stooping shoulders and long hair told Lorne who it was—Louie, the Mexican, who had been discharged when Lorne went to work first on the Circle Bar.

But there was enough to look after at the other end of the line. The cattle, startled more than ever by the noise, had started on a stampede, and were racing towards the east at the top of their speed, the herders doing all in their power to stop them, but without effect.

The plan of the herders was to ride on the edge of the leaders of the herd, and by swerving them, eventually run the whole lot in a circle, so that it would tire itself out. Lorne joined in the ride, and fierce and fast was the racing for hours. All the time they were getting the herd into a "mill," which meant a constant turning, which might continue as long as strength lasted without damage. When this was accomplished Lorne went to the camp waggon and threw himself on a pile of blankets to rest.

It was two days before the herd was in shape to start on the journey again. On the second day they came back to the broad ribbon of brown earth that was spread over the green of the plain for four hundred miles, and was the first thoroughfare between the ranches of the south-west and the shipping station of the north.

Upon it were scores of herds, and it seemed likely that they would be allowed to proceed quietly and without molestation. They did not know the character of the young Mexican who was hanging on the edge of the herd.

Louie was not alone. He had taken with him another renegade from the south-west, and they were fertile in expedients to disturb the passage of the herd. The young foreman was unsuspicious.

"I believe, Jim," said he to the head herder, "that they have got discouraged and have left us."

"I don't know. It is never safe to trust a greaser unless he is dead," was the reply, "and then it is as well to take no chances."

So the watch was kept close, and day after day went by without incident. To be sure, a strange cry came from the side of the trail one night and caused the cattle to rouse quickly, but it did not amount to anything serious. Then there was a bundle of red cloth in the middle of the trail one afternoon round which the stock rushed and took a course a half-mile out of their way.

But on the whole the trip was going well, and they were up in the middle of the territory, with hopes of seeing the south branch of the Cimarron any day. A halt had been called early for the night, and on the level plain the cattle were scattered for two miles up and down the trail. The herders were getting supper, and only three were on guard.

None of them saw a crawling figure, leading a small pony, that crept across the herd's grazing ground, and slowly, without making the contented animals raise their heads suspiciously, separated the northern third of the herd from those on the south.

Steadily they drew away, and, as there were several hummocks in that region, were soon behind one, and

Digitized by Google

out of sight of the regular herders. Lorne did not even see what had been done until one of the herders rode up to say that there was something wrong.

"The herd's short, somehow," he exclaimed.

In a moment the herders were in the saddles and the remainder of the cattle were being urged forward, for they knew that the lost stock had not been taken during the day, and consequently were not to the south, but must be to the north of the herd. It was almost sundown by this time, and he feared that the stock would escape him altogether if he waited for morning.

His fears on these grounds were unnecessary. Louie had no intention of stealing the stock. Every hoof was branded, and could not have been sold in any market. With his companion he had hurried the thousand head that he had led away from the main herd, and was already a mile or more up the trail preparing for a grand stroke that should give the Circle Bar man trouble.

On the long trail nothing causes so much annoyance and often great loss as the meeting of two herds. The cattle charge on each other, and frequently some lively fights ensue. More than that, there is almost sure to be a stampede, and when the two herds take opposite directions there is little chance for milling or controlling the frightened creatures.

So it happened that as the main herd went round the edge of the hillock, being pushed as fast as the excited men could hurry it, there came suddenly to meet it another herd, that was not for the moment recognised by Lorne and his followers.

Behind the thousand were two yelling men, Louie and his companion. The stock fought and the regular herders tried to separate the herds, not knowing that they belonged to each other. It was growing dusk, and the situation was a serious one.

Louie had gone to one side and was watching with satisfaction the *mêlée*. Suddenly the great mass of horns and swing tails gave a lurch in his direction and the stampede had commenced. Coming at him broadside, it gave him small chance to escape, and he put spurs to his horse and raced away to the south.

On came the herd, and then, to add to his peril, the trusty little pony stepped in a prairie dog hole and went sprawling on the sod with a broken leg. In an instant he was out of the saddle, but what could he do? The avalanche was coming.

Lorne, hurrying to the front, saw the herd start for the west and caught through the dusk a glimpse of a single horseman. Then he saw, too, the horse fall and fail to rise again. Forgetful of the herd, and only intent on saving the unfortunate herder, whoever it might be, he reined his pony in that direction.

As Lorne rode it was with the thought that the herder was one of his own men. He spurred at his best gait and was soon within a few yards of the unfortunate man. But the cattle were nearly as close, and it was even racing who would get there first.

Suddenly the young foreman recognised the man on foot and at the mercy of the herd—Louie. He was tempted to ride in another direction and save himself—something that he could not be sure of doing if he waited to take care of the meddler.

But the beseeching eyes of the Mexican were too much for him, and he slipped his left foot spur under the wide clinch that held the rear of the saddle. Then he prepared for leaning to the right, and called. "Get ready to jump there!"

Louie could not understand why his enemy should take chances of his own life to save one who had done him injury, but he was willing to be the saved one in the present condition of affairs.

Farther and farther Lorne leaned over to the right until he could almost sweep the long grasses with his hand. He had practised picking up a handkerchief while his horse was on the run, and the experiment came in handy at this time.

"Now—ready!" he called, and then, with a swoop, he went past.

The herd was but a dozen yards away and coming with heads down and tails in the air—a terrifying spectacle, and one that meant death to both the young men if they could not get out of the way.

But Lorne's strong arm and the broad clinch on the horse's flanks meant safety, and as the boy's arm went round the Mexican it held. On and on they went, Louie riding in the grasp of his rescuer, at the side of the flying animal, and Lorne breathing hard as he held the heavy burden, watching all the time for the herd, which was pressing on them.

But at last the pony dashed out of the line of pursuit and the herd went raging past. Louie dropped and went rolling over and over on the sod, while Lorne went on to the camp.

When at last Lorne and his men had gathered round the camp fire and were eating some of the cook's black bread, that seemed so good to the weary cowboys, a dark figure came stealing into the circle. It was Louie.

"I want the señor," he said timidly, and Lorne went out to him.

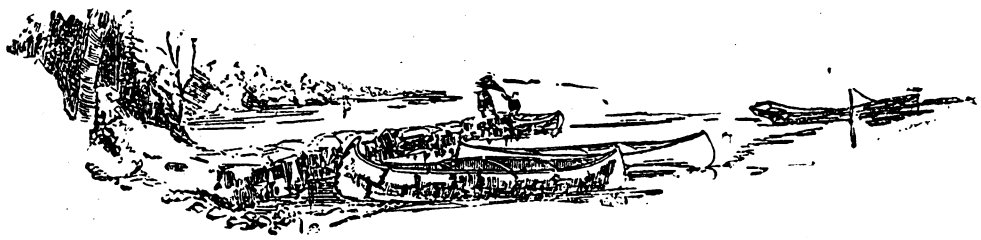
"You saved my life this afternoon," said the boy, in his broken dialect, impossible to reproduce in print.

"Well, I only did as I would for anyone."

"I know; but you are better than me. I make you loss and trouble. I am sorry. I like to help you now."

So the young Mexican joined the camp, and the next day took his place in the middle shift of the herders, and watched the cattle with all the care and fidelity of an old cowboy.

A. W. N.



Digitized by Google

EINAR OF THE LONG SWORD.

By George C. Wallis . .

Author of "The Winning of Gunhild," "The Gladiator," etc., etc.

SUMMARY.

This story of the wooing of Astrid, the daughter of Earl Sweyn, is told by Sigmund, the Skald.

Einar Longsword and Hardrada Hardskull are both wishful to marry the maiden, who has been promised by her father to the latter, but Einar is told that he may proffer his suit if he captures the ship of Edred the Bearsark, a notorious pirate, within a year.

While Einar is on the voyage, Hardrada offends Sweyn, and is debarred from paying court to his daughter.

Einar first sets sail for North-hold, his own home, and on his arrival there finds that Edred has devastated it and that his parents have perished. He then starts out on his mission of vengeance, and after sailing for some time meets with Edred, whom he slays in the ensuing fight.

Hardrada, after leaving Raven's-nest, the home of Sewyn, sails for North-hold, hoping to find Einar there. On the voyage he falls in with Hrolf, Edred's son, and they agree to hunt Einar together. It is during a great storm that Hardrada and Hrolf come up with Einar. Fighting takes place, and Hrolf is thrown overboard by Einar and his ship destroyed. Hardrada, however, who took no part in the fight, manages to save Hrolf from drowning

CHAPTER VIII.

The Hunting of Hrolf and Hardrada.

The *Eagle* was driven far out of the usual course of ships by the storm, and several days passed before she made land. She put in at last at Ostö, in the Skager Rack, and lay there until she was repaired, and fresh men taken aboard for those who had been lost in the storm-fight. As at Nidaros, there was no lack of volunteers, for Einar's fame was gone all down the coast, and it was esteemed an honour to be his man.

When she sailed again Einar had as stout and well-caulked a ship under him and as full and jovial a crew as ever he had taken to sea before.

After some days of fine sailing they met a trader, from whom they learned that a vessel in distress had been seen making for the Reyjane Islands not long before. Thither, not doubting that it was the mastless *Vulture*, Einar turned his keel.

"We can play no longer at a waiting game," said he to Algar. "The year speeds apace, and now that I have won Astrid she is much in my thoughts. A year is a long time, and much may happen in my absence, and as yet I have found no means to send her news of my doings, though it seems they are well-known down here in the south. Next time we see Hardrada must be the last, Algar Erikson."

"I trust so," said Algar, "but he is a wary customer, and I like not that were-man of his, Alfdane. Having tasted the sharpness of our teeth they will be the less keen for another bite until they can catch us napping and do the biting themselves. This is my view, that Hardrada will run from us if he can, thinking to keep us at sea until the year be out."

"Then we must be hot on his track," said Einar. "He has yet to show us that he has the swiftest ship. I wish I had got the *Destroyer* under me now, but it would be ill to risk her out here. Old Sweyn is well-named the Stern, and if I do not fulfil my vow to the letter, he will not give me Astrid without more trouble."

So they made all speed that wind and tide would let them to the Reyjanes; but when they landed there Algar's rede came true. The *Vulture* had been, and rigged new masts, but had sailed the moment she was seaworthy again. The islanders did not know where to, except that she seemed to be aiming north. When questioned about her crew, an old fisherman answered that they seemed to be a full company, and that there were three champions amongst them who wore the golden wings.

"Now, who can the third be?" said Einar wonderingly. "Except Hardrada and his man Swerkur, I know of none who should wear the wings. Alfdane was a deedless man, with only a steel cap. What kind of men were the three, fisherman?"

"One was tall and bony, with a villainous face," said the man. "The second was a grizzled Viking, but cheery withal, and the third was a young man of about your own age, Earl, as much like Edred the Bearsark—whom I have seen twice—as ever one man is like another."

"Hrolf Red-hand, by Odin!" cried Algar. "Then even Rana herself has refused him! 'Tis well, for he will live to regret the day. We have no time to waste here."

The Vikings ran down the shore to the ship at once, and leaving the fishermen staring astonished in the village street, sprang aboard in haste and headed north.

Now Algar had guessed rightly how Hardrada would act, but did not know the depth of Alfdane's witchcraft. The were-man was busy with spells and incantations as the *Vulture* sped through the sea, and his familiar told him at times where the *Eagle* was, and sent dreams at his bidding to Einar's mind, so that the latter steered the ship where he should not have done. Sometimes Einar fought against the strange thoughts that moved him, but the spells of the troll were powerful and conquered. In Iceland Hardrada had kin and lands, and thither, from the Westman Isles, his ship fared, the *Eagle* labouring three days behind. Hardrada's track was plain amongst the islands by the work of sword and flame he left where the people had not been hospitable enough; and at every fresh evidence of this needless ravage Einar's face was set the harder and his men swore the louder, and Algar vowed deeper vengeance.

The summer days were yet warm, the flowers were still blooming everywhere, the land yet smiled green and glorious to the face of Frey, when Einar reached Iceland and came to where Hardrada had taken up fresh men; this time but a day too late. Algar was furious, and he and the men were for sacking the place for revenge before they sailed again. Einar would not hear of it.

"I will have no needless slaughter on my hands," said he decisively. "I have no quarrel with these folk, who have done me no harm. Put out to sea again and sail south; we cannot be far behind Hardskull now."

They voyaged forth again, and to make a long tale short, came after many weary days to one of the Faroy Isles, landing there late in the afternoon of the same day that Hardrada had left it in the morning. They would have put out again at once, but the last run had been a long one and the ship was short of water, and one man sick and needed help. Also it was growing dusk, and Einar was full of thoughts regarding Astrid, and weary of sailing, and half-

Digitized by Google

minded to give up the search and fare back to Ravensnest to claim his love. And the folks were very friendly.

Now, this was the cunning of Alfdane. He had led them to this anchorage, where the people were hospitable, after a long and weary search, thus making sure that they would stay awhile and so fall into the trap he had set.

Not far from the landing-place was a temple to Odin, and not far from the temple was the garth of Borg Skiggison, who had made Hardrada welcome on his short stay.

Thither went Einar and his men, and old Borg, who had long left the sea and now spent his time listening to the boasting of the young Vikings who passed his way, bade them come in and rest awhile. His wife Sishild at once made stir to wait on the guests, and while they were putting away from them the desire for food his daughter Thora came in and sang them greeting. Hardrada's men had not rested there with idle tongues, and all on the island knew by now something of Einar's fame and the feuds that were between Einar and Hardrada on the one hand Hrolf and Einar on the other. However, old Borg said he took no man's part now, having done enough in his own day, and Alfdane had been very quiet with his own plot. So Thora sang:

Welcome to Borg's-hold,
Einar the Wonder,
Einar the Longsword,
Fighter in thunder.
Welcome to Fareys,
To peace and to rest,
After your sailing
O'er ocean's white crest.
Welcome to Borg's-hold
As long as thou'lt stay,
And kind be the thoughts
Thou wilt take away!

She was tall and fair as a lily and her voice soft and sweet, and the men cheered long and lustily when she had done, and even Einar smiled. He thought he had never heard a voice so like Astrid's, nor seen a woman who came so near being as fair. And that night the ale was good and men merry round the long tables in Borg's lofty hall. And Algar Erikson, when he had drained the ale-horn many times, spoke more than was well, telling of Einar's love and of his vow.

There was high revel and loud mirth till far into the night, and, after the women had retired from the hall, merriment of none too prudish a sort. At length, as the red logs flickered, and sank together, dying on the hearth-stone, the guests and the house-folk alike fell asleep, some beneath the tables, some upon their folded arms, some leaning back against the wall. The days of voyaging had been many, and full of hard work and fast following disappointments, and what wonder that Einar's men fell an easy prey to the soft glamour of Thora's songs and the good quality of Borg's beer?

The first to wake in the morning was Einar, and the sun was already stabbing the twilight of the hall with lances of light when he opened his eyes and roused himself. Close to him old Borg lay snoring, and not far off his own man Algar.

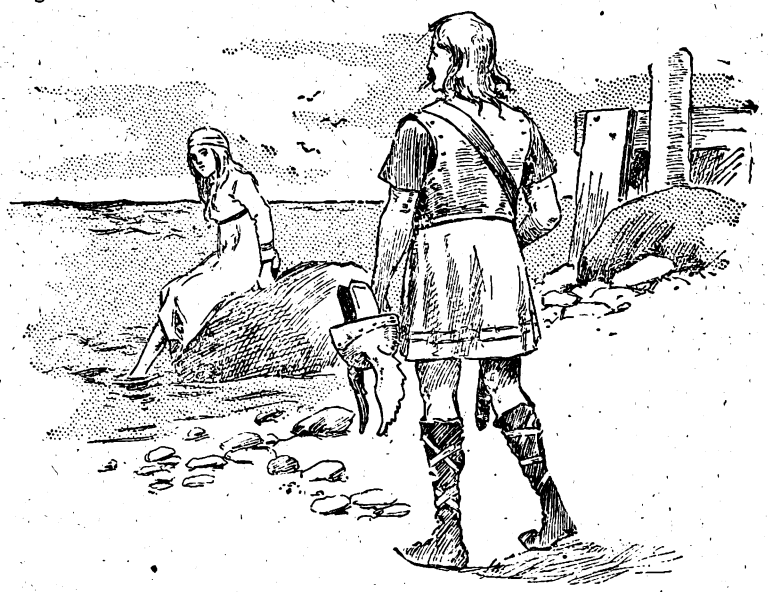
"We were over-worshipful of Bragi last night," said Einar to himself. "But no harm's done. Yet my mother Gunhild said that folk who truly believed in the White Christ did not thus. . . . . I will go out and get the morning air alone."

Down to the water's edge went Einar, the fresh breeze playing tricks with his curly golden hair as he strode along, his helmet swinging in his hand. Not far from the landing-stage there was a rounded rock jutting into the sea, and on this, her bare feet splashing the low water on the shingle, sat Thora, looking wondrous fair. The sunshine lay warm upon the light locks that escaped from her snowy coif, her arms shone white and firm beneath her fluttering robe, and there was something in her blue eyes that Einar could not understand, but which he could not help admire.

"Greeting, Einar Haraldson," said she softly, when she saw him, "It is a fair morning when the brave are up so early."

"I was never a laggard," said Einar, "but this time Strength is beaten by Beauty. Perhaps it is well that I have not spared more sleep, for who knows what voyage is before us to-day?"

"Surely you will not leave us so soon, Einar?" asked Thora, with a very pretty air of concern. "Surely Borg's-hold is a pleasant place, and vengeance can wait a while? And your Astrid is sure for you whenever you choose to sail!"



Down to the water's edge went Einar, where Thora was seated on a rock.

And Thora gave a little sigh, and looked at the Viking with a swift flash of the eyes that was very flattering.

"There is wisdom in your words, Thora," he said, and gazed out across the water, thinking.

This was Einar's fault—that he could not bring himself to believe evil of fair faces. Yet often fair faces are but masks for crooked minds, and sometimes the minds are the more crooked the fairer are the faces that mask them.

Thora was fair, yet she was false. She had fey gifts and a dark heart, and had before this time lured many men to their deaths for gain. And she had taken golden presents from Hardrada.

CHAPTER IX.

THE TREACHERY OF THORA THE FAIR.

"YES, there is wisdom in your words, Thora," said Einar. "The voyage has been long and fruitless and the year is going fast. Perhaps it will be better if I stay another day and rest and then go to claim Astrid, putting off revenge till after. It must be Baldur who has led us here, so fair a place it is. Yet I cannot stay after to-morrow's dawn, the sea is treacherous these days."

"So it is," quoth Thora, a gleam of triumph coming into her bright eyes. "And on other days beside. And so are men's promises and women's smiles. But see, the swallows fly high; it will be fine weather for your stay."

And then she sprang off the rock and walked with Einar

Digitized by Google

along the shore, talking of everyday affairs until they came back at last to the threshold of the house. But with her hand uplifted to the latch she said swift and low:

"If you are weary of the drinking and merriment this even, Einar, come with me to our guest chamber, which overlooks the sea. I would fain talk more with you, and also, I should like to read to runes that are graven on your sword. The carline Unna will wait upon us."

And he, thinking no evil, promised to be with her after sundown. That day they looked to the ship and cleaned their armour and weapons of the salt-rust that was on them, the men being nothing loth for a good excuse to linger at the island, and when the sun hung low and red over the western sea, all sat round the tables to a glorious feast.

Old Borg was wealthy, having much land and many cattle, and nothing liked he better than to see the ale flow and the boards groan under the weight of good food; to hear the rattle of daggers on the dishes and the wagging of loosened tongues; to see the faces of his guests grow warm with mirth in the leaping glare of the pine logs that roared and crackled on the hearth. And Einar's men were a jovial company, full of stories and full of recent experience, and never was so eloquent a boaster as Algar Erikson when the ale-horns were empty and the thralls were sent to broach a fresh cask.

"'Twas Loki's own luck that brought us here!" he cried, pledging Borg in a deep draught; "but 'tis Bragi that's keeping us. Next to Thor, Bragi's my god. Let us drink to them—Bragi and Thor—to Joy and Courage, Pleasure and Power!"

The men drank the pledge heartily, the house-carles at the door beat with their swords upon their shields, and the house shook with shouts.

So intent were all now on what was before them, that none noticed Einar's absence. He remembered Thora's wish and went up to the guest-chamber, taking his sword, but leaving his axe in the great hall.

Unna brought them wine that a wandering Viking had brought from the far South a year ago, and, having set it before them, retired.

While the twilight lasted it was a pleasant view that Thora and Einar had from the casement. They saw the deepening of the darkness over the sea, the drifting of the night clouds, the shining forth of the stars in the sky. And Thora spoke little, seeming pensive and thoughtful, and Einar sat full of content, dwelling on the love of Astrid and the words she had spoken to him by the water's edge that morning she and I had bidden him *vale*.

Then as the night came, and Unna brought lamps and set them in brazen sockets on the wall and their light glittering on the golden wings of Einar's helm was reflected into Thora's eyes, the warrior and the maiden drew closer together; and the maiden spoke of love, and sighed often, and gave Einar to see, if he would have seen, how dear he was to her. For awhile, however, he answered her absent-mindedly, and would not see how it was.

Now as the time for her treachery drew on, Thora became anxious and hesitated. She had undertaken the task lightly enough before she had seen Einar, but now she had seen him and spoken to him, her heart pained her. Seeking to entrap him, she had herself fallen a victim to the snare. She loved him as she had never loved before, and towards him her cold, dark mind was soft and warm. She had but to warn him, and he would be safe—safe, to go to Astrid.

At that thought she hardened, but softened again, thinking to win his love. He had praised her songs and seemed content in her presence. Perchance he regretted that he was bound to Astrid the Beautiful? She resolved to try him before she gave him to his fate. "At least I *may* win," thought she, "and if not, then shall no other."

So she talked of love and of the perversity of fate, and after awhile Einar felt how the wind blew, and looking at her face, was troubled. Yet he would not acknowledge that he knew, caring only to think in that way of Astrid, whose trust he might not break.

"Blind Hödr does things as he will, having no concern for men," said he. "Hearts may be hurt and seared, but he stays not his hands of destiny. 'Tis our best plan to face all fortune, good or ill, with an equal mind, for what we cannot help must be endured."

"That is true, Einar; but is it not also true that sometimes we have our fate in our own hands? For you, Einar, even now I can read much blood and sorrow in the future, if you persist in this feud and in returning to Astrid—who has doubtless grown tired of waiting. Yet you are not forced to go; the choice lies in your own hands. Stay here with us in peace, where love may wait for you without any struggle to win it—love that is, perhaps, deeper than you will find if you search the world over."

"I have given my word to go back," said Einar, strangely moved by the steady regard of her melting eyes. "How can I be a traitor?"

"That you can never be, Einar; you are too brave and noble," said Thora. "But I have great skill in these things, and if you will stay with us, it shall be made to seem to those you have left that you could do nothing else. Surely Borg's-hold is pleasant, and love that cannot keep silence not to be despised? And am I not fair, viking?"

"Yes," said Einar. "And you must be fey, too, to make the saying of what I must say so hard. I cannot forsake Astrid, not even for you. I must sail hence to-morrow, grieve you as it may. We cannot choose our fates, despite your philosophy, Thora. But I shall always remember you, and I trust that sometimes we may meet again and be friends. This I will say, that, had I never seen Astrid, it might have been as you wish."

"Is this Astrid so beautiful, then, and so dear to you?" asked Thora in a low voice, drawing away from him."

"So dear that, not for my life's sake, would I be untrue to her," said Einar.

For a moment Thora fixed her eyes upon him with a gaze that seemed to pierce to his soul, but under which he did not waver, then she rose and took one of the lamps from its socket and drew aside the curtains of the casement, and placed it on the ledge without, so that its light shone as a faint star over the sea.

"Why do you set that lamp there?" asked Einar.

"To guide any seafarers who may happen to have lost their way," said the maiden. "I forgot, or it should have been there sooner. It may lead some wanderers here to-night, calm though the sea is, and there is welcome for all. Now Unna shall bring us more wine, and then I will leave you."

The carline brought in the flagon, and Thora's white hands poured the red liquid into the drinking-cups. Einar thought the hands passing shapely, but did not see, in the uncertain glimmer of the remaining lamp that Thora shook a dark powder from a tiny phial into the cup that she gave to him. He drank, thinking that the wine had a very sweet taste, and whilst he leaned back lazily upon the couch, Thora's deft tongue ran on.

She seemed in no haste to be gone, though she said no more of her desire, and noted with satisfaction how silent Einar was, and how his eyelids slowly drooped. Ever and anon she went to the window and glanced out at the sea.

Einar felt drowsy, but could not rouse himself. The scent of the drugged wine rose to his brain; the talk of Thora was like the soothing murmur of mountain streams; the restless tiding of the sea on the shingles pleasant to hear. In the great hall the voices were growing fewer, and those few thicker and fainter. He was drifting into an unnatural sleep. Then Thora came back from the window, bringing the lamp in again. She had seen, far out on the ocean, a waving flash of fire, and knew that she was giving Einar to his fate. Yet so handsome he looked when the glow of the two lamps shone upon his noble face and the

Digitized by Google

curls of his golden hair, that she shook him gently, and bent and said:

"It is not yet too late, Einar Haraldson. Yet you may have me instead of Astrid. Say quickly which it shall be."

Einar heard her but faintly, saw her anxious face but dimly, as a man in a dream, and only half understood her words. But he caught his love's name, and murmuring it twice—"*Astrid, Astrid!*"—fell asleep.

Thora watched by him awhile, then started up as she heard the sound of oars on the water and the low, grating noise of a boat being carefully beached. Deftly unfastening

Einar, murmuring "Astrid, Astrid," fell asleep.

Longsword from Einar's belt, she bore it, sheath and all, to her own bower.

"At any rate, that shall be mine!" she said to herself.

She came back once more and kissed his unconscious lips, then went out again. As the curtain fell behind her, there came a hammering and crashing at the great door below, and then the shouts of men and the clash of steel. With flushed cheeks she ran to the inner door of the hall and looked within.

Hardrada Hardskull was there, swinging his axe, and with him Swerkur and Hrolf Red-hand, and behind them came crowding the men of the *Vulture*. The were-man, Alfdane, stood without, not liking a fight in the semi-darkness.

The work was sharp and short. More than half of Einar's men were too drunken to be roused—and Algar was amongst those—and those who woke and seized weapons hastily were too surprised and dazed to offer a long resistance. They struck out wildly, not knowing friend from foe, and were soon overpowered.

Borg's men, being dressed as for peace, were easily distinguished from them, and though some got hard knocks in the rough fray, none were killed. It was no part of Hardrada's plan to have a feud with Borg—who lay near Algar, oblivious to all—by doing more slaying than could be helped, so long as he had Einar safe. When the fight was over, and Thora and Unna and Sishild brought lamps, he turned to Thora and said, so that all might hear:

"It is a rough return for your hospitality, maiden, but 'tis not so bad as it might have been, and now we have mastered the sober ones, we will leave you the rest, saving Einar only, and this sot, Algar Erikson."

"The one is as bad as the other," cried Thora. "Einar sits in the guest chamber, drunk with our best wine, over which he fell asleep making love to me!"

"That will be good news for Astrid the Beautiful," said Alfdane, who was now at his master's side. "I long to be on my journey."

"You shall not wait, troll," said Hardskull. "When we have netted our bird and emptied these tables, we will be off, and dawn should find us far on the sea. If Borg wakes he may be troublesome, and there is no sport fighting an old grey dog whose teeth are blunt."

So they went in and bound Einar fast with strong cords, and then Algar; and having made a good meal and given Thora more gold secretly, Hardrada went back to the ships with his prisoners, well pleased with the night's work and in high spirits for the future. It was yet quite dark when the *Vulture* put out to sea again, followed by the *Eagle*, on which a working crew was placed, and the rise of the sun came when they were out of sight of land.

But in the hurry and excitement, Hardrada had forgotten to look or to ask for Einar's axe and sword, and his men had not bound Algar very securely. The two prisoners lay in the poop-cabin, the door of which was swinging to and fro with the rolling of the galley, and so elated were the crew over their success that none of them took the trouble to look within. The motion and the noise of the sea air, however, woke Algar, though Einar was past rousing for some time to come, and the feeling of the cords sobered him at once. He broke one of the bonds easily, and slipped out of the rest after some patient effort, then crept to the door and peered out.

He had not to listen long to what was being said to know on whose ship he was and how he came there, though it was too dark to see much, and after a vain attempt to wake Einar, he did not hesitate over his course of action. He must jump overboard and swim back to the island before the distance grew too far—he knew that it was no short swim already—and by some means get possession of old Borg's ship, and follow Hardskull to his lair.

Several of the Vikings heard the splash of his dive, and a moment later his escape was discovered, and some arrows and spears sent after him into the darkness. But the ship had a good way on, and they judged it too far from land for a man to reach it alive, so Hrolf said:

"Let the sot die in Rana's arms. It will save us the trouble of putting Odin's mark on a nithing who forsakes his friend!"

So the ships sped on, steering for Strongness. On the second day they parted, Alfdane, with the *Eagle* turning north. When he came to the fiord that runs up into the land past Raven's-nest, he put in there. The galley was looking very battle-worn and sea-tried, and as they came to the landing-place Alfdane sent most of his men below and went to the helm alone.

CHAPTER X.

THE FIRE ON THE FIORD.

Now when Kolbi the thrall ran to tell us of the solitary ship in the fiord I at once went down to the water side, for visitors had of late been few. Astrid came with me, and

Digitized by Google

little Arvak, who was growing a very sturdy youth, and several of the house-folk.

When we first saw the vessel she was creeping slowly out of the shadow of the lower cliffs into the full glow of the open, and when the sun's rays glittered on her figure-head we saw that she was the *Eagle*, Einar Haraldson's ship. Astrid gave a start, and a cry of glad surprise; but, as the ship came nearer said, with a catch of fear in her voice:

"It is strange, Sigmund, but her shields are few, and she comes slowly because there are also few rowers. And the man on the forecastle seems neither so tall nor so stalwart as was Einar when last we saw him. Odin grant that no harm has befallen him."

"You are a Norseman's daughter, Astrid," said I, also fearing evil. "You will know how to meet sorrow if it comes; but till the tale is told it is folly to let it grieve us. The man is not Einar, I am sure, but there is something familiar about him even at this distance. We must wait and see."

We were silent then until the galley came to hailing distance, and when the man called to us I knew him at once and marvelled why I had not recognised him before. It was Alfdane, Hardrada's man, and when Astrid heard his name her face turned as deathly pale as the dying glimmer of the northern lights across the snowfields.

My hand was on my dagger as Alfdane sprang to shore, for I feared treachery from the first. He laughed loudly at my care, and smiled insolently at Astrid, and cried:

"Your teeth are not so sharp, skald, that you need think to scare me by showing them, though, by Tyr, you make a good watch-dog. 'Twould have been good news for Einar your care of his fair one."

"Why 'would have been'?" asked Astrid. "What news have you of him?"

"News that will keep till we get to Raven's-nest Hall," said Alfdane. "It is a matter for Sweyn to hear as soon as any man."

Having no quarrel with him, and cursing my physical weakness as I went, I turned about with the others and we all went up to the house, Alfdane and his few men, after anchoring the *Eagle*, following us. The hall was well filled with folk, and when Earl Sweyn had bidden Alfdane greeting, with a scowl on his face that belied his words, all were eager to hear what was to be told.

But Alfdane drank much ale before he would speak, taking delight in our anxiety, and not until he saw that he had driven Sweyn the stern to the limit of his patience did he put down his cup and tell us the story agreed upon between Hardrada and himself.

"It will seem strange that I alone am returned, and in the *Eagle*," said he, "but 'tis none of my work. It is the doing of Hödr, and no man can stand against the arm of Fate. If no traders have been this way of late you will not have heard of Einar's doings before he fell in with my master. He has slain Edred the Bearsark in fair fight and taken his ship, and since then, having seen the work that we did at North-hold, has been in search of us. A few days ago we met him at one of the Fareys, and took him a prisoner, together with his man, Algar. Brun the Silent has been silent in death some months now."

At the news that Einar had fulfilled his vow a smile came to old Sweyn's face and a flash of light to Astrid's eyes, and from the men of the homestead a great shout of praise. But at the other tidings a spell of silence fell upon us.

"That is a were-man's word," said I at last scornfully. "No man like your master ever conquered Einar Longsword in fair fight. If he is a prisoner there has been foul work done—nithing's work."

"Not so fast, Sigmund the Skald, not so fast," said Alfdane mockingly. "It was not in open fight, truly, yet it was no more advantage than one man may take of another. We heard of him at the island and that he was seeking us, and, being a large crew, put in boldly to meet him. Though it was night when we got there we landed and broke in the door of the hold where he was guest. We were ready for a stern fight, but so many of his men were asleep with drink that we had little enough to do. Einar himself we took without a blow, for he lay fast asleep in the bower of Borg's daughter, Thora."

"Now we know you speak untruth!" cried Astrid, springing to her feet, her eyes flashing; "now we know what your tale is worth, Alfdane! Go tell that somewhere where Einar is not known!"

"Peace, child," said Sweyn. "Let him be done before you grow so furious. Men are but men after all where fair faces are concerned, and such things have been before to-day."

"'Tis well said, Earl," Alfdane replied. "And when a man is great as Einar and a maiden beautiful as Thora one must look for like doings. But I know nothing beyond what I saw and heard. It was Thora herself who led us to him, to save her father's life, and with my own eyes I saw him asleep, an empty wine-flagon at his side. We bound him and took him on board the *Vulture*, which sailed at once. With these few men I came hither in the *Eagle* to ask the hand of Astrid for Hardrada; or, if that be not granted, to offer other terms."

Astrid was now still, for the tale bore some mark of truth—it was, indeed, part true, and therefore the worst of lies—but old Sweyn's brow hardened.

"You can tell Hardrada Hardskull," said he, "that my word is my word, and having given Astrid to Einar on conditions which he has almost fulfilled, I cannot go back on the promise. Hardskull is no longer a friend of mine, and his doings at North-hold have broken all contracts between us. What else have you to say?"

"He bade me say, expecting your answer to the first, that as a second alternative he will go holmgang with Einar, and the victor shall have Astrid. But that all may be fair Astrid herself must see the fight and be ready to wed the winner as soon as it be over. And I should tell you that there is now with us Hrolf Red-Hand, son of Edred, who will challenge Einar should my master fall. So Einar will have two fights to endure at the best, and this Hrolf is a very strong man."

"Nor do I like this," said Sweyn.

"Then Astrid may bid farewell to Einar," said Alfdane, "for if neither of these offers be taken his life is at once forfeit to Hrolf. And prisoners are easily hastened to Valhall. Sacrifices can be made to Thor."

Now we were all speechless but old Sweyn. He was named "the Stern" for this: that nothing could so fix him in a resolve as thwarting or hindrance. Alfdane's words could not have been worse chosen.

"That is as it may befall, Were-Hound," he said, breaking the peace-bands from his sword and unsheathing it as he spoke. "Sometimes the hound bays a different tune when the deer are run down and desperate. Hardrada Hardskull need not think his head so thick that it is axe and sword-proof, nor that my arm is yet too weak to use either, nor that the killing-trick has gone from my memory. After such a message as you bring I declare him my enemy. There is were-gild between me and him because Astrid, my daughter, is now Einar's promised wife, and his father and mother were my friends.

"Go tell him that, Were-Hound, and say that Sweyn's ships are behind you, and Sweyn's sword will soon be in his throat. And tell him that even if he escapes me both he and Hrolf and all their men shall be outlawed and hunted down without mercy. And, last of all, tell him that you are lucky to get out of Raven's-nest at all, and would not but that you were made welcome before you told your tale. On this blade I vow, by Odin, that what I have said I will not unsay for any man. Now go."

For a moment Alfdane's face reddened, for the gaze of all was upon him; then he laughed a soft, cunning laugh that was never heard from an honest man, and said:

"You were ever a man of your word, and noted for

Digitized by Google

hospitality, Earl Sweyn. You cannot do much less than let me go, for I am only a bearer of news, a carrier of a message. It is with Hardrada you must deal. But my men are sea-weary, and so am I, and we would ask to stay the night over. The wind is rough, with threat of wild weather after sunset, and by morning it may be blown over. Whenever I go I can take your word, and Einar is safe whilst I am here."

This old Sweyn could not well refuse, nor could any of us find objection, so Alfdane sat down again and made pretence to be jovial; but I noticed that he drank very little more ale, his men following his example, though some of our folk were worse for what was in them.

With the night came a howling wind that shook the house and woke me several times out of a troubled sleep. The last time I opened my eyes was in the dense darkness that comes just before the show of dawn, and as I lay awake, staring into the blackness around me, a faint scent of burning wood was borne on the wind that whistled through the crevices.

I sat up at once, full of suspicion and thinking of Alfdane, but so loud roared the gale without that I could distinguish no sound in the house save the regular breathing of the men around me. And then, as I heard the wind change its dull roar to a shrill shriek as a fresh eddy caught the gable of of the house, the scent of burning went away altogether.

"It comes from outside, thanks to the All-Father," I said to myself, "but, nevertheless, I will go and seek for it."

I was ever a wakeful bird in the early hours. Groping my way cautiously to the back of the house so that none might be disturbed, I came to a window that I knew to be unsecured. Twice as I groped along the same faint smell of burning reached me, and when I put hand on the latch of the lattice I saw that the sky was red with a strange flickering glow.

At first I thought it was the northern lights, and wriggled through the opening without more ado, but when I stood outside and could see the sky well, I knew better. The glare was a reflection from a vivid fire towards the south, from over the cliffs by the fiord. It was no work of the gods that glare; it was cast by a fire of man's making on or near the silent fiord.

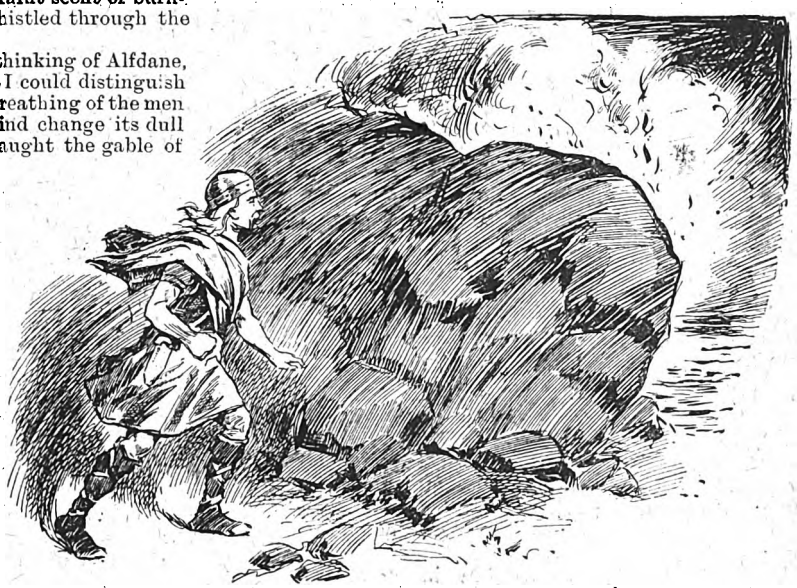
Turning to give one glance at the house, which stood dark, grim, and seemingly lifeless behind, I ran along the garth by the bridle-path that goes down to the landing-stage.

As yet there was no rain, but the gale was so fierce and gusty that owing to my weakness I could in some places scarcely keep my feet, and it was some time before I drew within sight of the landing-stage. Before then, however, there was no doubt that something was on fire. Showers of sparks shot up from behind the rock that hid the fiord, and were whirled hither and thither in starry streams, and now and then the tongue of a huge flame would leap into view, linger a moment, and die down as swiftly as it came. And when the wind blew directly towards me I smelt burning wood, and heard the ominous crackle and roar of its consuming.

Before I came to the end of the rock I feared the worst and was prepared for what I saw. I saw three ships adrift on the fiord, blazing furiously. They were all dry, and in the dry, clear air, fanned by the shrieking gale, the fire had got hold of them beyond all hope. Even if they could have been reached they were past saving, for all the boats were gone from the shore. And the thing that confirmed my worst fears was that there were three ships only. The *Eagle* was gone, and so, doubtless, were Alfdane and his crew, and this was his doing.

Now when I had been standing there awhile, stupefied by my helplessness and loneliness in the night, and watching the changing glare of the fires on the cliffs and on the still-flowing water, I bethought me of Astrid, and knew the reason of it all. Alfdane's peaceable offer and sudden submission after Sweyn's expressed contempt were only excuses to gain time. He had been sent to bring Astrid away, and failing fair means had used foul. It was a master-trick to sail off and leave our ships and boats burning.

Full of this thought and of furious anger, I went back, the wind behind me now, but before I reached the great hall I saw lights within it and moving figures in the home patch. The scent of fire had roused others. The whole household was up, and it was not long before I had told what I knew and feared, and some were running down to the water, and Sweyn and Alfifa were searching for Astrid.



Showers of sparks shot up from behind the rock.

But presently those who went out came back again, saying that it was useless to try to save the ships, which were almost burnt to the sea-line, and the old Earl came into the hall, reviling the gods with language terrible to hear. Astrid was gone; she had been seized in her sleep, for there was no sign of a struggle, and Alfdane and all his men were missing. The great outer door, closed but unfastened, told us an eloquent tale.

When the sun was well risen and all shone white and glittering with the mantle that the early frost had left, the wind-storm increased in violence. It swept down the valley so fiercely that it was a hard thing to walk erect against it, and its coldness was like the prick of a sharp spear on the skin.

I stood in the shelter of the lee gable with some of the carles when all talking was done and silent despair sat on all faces, looking up the valley to where the bridle path over Saddleback Ridge turns out of sight to the left hand, and suddenly I remembered that it was not a half-day's ride to Trollfell, where Othnar Wolf'sfang's house was. Then I bethought me that I, Sigmund the Skald, who had sung the praises of so many men, might yet do a deed worthy to be remembered after the Hell-shoes are bound upon my feet. And, full of this resolve, I went quietly into the hall.

(To be continued.)

Digitized by Google

SHORT STORIES ABOUT CATS.

We devote, every week, two pages of *Short Stories* to pithy, humourous anecdotes similar to those which appear in these columns. A prize of £1 1s. will be sent to the reader who submits the best storyette this week, and a copy of "A Broken Promise," by Violet Whyte, to each of those whose attempts are used. The anecdotes may be either original or selected; in the latter case the source *must* be stated. The prize of One Guinea offered for the best Storyette in this competition has been won this week by Mr. D. Ryan, Jun., of 16 Crow Street, Dublin. Attempts for this week's prize must deal with FUNNY STORIES ABOUT NEGROES, and must reach the Storyette Editor, *Short Stories* Office, Henrietta Street, Strand, London, W.C., by Monday, July 9th, Post-cards only, please.

Almost Human.

THE other day, having occasion to go down to the kitchen for something or other, I saw an undoubtedly very clever piece of roguery performed by our cat.

The kitchen door was open, and I could see what was going on as I came down the stairs. The cat was on the kitchen table making her way through a piece of meat intended for dinner, and her offspring—a young kitten—was reposing peaceably in a box-bed by the fire.

Hearing my footsteps on the stairs, the cat leapt from the table, ran to the box, took the kitten in her mouth, and having deposited it beside the half-gnawed joint, got into the kitten's bed, and coiling herself up, presented the appearance of the most innocent tabby on earth.

D. R.

Why They Wanted It.

Two neighbours had a long litigation about a cat, which they both claimed. The judge, wearied out with the case, at last said:

"What is the use of making so much fuss about a little cat?"

"Your honour will see the serious nature of the case," replied one of the lawyers, "when I inform you that the parties are both sausage makers."

The roar of laughter which followed proved that the entire court saw the point.

J. M.

Educating Barnum.

WHEN the late P. J. Barnum was in San Francisco, he advertised for a cherry-coloured cat.

An Irishman answered the advertisement, and offered to bring him a fine cherry-coloured pussy for three dollars. Barnum was so delighted that he sent the man the money at once, in order to hold him to his bargain.

But his delight changed to unmitigated disgust when Pat came and jerked a wall-eyed, sickly-looking black cat out of the bag, and told him that its name was Billy, and that it was very fond of fish.

"What do you mean by bringing me this thing?" yelled Barnum. "Didn't you say you had a cherry-coloured cat?"

"I did that, Mr. Barnum," said the Irishman, "and didn't Oi bring yer wan? Didn't ye iver ate black cherries?"

The great showman smiled a sickly smile as he muttered:

"Done, by thunder!"

C. R. F.

Mr. Bowser's Cat.

MRS. BOWSER: "I say, my dear, that cat is a nuisance, we must get rid of it. It killed the canary this morning. I asked Mrs. Suburb if she would like to have it this morning, and she said she wouldn't have it if every hair on its whiskers hung with diamonds."

Mr. Bowser: "That's just like you women. The way to get rid of that cat is to advertise it in the papers, and put a price on it, say £10. Nobody will have it for nothing." (And Mr. Bowser was right for once. The cat brought £3 10s. But it came back to him again. He says he knows now how to make money.)

J. M.

A Contretemps.

AN amusing incident was recently witnessed in Scotland during a performance of *The Middleman*.

Playgoers will recollect how Cyrus works at midnight, firing up the furnace till it is at a tremendous heat, and how the flames glow. At last, when he thinks the pottery is sufficiently fired, he allows the furnace to cool down. Then, in his eagerness to see the result of his work, he begins to pull down the bricks before the oven is really cool.

The delight of the audience may be imagined when from the blazing interior suddenly jumped one of the theatre tabbies.

W. J. B.

Didn't Know, But——

A CERTAIN gentleman's garden was by no means improved by the nocturnal visits of the neighbours' cats, and the sufferer had been heard to declare that it would go hard with the first feline trespasser he laid hands on.

One morning a neighbour, who owned a lost pussy, called on the owner of the garden.

"Have you seen my cat, Mr. X.?" she asked.

"Scores of times, madam," was the reply.

"Yes, yes; but you've killed him, haven't you?"

"My dear madam," replied X. cautiously, "your cat was a constant and unwelcome visitor, along with scores of others. If he came with the crowd he took his chance. Perhaps I slew your pussy, perhaps not. That is for you to prove."

With this the lady was by no means satisfied, and on the following morning she waited for Mr. X.'s six-year-old son. Giving the youngster sixpence, she asked:

"I say, Tommy, did your papa kill my cat?"

"Don't know," grinned Tommy, pocketing the coin; "but there's a loop on the end of our clothes-line and a grave in the garden."

F. W.

Digitized by Google

Experimenting on Pussy.

"GEORGE," said the careful mother, "don't eat those ornaments on the top of the cake; they are poisonous."

The ornaments remained on the mantelpiece for two days, when one disappeared.

"George, I am afraid you have eaten one of those ornaments?"

"No, mother, I haven't," was the reply, "but I have given one to the cat, and if he is alive to morrow, I shall eat the other one myself!"

A. H.

A Recipe for Good Jumping.

"HERE, Johnson," roared Bowser from the neighbouring garden, "here's your blessed cat raiding my fowl-house again."

"Is she?" said Johnson, "then why don't you kill her, man? Go for her and wring her neck. It's my wife's cat and I'd like to be rid of the brute."

Thus encouraged, Bowser made a dart at the feline, which promptly jumped on the old fellow's head and over the wall.

"Good gracious! Can't the cat jump!" said Johnson. "Why, man, you've lost her after all."

"Jump, I should think so," retorted Bowser ruefully, "she ought to jump considering the spring chickens the beggar's had."

H. E. L.

Mews and Pews.

A CARPENTER, who was repairing a country church, tore down a heavy wire screen that enclosed the belfry, and, when it was removed, three cats were seen to jump from rafter to rafter, and ascend to the peak of the spire.

The carpenter was not able to capture them, but, from his description, they were very peculiar creatures—their fur long and shaggy, and their teeth very prominent, and they were as agile as squirrels.

It is believed that they had been living on the sparrows they caught, but it is not known where they obtained water to drink.

C. H. M.

'Afraid of Cats.

SOME people have an unaccountable antipathy for certain objects. They are apparently unable to control the feeling. No power of reason aids them to overcome that which in another person seems mere foolishness and nervousness.

The object held in abhorrence may be a cat, a dog, a mouse, or a snake, the mere sight, even suggestion of which, affects the person very strongly. Serious consequences have sometimes resulted from a desire to overcome or play upon this weakness, by those who thought it but an affectation. But this is wrong, and a cruelty. Witness the following instance:

Brigadier-General Robertdau was once dining with a party of friends at a hotel. Someone had heard of his antipathy to cats, and thinking it would be amusing to play a trick on him, planned to bring a cat into the dining-room while they were at dinner.

At a given signal, one of the waiters quietly brought in a cat, unseen by the general, and the first that he knew was that the cat was climbing in his lap.

General Robertdau turned pale, dropped his knife and fork, faintly exclaimed, "A cat!" and fell back in his chair in a spasm.

All present were greatly alarmed, and immediate measures were taken to revive the fainting man. The dinner was forgotten. Finally he came out of the fit, and shuddered as he looked round for the object of disturbance.

The gentleman who had thus played on the general's weakness was profuse in apologies, declaring that he would have lost his right arm rather than do such an act, had he known his friend would have been so affected.

The general said it was a weakness over which he had no control; that he had tried vainly to overcome his repugnance to cats, and he would rather any time face the cannon's mouth or point of the bayonet than have a cat near him.

M. H.

Had all the Qualifications.

HERE is a rebuke administered to a hard bargainer who sent the following advertisement to a paper:

"A lady in delicate health wishes to meet with a useful companion. She must be domesticated, musical, an early riser, amiable, of good appearance, and have some experience in nursing; a total abstainer preferred. Comfortable home; no salary."

A few days afterwards the advertiser received by express a basket labelled:

"This side up with care; perishable."

On opening it she found a tabby cat with a letter tied to its tail. It ran thus:

"Madam, in response to your advertisement, I am happy to furnish you with a very useful companion, which you will find exactly to your requirements. She is domesticated, a good vocalist, an early riser, has an amiable disposition, and is considered handsome. She has had great experience as a nurse, having brought up a large family; total abstainer. As salary is no object she will serve you faithfully in return for a comfortable home."

H. C. G. S.

Pussy as a Railway Pet.

THOUSANDS of people have heard of railway dogs, which travel so extensively, and really seem to know as much about trains and time-tables as a guard does. But there is a cat in Colorado which is certainly as remarkable in its fondness for railway riding.

It was a pet of the wife of the engineer of a goods locomotive, and now it accompanies the engineer on every trip that he makes. When the train has to make a long wait, the cat goes off in search of mice, always returning when the whistle sounds, and at some of the stations it is quite a pet.

When the engine is running, the cat sits in the cab or on the coal, and, as its fur is jet black, its beauty is not greatly impaired by its grimy surroundings.

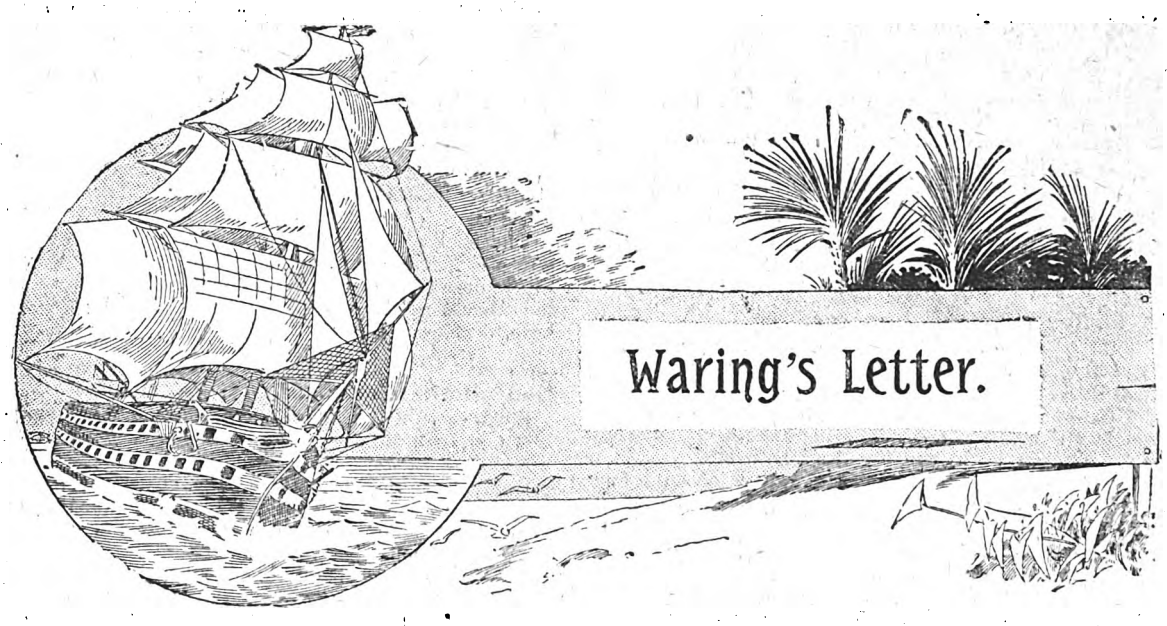
Pussy must have travelled many thousands of miles, for it has been doing duty for several years, and has never been known to miss a trip,

That cats care little for persons and are attached to places and to their environment was seen in the case of this cat last year.

The engineer was badly hurt in a collision, and was laid up for three months. Instead of the cat following him, as a dog would doubtless have done, she stayed about the sheds until the engine was repaired, and then she once more resumed her rides with the substitute engineer.

E. G.

Digitized by Google



Waring's Letter.

WARING wrote no letters, but simply sat and smoked watching the other men with a half-cynical, half-regretful feeling of loneliness. For no one in far-away England would hang on the postman's knock for his letter—he was alone in the world, one of those logs on the social sea, that drift past without breaking the slumber of any man's regret.

To-night he allowed himself the rare luxury of self-compassion. At ordinary times he abhorred the failing but to-night, as he watched his brother officers scribbling home to their dear ones—to sweethearts, wives and mothers—Waring vaguely regretted the lack, in his case, of either sweetheart, wife, or mother.

The latter had died many years ago when Waring was a little lad resplendent in a velvet suit and curls. Wife he had never known, and sweetheart—he had once.

And for a moment, as Waring conjured up a vision of the old, happy days, with all their garnered store of "might-have-beens" the hard stern lines of his mouth softened, and the regular puffs of tobacco smoke degenerated into fitful clouds.

Pulling himself up with an effort he instinctively glanced at the bowed head of Captain Bob Brazil, who was hastily scribbling off letter after letter.

For Bob Brazil was one of the corner-stones in Waring's hidden away-romance.

Presently the former looked up, and the serious aspect of his face was merged in a smile as he met Waring's enigmatic glance.

"Lazying, as usual, old chap," he cried. "What a blessing it is, after all, to have no friends!"

Waring shrivelled up a little at the thoughtless remark, but his voice was the perfection of *insouciance* as he drawled:

"Yes; after all, we social Robinson Crusoes have our advantages. There are no letters to write, no farewells—beastly fag they must be—no tears to account for, and we go out to battle confident in the assurance that our 'going under' will wrinkle the brow of nobody. Yes, as you say, it has its blessings—and curses," he added under his breath.

Brazil detected the pathos behind Waring's cynical words.

"To-morrow may be a bad day for some of us, old chap," he said rather huskily, "and I know you must feel beastly lonely, having no relations to whom you can scribble a last few words. Why don't you send a line to Rose? You two are such old friends and I am sure she would be glad to know you remembered old friends at what may be, perhaps, the finish.

Forgotten. Good Heavens! thought Waring, with a faint shiver, did he ever forget her? Was she ever absent from his thoughts during those last five bitter years?

For Brazil's wife was the other corner-stone, the builder and wrecker of the old-time story, whose ruins Waring kept locked away carefully behind the walls of a lazy cynicism.

He was a modern man distinctly, so his tragedy partook of the quiet order of tragedies, and Brazil never dreamt that to his wife's influence was due the bitter scepticism of his old school chum and brother officer.

"They had been old friends," thought Waring with a shadowy smile, "but Brazil never suspected the possibility of their having ever been anything more than friends."

It all happened so long ago, quite five years ago, and the pages of life-stories get grievously thumbed and worn and out-of-date after five years of this self-contained nineteenth century of ours.

But although Waring's story was a well-thumbed one, the memory of its halcyon days was keen and vigorous as he blew a cloud of smoke through mocking lips and turned to Brazil.

"It's awfully kind and thoughtful, old chap," he said, "but Mrs. Brazil will have in you too great a claim on her interest to waste any of it on a superfluity like me. I appreciate your motive, but if I've got to go under, I prefer to do it without making a fuss."

"I thought you might like to write," said Brazil, "you seemed so solitary, and so altogether out of it, as it were, that I——"

"Thank you, Bob," Waring broke in gratefully, "I

Digitized by Google

understand, old man, but," with an enigmatical smile, "if you don't mind, I think I'll die—silently."

"As you please, of course, Waring," replied Brazil, "but I'm sure Rose would be glad of a line from you. However, as I haven't closed my own letter yet, I'll send your remembrances. May I?"

"Yes," said Waring, with a little smile, "Oh, yes, you may send my—my remembrances."

"Remembrances! Remembrances," he muttered, as Brazil resumed his writing, "what an obtuse world we live in. Poor old Bob has never grasped the possibility of even 'old friends' falling in love. I wonder what he would think if he knew that five years ago his wife and I—bah! what a silly ass I am, and she—she doubtless has quite forgotten the episode of an 'old friend.'"

But although Waring smiled contemptuously at what he dubbed his folly, the "episode" still continued to occupy a central position in his thoughts.

It was only one more of these silent stories, written often-times with ink from the hearts of men and women, but never published and never read.

Six years before Rose Campbell and Waring had been more than friends—they were lovers. Waring had little more than his pay in those days, and Rose's people being rather prone to goods and material, the engagement had been a secret one

But fate unfortunately subverts occasionally the plans of the wisest mortals, and unlooked-for complications ensued when Bob Brazil, Waring's brother officer, an old school chum, fell in love with Waring's sweetheart.

Brazil belonging distinctly to the enviable category of "eligibles," his overtures received the parental sanction, and were forwarded with all the diplomacy of the parental mind.

Unfortunately for the happiness of Rose and Waring the latter, although superficially of an emotional nature, was in reality of a hyper-sensitive and excitable temperament, and this, in conjunction with the hopelessness of his financial position, produced an era of misery partly real and partly self-inflicted.

With the unfortunate perversity of such natures he began to read into Brazil's movements encouragement on the part of Rose.

The latter being excessively proud, this was the beginning of the end, which culminated one day in a rupture, all the more irretrievable because of its self-contained quietness.

In social life, however, their relations were as amicable as old friendship should be, but some time later Rose Campbell changed her latter name to Brazil.

As became an Englishman born and bred in the traditions of nineteenth century self-control, Waring took his *congé* with commendable *sang froid*. The old hidden-away shattered love story was respectably swept away into a dark corner amongst the other fragments of *de trop* sentiments, and apparently forgotten.

Only, quite suddenly, he developed an abnormal growth of cynicism and disbelief in things generally, with a special clause relating to women. He never for a moment doubted the reality of the Brazils' domestic felicity. Neither did he dream that the one woman in the world whom he would ever love, had made the great mistake of a lifetime.

And Brazil, luckily for his mental peace, never knew that his marriage had been a big failure to at least one of the contracting parties.

And so the years drifted past, quietly and peacefully, years in England generally do, and the smiling surface of life's stream was never ruffled by the tempest of aching hearts below.

A period came at last, however, when the years in England were quiet no longer. Hostilities had begun in South Africa and soon afterwards Brazil and Waring went to war.

The latter cool and cynical, Brazil depressed at leaving his wife, but hopeful of soon seeing her again, whilst at home, in mourning London, a woman hung over a few letters and a photograph and cried her heart out quietly for the mistake of five years before.

And to-night on the eve of a great battle Waring also thought of that time five years ago, and in the rising clouds of tobacco-smoke pieced together the broken fragments of memories long repressed.

All the softness he had tried so hard to stifle crept back into his heart, and as the old sweet ideal of the woman he had loved came back again, Waring's eyes grew strangely misty.

"Strong tobacco," he muttered, with a touch of his old sneering cynicism, "must try a lighter brand if I live over to-morrow."

Aye, if he did live over to-morrow? For a strange premonition of disaster had been overshadowing him all day, and although not a superstitious man, Waring instinctively felt that the vivid recall of those old romantic days was an omen of approaching disaster.

"To-morrow, perhaps," he thought, "would witness for him the solving of Life's great problem of apparent inequality—he would perhaps learn the why and the wherefore of what his whole soul had rebelled against for five years, the Master's great plan of human suffering. He would know the reason why, to men like Brazil yonder, happiness came perpetually and was accepted as a matter of course—why the sun always shone on their side of the road, whilst poor devils like he, Waring, walked for ever in the shade.

Even as he thought, there crept round his soul a strange tranquility, and all the pent-up harshness towards the woman who had shattered his happiness faded away like a bad dream, and only forgiveness remained.

He felt himself to be stepping up close to the boundary line of eternity to-night, and a wild desire presently seized him to let her know the strange emotion that possessed him—to tell her that even five years' cynicism had failed to eradicate the purest emotion he had ever known.

Yes, Brazil had asked him to write, and he would write. After all, what would it matter to her, and it would bring much rest to him to-night. What could it matter? After to-morrow he would never offend a living soul again—of that he felt perfectly certain.

And even as Waring thought of to-morrow's probabilities, the conviction that he would never fight again grew into a fixed and absolute certainty.

So what mattered it whether he wrote a letter or not—to her—nothing; whilst to him, it meant—a feeling of peace, nay even of vague happiness at the laying-down of life's burden.

With a "good-night" he presently rose and walked rapidly to his own little tent.

There he hunted up an old and battered writing case, and began to write his letter.

No suitable style of address suggested itself immediately, and for some time Waring stared out through the opening in the tent, into the grey and misty night beyond.

Mechanically he noted how one small star struggled

Digitized by Google

painfully to penetrate the murky atmosphere, then began to write simply and without prefix of any kind:

"If the writing of this letter offends you, try and think of me a little more leniently when you fully grasp the circumstances under which it is written. Believing, as I do, that I am now scribbling my last letter on earth, I am writing as straight from my heart as the medium of words will allow.

"A great battle is impending, one which, some strange feeling tells me to-night I will never come through. My implicit belief in this ominous emotion has aroused in me an uncontrollable desire to write you a few words of farewell.

"Standing on the brink of eternity, man sometimes sees things clearer and in a fairer light than he is ordinarily accustomed to, and to-night all my rebelliousness at what fate meted out to me five years ago has vanished. After all, you had your happiness—mine was a cheap price to pay for that.

"You used to care for me once—when you think of that, try to forgive me for saying now, at my last hour, I still love you.

"It won't hurt you, and the saying of it makes the way a bit smoother for me.

"In saying 'I love you' I have said all, and it makes dying more easy for me. To the love of five years ago I say 'Good-bye. God keep her safely.'

"John Waring."

* * * * *

No man on board the great Cape liner *Good Hope*, as she reached her moorings in Southampton Water, cared less about his home-coming than Major John Waring, D.S.O.

Six months had come and gone since he wrote that letter, the writing of which, he felt convinced, would be his last literary effort on earth.

But although death had swept away many of his fellow officers, Bob Brazil amongst them, "the man with the scythe" had left him unscathed.

"Threatened men," they say, "live long," and the strange foreboding that prompted Waring to write the fateful letter to the woman who had wrecked his happiness, years before, had resulted in nothing worse than a bad wound.

The great battle, however, had left many widows in far-away England, amongst them being Rose Brazil.

And Waring's letter?

It was the one thing that disturbed the apathetic carelessness of his home-coming. Many times since that fateful night on which it had been written, Waring had cursed himself for being such a superstitious ass. Following immediately on her husband's death, its receipt must, he thought, intensify her old antipathy towards him.

How could he undo that wretched scrawl? What apologies could he make? None. No power of his could undo the past. What was written was written without hope of recovery or alteration, and Waring dreaded accordingly his first meeting with Rose Brazil.

Even as Waring's uncomfortable speculations ran on, the great ship had drawn up alongside the quay and friends were rushing into the arms of friends. Waring had seen the same scene enacted many times before, and had looked on indifferently, but now as he watched the eager, loving faces, a strange feeling of loneliness and social isolation swept through him.

"No one would meet him," he thought with a queer little pang of regret. "No one——"

Suddenly, as he stepped ashore, a woman dressed in deep black came towards him quickly.

It was Rose Brazil.

"You!" he muttered amazedly.

"Yes," she said gently, "I saw your name amongst the list of passengers, and as I knew you would have no one to welcome you home—I——"

"Thank you," said Waring, with a swift look of gratitude, "it was awfully good of you—but—but—have you received my letter?" he added suddenly, remembering himself.

"Yes," she said, flushing softly, "I got your letter."

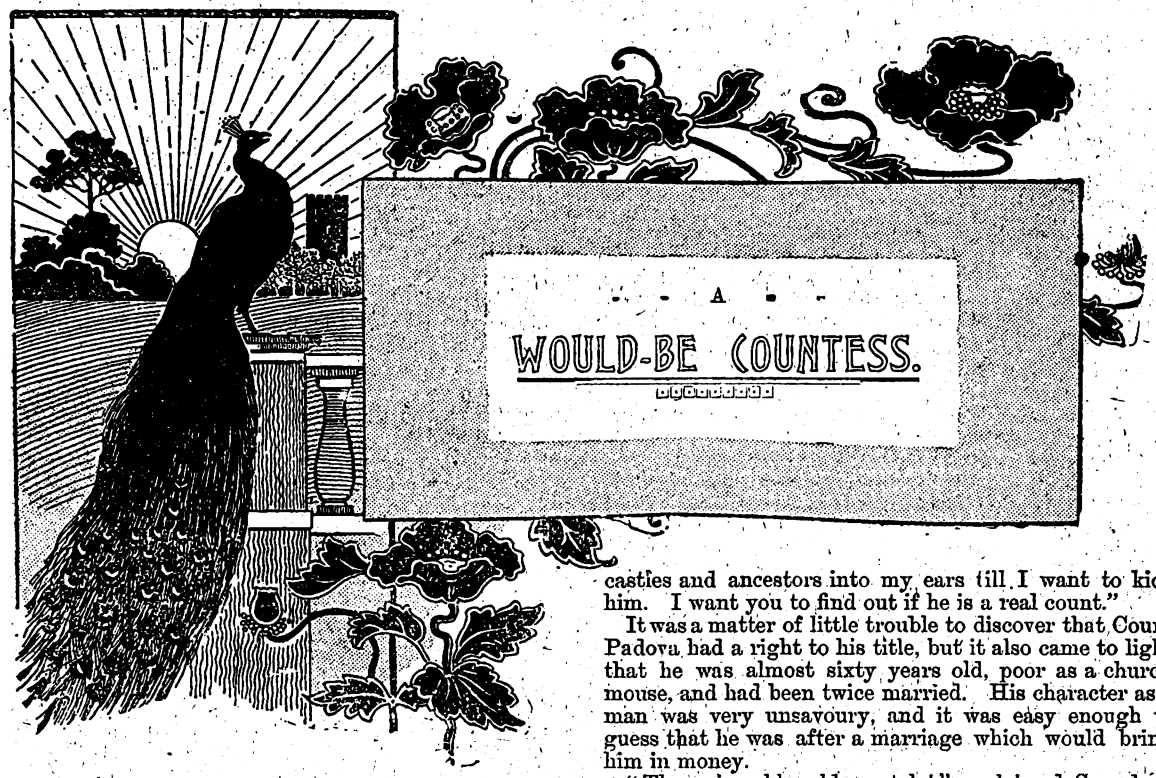
"And you forgive?" he whispered anxiously. She did not reply immediately and they had walked some distance from the crowd before she spoke.

Then she turned towards him and her eyes were filled with tears.

"If people knew," she said, "they would say my conduct in coming here to meet you, so soon after his death, was everything that was bad and unwomanly, and I suppose it is wrong and sinful. But I couldn't help it—Heaven knows I couldn't. I have never loved any one but you. Oh, John," she whispered, and her lips quivered pathetically, "there was a big mistake made five years ago. For Heaven's sake don't let us make any more."

Nolan of Castleknock.

Digitized by Google



A WOULD-BE COUNTESS.

When I reached Leghorn I found myself in the company of two people I had heard of several times before in Italy. They were James Saunders, widower, and his daughter, Eileen, of New York.

He was a man of sixty and rather an invalid, and she was a girl of twenty who had an overwhelming desire to become an Italian countess. Mr. Saunders was a frank, blunt-spoken man. I hadn't known him an hour before I knew all his troubles.

He had amassed wealth, and he loved his daughter but he had no use for a son-in-law not born in America.

"I don't know what on earth possesses the girl," he said, when referring to Eileen, who had been plain Ellen before the steamer left New York. "She's just gone mad on the title business. At home she'd have been satisfied with a colonel, a judge, or an honourable, but now she declares that nothing less than being a countess will do.

"It seems as if all the counts in Italy had heard of her desires and the size of my banking account, and they have hung on our heels by the dozen. It's no use for me to talk to the girl. She gets highty-tighty the minute we start to argue, and if I don't give in to her she sulks for a week. Do you know anything about Italian counts?"

"Very little," I replied.

"As near as I can find out they are a mighty poor lot, take 'em as you find 'em, and I haven't seen one I'd hire for a coachman. There's one fellow in particular I'd break in two if I was twenty years younger and could run him down. He's followed us for a month, and the girl seems to be altogether gone on him. I say, now, but I want you to do something for me. He calls himself Count Padova, and he's drummed his title and castles and ancestors into my ears till I want to kick him. I want you to find out if he is a real count."

It was a matter of little trouble to discover that Count Padova had a right to his title, but it also came to light that he was almost sixty years old, poor as a church mouse, and had been twice married. His character as a man was very unsavoury, and it was easy enough to guess that he was after a marriage which would bring him in money.

"The miserable old wretch!" exclaimed Saunders, when I made my report. "I thought that he was an old sinner, and that he was trying his best to knock twenty years off his age. Why, hang the man, I'm sure he's got a wax nose, false teeth and a wooden leg, and that without his wig we'd find his head as bare as a billiard ball! I want you to help me save Ellen."

"But she can't marry without your consent and assistance," I replied.

"But she'll keep at me till I give my consent and assistance," he protested. "Think of it, will you—the daughter of James Saunders, a straight-haired Yankee Doodle Dandee, picking up with a lop-shouldered, knock-kneed, played-out old Italian grandfather just for the sake of being called Countess Padova! Why, I want to hit myself and break the dishes when I think of it! I want you to have a talk with the girl and tell her what a fool she is making of herself."

I naturally refused to take any part in the matter, though willing to offer such outside advice as might help the father. Indeed, one look at Eileen satisfied me that at my first word she'd retaliate with a mighty snub.

It was four or five days before I got sight of Count Padova. He had probably been obliged to fish round to get his railway fare from Florence. I found him all that Saunders had described him, and a little more. He had been washed and wrung out and bleached until one could think only of an old towel on a clothes line.

We didn't hit it off at all. He saw in me a rival, and straightening up as far as possible and assuming what he probably thought was a ferocious dignity, he advanced upon me and said:

"Sir, I am the Count Padova!"

"Well, what of it?" I queried.

"And the affianced husband of Miss Saunders."

Digitized by Google

"I'm sorry for her."

I thought that a challenge would follow, but it didn't. He tottered round and tried to look bloodthirsty and, finally shook his finger at me and cried out in piping tones:

"Beware, sir—beware! No man shall come between me and my love and live!"

I think he went upstairs and told his lady love that he had scared me off the track and then discovered that I was no rival, for he soon returned, and begged my pardon and offered me his hand. I was reading a newspaper and didn't see or hear him.

Saunders was laid up in his room that day, but he came down after dinner and groaned out as he met me:

"My last hope is gone! Ellen tells me she has accepted the count, and the beggar is going to have the fact published to-morrow."

"But suppose you refuse your sanction and order the old beggar to get?"

"Oh, you don't know Ellen. I threatened to do that and she declared she'd elope with him."

"And what if you told the count he should never touch a shilling of your money?"

"He'd smile and smirk and take it for a bluff. By Jove, though, but I'd pay a bravo a thousand pounds in gold to break his old neck. You know about these bravos. Go out and find one for me, and tell him to come round with a sand bag."

The man was really in wretched spirits over the affair. It would not have taken some fathers two minutes to end it, but he was ill and morbid, and his strength of character was gone for the time.

We sat talking for an hour and then went up-stairs and joined the couple on the balcony. The daughter received us very coolly, but the count had been drinking and was good natured and voluble. I had insulted him, but I was a friend of the charming Miss Saunders and her respected father, and he would overlook it.

We were a little family party, and we were by ourselves on a little balcony, and he would take advantage of the occasion to say that in seeking the hand of the fair girl before him he was incited by love alone.

He was forty-five years old and lonely. He wanted to love and be loved. Money to him was as to the cobblestones in the street. He had estates in Sardinia, in Lombardy and in Umbria. He had castles in Tuscany, Naples and Sicily. He had gold mines in the Alps, silver mines in the Carnics and lead mines in the Apennines. And as to his social standing, who could desire more than to be the confidant of the ruler of the land?

The old count knew how to lay it on thick, and it was entertaining to hear him talk, but at the same time one could not help but pity the father and feel provoked at the daughter.

The aged lover was still exploiting when he suddenly pitched forwards out of his chair. The girl screamed out and ran away to her room, and I was for bringing a doctor as quickly as possible when Saunders protested:

"Hold on a bit. The old vagabond has only fainted away. Let's see what he's made of."

We went to work, and the results were strange enough. I brought soap and water from my room and the first thing we took off was a false brow. We got enough enamel off his face to reveal a score of wrinkles, and it was discovered that every tooth in his head was false.

Under his wig was a shiny pate and his backbone was stiffened with a corset. I believe it was the tightness of the corset that had caused him to faint. There was something still to come. His right leg was supported at the knee by a brace, and a nose which had been broken was neatly patched up with wax.

When we had taken the old fellow all to pieces he was a queer sight to look at, and it was hard to tell whether the heap on the chair or the heap on the floor was Count Padova. He had partly revived before we got through and he cackled away like an old hen.

"And this," groaned Saunders, as he pointed to the heap on the chair, "this was to be my son-in-law! This was what my daughter was to marry to be called a countess! I want her here."

He was back with her in a moment. I lifted the count to a sitting position, and he was chattering of love and castles as the girl got sight of him.

"What have you done!" shrieked the daughter, as she turned from the grisly spectacle to us.

"We've simply taken him apart," replied the father, "and the best part of him is on the chair there."

When the would-be countess had fled we sent for help to get Count Padova to his room.

He had to be handled with care. Any sudden movement might have pulled a limb or his head off. There was considerable hilarity among the servants, and it was left to them to glue the pieces together again and make a man. When morning came he had disappeared, and he had not even left a farewell note behind. A day later Saunders said to me:

"Good heavens, man, but I feel like dancing a hornpipe! There is to be no countess in our family. Ellen has written to a young lawyer in Chicago and said yes to his proposal and we are making ready to start for home. Come out and have three drinks and a hurrah with me!"

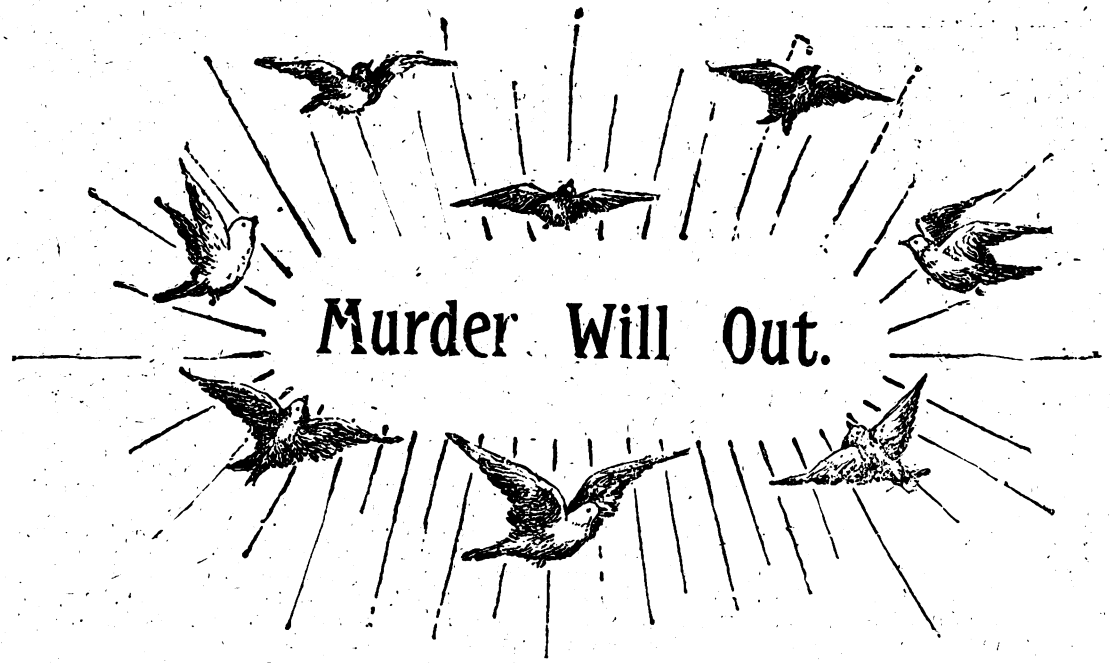
JOHN WINTHRUP GREEN.

DO YOU DIVE?

Learn the fine art of diving by reading a splendid article on this subject in the July number of PEARSON'S MAGAZINE, illustrated with the most marvellous series of photographs that have ever been taken.

The July PEARSON'S, now on sale, price sixpence, contains no fewer than twenty splendid stories, articles, and poems—enough of the best light literature to last you a month.

Digitized by Google



Murder Will Out.

I was never a girl hard to please, but I could not help feeling angry with my hostess for picking him out to take me in to dinner.

His whole cadaverous appearance was most uninteresting—his eyes were of a watery nondescript hue—and the impression given one was that of a washed-out semi-animate individual whose only redeeming features were a more than average height and the appearance of muscle in his gaunt anatomy.

This seems very paltry, but somehow we girls are very apt to judge men by first appearances, and so I felt distinctly angry and disposed to be most oyster-like to my partner. He came up in a limp, sidling manner, and offered me his arm without a word. We followed the rest.

My discomfiture was a little alleviated when I found my other neighbour was Richard Deeron whom I had met once or twice and whom I rather liked, perhaps from the fact that he had flattered my vanity by appearing interested in my company, and his deeds of prowess—told by himself, by the way—in his travels and career (he was in the army) had the usual effect on the mind of a girl just out of her teens.

His companion was a querulous old lady who was already making herself agreeable to any and everybody; so I saw an opportunity of engaging Captain Deeron's attention to the neglect of my own partner.

The latter's name was Eversey; I fancied that somebody had told me he also had travelled considerably in a journalistic capacity and had vanished for some considerable time recently from the public ken.

Deeron, seizing the opportunity, turned to me:

"This is a pleasure, Miss Hurtlas," he said in his usual manner which savoured much of the *suaviter*. "I was in hopes Mrs. Masham would let me take you down. My old lady, however, is quite happy. By the way, who is your companion?"

He elevated his eyebrows as he said this and looked at Eversey, who happened to be facing him. I fancied Deeron's gaze suddenly dropped as he met the other man's eyes, though Eversey showed no signs of recognition, and might have been been posing as a Dutch doll by the lack of interest which he showed.

"I think his name's Eversey," I said quietly, "but don't you know him?"

"I—oh no! though I seem to know his face. But then you see I meet so many fellows that we can scarcely remember one half the occasions or the men."

I felt scarcely satisfied with his answer, but the conversation which was generally too low for the others to hear was soon instrumental in driving away any wonder I felt.

The dinner was a success. My hostess was generally happy in her company.

The old dowager on Deeron's right talked at the top of her voice to Colonel Masham—a brother of the host—across the table, and conversation everywhere was general.

Deeron devoted himself to me. My partner on the other side, beyond a few remarks essential to the occasion, said little, though I noticed that every now and then he turned his passionless face towards us, and at times even showed a little interest as Deeron's narrations grew in loudness.

"I never told you, Miss Hurtlas, of an experience I had in the last frontier business. We had been dodging the beggars all day—grim work it was too—and we, that is, twenty of us, were sent on in advance to find the whereabouts of a poor chap of a war correspondent, who was captured three days before, and whom we had heard from a prisoner was still alive. The enemy had not been seen for some time; we had reason to believe they had retired to their camp in the other direction. We made our way—it was about six o'clock in the evening—and after an hour's gentle picking of our path along the side of the Larri pass towards Nawpur, we came suddenly upon an old battlement lower down the side of the hill. From information we knew that our object of search was probably here.

"We did not anticipate many opponents, and the

Digitized by Google

advantage gained by a surprise seemed likely to balance any inequality of numbers."

By this time most of the company at our end of the table were listening to Deeron, who was quite in his element as an object of interest.

Eversey even was showing animated attention.

Deeron went on:

"Stealing down the side of the hill we came upon an old heavy wooden gate which curiously was ajar. We decided to attack. There was no sign of life. Immediately opposite the door was a building about twenty yards long bordered partly by a moat which, surrounding the whole of the building except where we were, approached within five yards of the door. There was another door in the wall opposite, and this also stood open. There seemed a small roadway therefore to cross between the two doors.

"We began to enter. Before more than half a dozen had entered, the heavy door swung to, shutting out the rest, the wooden roadway which was merely a sort of bridge gave way, and we were precipitated into the green slimy waters of the moat.

"After floundering about for a moment or two, in doubt as to what was to happen next, we found we could do nothing but swim or wade up to our armpits. Nobody could be seen. We could hear our men outside firing at intervals to attract the wretches out, but it was bound to be some time before they could manage to scale the outer wall."

Dinner was now practically over, but the ladies clamoured that the tale should be finished, and even Eversey, when the other men did so, added his request.

"Well," continued Deeron, "we slowly waded on in the dirty water till of a sudden from one of the little openings at the top of the building was thrown the body of a white man.

"We had no time to speculate on the meaning of this, before the moat was alive with what made our blood go cold—alligators in front of us disturbed by the sudden splash. We gave ourselves up as lost. Our rifles were useless, but our revolvers were all right, and these we began to use on the monsters.

"There were a couple of ledges of about the thickness of an ordinary brick—one about a foot below the surface of the water and the other about four feet higher up the outer wall. These we raised ourselves upon, and firing as we went we began to creep back to the entrance.

"The rest of the story has little to tell. We had lost two of our fellows, and doubtless the creatures had made a meal of the body thrown in as well. This doubtless was of the man we went to rescue.

"By the time we reached the gate, our men had succeeded in opening it, but we could do no more than get outside and make our way back to the column."

"You, of course, reported the death of the journalist," said Eversey, and as we turned to him I noticed a gleam of interest I never had expected in his face. He seemed another man. We felt something strange was to come.

Deeron, taken aback by what we thought was the irrelevant remark, said, "Of course I did. Why——"

The old colonel here intervened.

"Yes, I heard of the business; but I had a hazy idea that the newspaper man turned up after some time."

Deeron's face turned a ghastly white.

Before he could stammer out anything, Eversey leant over and said slowly:

"You made a slight mistake in your official report, Captain Deeron. You reported his death. You should have reported his attempted murder.

"May I give a slightly altered version? When you got on the ledge, the alligators began to snap at you. You, sir, were far too terrorised to use your revolver. You, however, saved your life by pushing the man behind you in to take the brute's attention. That man was the newspaper man. But he was not killed. By the greatest of wonders he escaped with the loss of two fingers, and was recaptured just as you went and escaped three months ago."

Deeron, white to the lips, could only put on a sort of sneer of desperation and demand Eversey's right to question his narrative.

"Because, Captain Deeron, I was the correspondent and your would-be victim. Don't be alarmed, sir, my only wish is to revenge myself solely by contradicting your statement. My own feeling for you is not so much hatred as contempt."

Deeron, amid a grim silence, slowly slunk out of the house, to be heard of no more by us, save through the *Gazette* which told us he had sent in his papers.

* * * * *

Those first impressions of mine I view with mixed feelings, for if I had not devoted myself to Deeron that evening, the tale might not have come out, and the revulsion of feeling might not have been strong enough to cause another *dénouement*.

I am now the wife of a newspaper man, and his name is Eversey.

S. B.

Digitized by Google

VIE D'OR FOR THE HAIR.

THE AMERICAN TREATMENT.

Vie d'Or puts 10 years on the life of the hair.

SOLE AGENT:

GUSTAV ROSSELLI, 4 New Park Street, Park Lane, LEEDS.

Price **2/9** post free.

DRUNKENNESS

CURED. This can be done with or without patient's knowledge. Send me a stamp and I will tell you how. (Send no money.) Address, in confidence, Mrs. C. H. (Room 8), 195 Oxford Street, London, W.

A SUM of from 12s. to 25s. per week can be earned in spare hours or evenings by either sex everywhere.—Send addressed envelope for particulars to Box 24, Eclipse Works, 89 Aldersgate Street, E.C.

WHY BE FAT?

When a lady, who has discovered a simple means of Self-Cure will be happy to send particulars of same to any sufferer from this distressing complaint. Free on receipt of stamped addressed envelope. ADDRESS:

Mrs. TREVOR WELLS,

C3 *HIGH HOLBORN, LONDON, W.C.*

VARICOCELE.

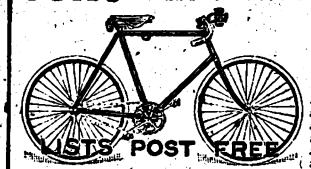
Every man suffering from Varicocele and the allied troubles, should send for treatise, describing their Causes, Symptoms, Results, and Successful and Painless Treatment without surgical operation or the use of cumbersome trusses and electrical appliances. Will be sent sealed, post free, three stamps.

S. S. MURRAY,

7 Southampton Row, London, W.C.

JUNO CYCLES FOR LADIES AND GENTS

FREE OR FIXED WHEELS.



LISTS POST FREE

THE VERY BEST.

Carriage Paid. Discount for Cash.

Monthly

£8 10s. ... 14/2
£10 10s. ... 17/6
£12 ... ... 20/-
£12 12s. ... 21/-
£14 14s. ... 24/6
£15 15s. ... 20/3

Road Racer ... £10 0s. 10s. 8d. Monthly. Write for New Light Roadster, £10 10s. 17s. 6d. Monthly. Season's List of JUNO Cycles and Accessories, over 100 pages, sent post free. Scorcher Brake, 1/-; Standard Cyclometer, 10,000 miles, 1/10

METROPOLITAN MACHINISTS CO. Ltd.

Juno Cycle School & Works, 75, 76, Bishopsgate Street, Without, E.C., and Piccadilly Circus, London, W.

TEMPTING DISHES FOR FLAGGING APPETITES.

See Special Supplement

GIVEN AWAY with every copy of this week's **HOME NOTES.** The best and daintiest of Ladies' Weeklies.

ONE PENNY.

TOO STOUT.

I was for years; by chance I came across a simple home remedy that reduced me from 17st. to 10st. 12lbs., and I will willingly send particulars **free** to any sufferer enclosing stamp. Mrs. L. E. FELL, 195 Oxford Street, London, W.

NOSE

MACHINES. LEES RAY. S. S. Dept., South Castle St. Liverpool, is a specialist on Ugly and Red Noses. Send stamp for particulars of his patent scientific Nose Improvers. Red Nose Cure, medically approved, 3/9. Outstanding Ear Machines 11/6.

HAIR DESTROYED.

Send me an envelope (stamped and addressed) and I will tell you how to remove all superfluous hair **free of charge.** (Send no money.) Address, in confidence, Miss E. V. (Room 3), 195 Oxford Street, London, W.

STRENGTH, VITALITY, MANHOOD.

A valuable treatise on Nervous Exhaustion, Lost Vigour, Exhausted Vitality; their cause, and means of cure by concentrated Herbal Remedies. It is written so that any person of ordinary intelligence can understand it, and so clearly defines the nature of each disease that it is impossible to make the fatal mistake which is so often made of treating the symptoms instead of the cause. This brief work is the only one that contains any sensible advice to the inexperienced, and to all young and middle-aged men will not only prove instructive, but a valuable safeguard. Sent sealed on receipt of 4 penny stamps to any address, by CHARLES GORDON, 288 Great Horton Road, Bradford, Yorks.—Advt.: Copyright.—Mention this paper.

Neuralgia Positively Cured!

Free Test Offered.

The annexed cut presents in the prominent white lines the nerves most liable to attacks of Neuralgia. Sufferers will know only too well the pain tracks, and will be glad to know of a Simple and Sure Remedy. The proprietors will send Free two sample Zox Powders to any reader of *Short Stories* sending stamped envelope to ZOX CO., 11 HATTON GARDEN, LONDON E.C.

"WORTH A GUINEA A BOX."

BEECHAM'S PILLS

FOR ALL

BILIOUS & NERVOUS DISORDERS,

Sick Headache, Constipation, Wind and Pains in Stomach, Impaired Digestion, Disordered Liver, and Female Ailments.

SALE OVER SIX MILLION BOXES YEARLY.

In Boxes, 1s. 1½d. and 2s. 9d. each, with full directions.

Prepared only by the Proprietor,

THOMAS BEECHAM, St. Helens, Lancashire.

Sold by all Druggists and Patent Medicine Dealers everywhere.

WATSON'S MATCHLESS CLEANSER

Has proved itself one of the Best Soaps ever used. Still Holds the Lead. Quality Perfect. Buy It, Prove It, and Secure a Prize.

BIG PRIZE SCHEME

For SEPTEMBER, 1900.

15,409 Handsome PRIZES, value £6,641 10s.

LIST OF PRIZES:

1	Cash Prize of £50	£50 0
2	Cash Prizes, £40 each ...	80 0
5	Pianos, £40 each	200 0
3	Cash Prizes, £30 each ...	90 0
3	Cash Prizes, £25 each ...	75 0
5	American Organs, £20 each	100 0
20	Ladies' Bicycles (free wheel), £17 17s. each	357 0
20	Gents' Bicycles (free wheel) £17 17s. each	357 0
5	Cash Prizes, £10 each ...	50 0
10	Cash Prizes, £7 10s. each ...	75 0
10	Cash Prizes, £5 each	50 0
20	Cash Prizes of 50s. each ...	50 0
50	Gents' Rolled Gold Waltham Lovers, 50s. each	125 0
300	Ladies' Sterling Silver Watches, 30s. each	450 0
200	Cash Prizes of £1 each ...	200 0
250	Electro-plated Teapots, 15s. each	187 10
500	Gents' Umbrellas, 15s. each	375 0
500	Ladies' Umbrellas, 15s. each	375 0
100	Pairs of Witney Blankets, 15s. pair	75 0
500	Cash Prizes, 10s. each ...	£250 0
500	Handsome Meat Carvers, with Steel in Case, 10s. per set	250 0
500	Gents' Gun-metal Watches, 10s. each	250 0
500	Ladies' Umbrellas, 7/6 each	187 10
1,000	Ladies' Dress Lengths (Navy Blue Serge, 6 yds., double width) 7/6 each	375 0
400	White Linen Table Cloths, 70in. square, 6s. each. ...	120 0
500	Cash Prizes of 5s. each ...	125 0
500	Brushes and Combs in handsome cases, 4/6 each	112 10
2,000	Cash Prizes, 4s. each ...	400 0
2,000	Ladies' Leather Handbags, 4s. each	400 0
1,000	Handsome Pictures "Charge of the Light Brigade," 4/- each	200 0
2,000	Handsome Work-boxes, 3s. each	300 0
2,000	Doz. Fine Linen Cambric Handkerchiefs, 2/6 each ...	250 0
15,409		**£6,641 10**

CONDITIONS OF COMPETITION.

Every tablet of **Watson's Matchless Cleanser** is enclosed in a Wrapper, with signature up the centre of same. Save the WHOLE Wrapper (tops of Wrappers will be disqualified), and send, postage or carriage paid, to **Joseph Watson & Sons Limited, Whitehall Soap Works, Leeds,** not later than SEPTEMBER 30TH, 1900. Each package will be counted as one lot; separate entries must be sent under separate covers. If any parcel arrives, postage or carriage not being fully paid, such parcel will be refused. Be careful to see that the full postage is paid. Each parcel sent in must contain the full name and address of sender, and number of Wrappers sent in must be marked on the same paper. On outside of parcel write legibly **"Prize Competition."** The prizes will be awarded in the above order to the senders of the highest numbers of Wrappers. A list, giving result of the Competition, will be enclosed with each prize when it is sent out. Every wrapper must have first contained soap. No employee of Joseph Watson & Sons Limited will be eligible. All prizes will be despatched about October 25th.

WATSON'S MATCHLESS CLEANSER

Is pleasant to use, its washing qualities are well-known. Dirt flies before it, and the washing is done quickly and easily. **It has the largest sale of 1-lb. tablets in the world.** Sold by all Grocers, Oilmen, &c., throughout the United Kingdom.

Digitized by Google

THE BRAIN GYMNASIUM.

In these competitions a prize of £2 will be awarded each week to the competitor whose attempt we receive giving the correct solutions of all the puzzles. If more than one is absolutely correct the prize of £2 will be given to the first correct attempt dealt with.

If no lists of absolutely correct solutions are sent in the first prize will be awarded to the competitor whose attempt is first dealt with showing the fewest mistakes.

Each week we shall award in addition to the above, either ten of our silver plated pencil-cases or ten popular six shilling novels, to be distributed amongst the competitors whose attempts are absolutely correct and have failed to win the first prize, or, if no complete lists of correct solutions are received, to those whose attempts show the fewest mistakes.

Write all your solutions on one sheet of paper, putting the number against each. Post the batch in an envelope marked "Brain Gymnasium," to reach the Editor, Short Stories, 18 Henrietta Street, Covent Garden, W.C., by first post on Monday, July 16th, 1900.

No. 163.

How can 100 be expressed by a repetition of the same figure six times over?

No. 164.

AAA D EEEE CCCCCC II K LL NN OOOO RRR S WW.

Re-arrange the above letters to form a double word-square. The connecting word is a British city.

No. 165.

I am a piece of furniture; behead me and I am a part of the body. Change my head, and I am more than one. Behead me, and I am invisible. Change my head, and I am a kind of tree. Change my tail and I am part of a fish.

No. 166.

One-eighth of terrible, plus two-fifths of brutal, plus two-fifths of piece, plus one-fifth of enter, plus one-fourth of timorous, plus one-eighth of American, plus one-sixth of belong. The sum will give the name of a mineral product.

No. 167.

My 3, 28, 15, 26, is Paradise.
My 18, 19, 8, 1, 23, 6, is to hurry.
My 2, 5, 16, 9, 10, 21, is one who lives in solitude.
My 25, 26, 27, 13, 12, is value.
My 24, 22, 14, 4, is a large vessel.
My 11, 16, 7, 17, is sand.

No. 168.

"No!" I said, as FIRST I planted,
Firmly on the grassy plot;
"I will not go to the SECOND,
As this weather is too hot."
As my THIRD I scratched, I murmured,
"Soon again my WHOLE I'll see,
When the swallows have gone southward."
Then I wandered in for tea.

RESULT OF BRAIN GYMNASIUM.

Nos. 136 to 141.

The prize of £2 has been awarded this week to Mr. Walter Jordan, Scariff, Limerick, Ireland, whose solution was the first correct one dealt with.

A copy of "The Pursuit of Camilla," by Clemintina Black, has been sent to:

Miss Edith Auber, Thornleigh, Sunningdale, Berks.
Edgar Lee, 8 Praed Street, Paddington, W.
B. H. Bennitt, Clent House, Harborne, Staffs.
W. B. Heberden, Stanford Rectory, Loughborough.
J. Williams, 22 St. John Street, Essex Road, N.
George Simpson, Elmhurst, Langley Road, Merton Park, Surrey.
T. P. Cowling, "Gomm" Schools, Plough Road, Rotherhithe, S.E.
T. Tatlow, 136 Main Street, Bulwell, Nottingham.
G. Richardson, Prospect Villa, Waltham Cross.
Franc Macauley, 165 Moncur Street, Glasgow, E.

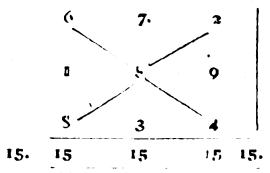
SOLUTIONS TO PUZZLES.

Nos. 142 to 147.

No. 142. **Write down the Roman figures, draw a line through the middle. The upper half will be VII.**

No. 143. **Procrastination is the thief of time.**

No. 144.



No. 145. **The squirrel each day takes out one ear of corn and his own two ears.**

No. 146. **PENMANSHIP.**

No. 147.

	R uth
	O range
	S ardine
ROSALIND.	**A berdeen**
	L ivingstone
	I ndia
	N arcissus
	D iamond

A BOOK FOR WOMEN.

THE ART OF BEAUTY.

By a Toilet Specialist.

Small Crown 8vo. Cloth. Price, 1s.

Some of the twenty chapters are:

The Cure of Stoutness	Chap. I.
The Cure of Leanness	,, II.
The Figure	,, IV.
Bad Complexions: How to Cure Them	,, V.
The Complexion	,, VI.
The Hair in Health	,, VII.
The Hair in Ill-Health	,, VIII.
Moles, Warts, and Superfluous Hair	,, XIII.

C. Arthur Pearson Limited, Henrietta Street, W.C.

SHORT STORIES ADVERTISEMENT RATES.

Single column, per inch, per insertion	£0 10 0
Double ,, ,, ...	1 0 0
Full page inside, facing page of matter, either white paper or 2nd or 3rd page of cover, or back page, per insertion	10 0 0
Half-page ,, ,, ...	5 0 0
Quarter-page ,, ,, ...	2 10 0
Eighth-page ,, ,, ...	1 5 0
Front page, whole ,, ,, ...	12 10 0
,, half	6 5 0

All spaces above one-eighth of a page are charged at per page rate. Series discount: 5 per cent. for 13, 10 per cent. for 26, 15 per cent. for 52 insertions.

Black blocks are charged 25 per cent. extra. All advertisements are subject to approval. All copy must be sent in by Noon on Tuesday, July **10th**, if intended for the issue on sale July **24th**, and dated July **28th**. The Proprietors reserve the right to hold over or suspend the insertion of any advertisement without prejudice to other insertions on order. All communications should be addressed to the Advertisement Manager, "Pearson's Weekly" Offices, Henrietta Street, London, W.C.

Printed and Published by C. Arthur Pearson Ltd., at Pearson's Weekly Buildings, Henrietta Street, London, W.C

Digitized by Google

GEO. R. SIMS'

HAIR RENEWER "TATCHO."

SAMPLE TRIAL BOTTLES TO-DAY,

EIGHTEENPENCE.

Sent Post Free in plain package, Twenty-one Stamps.

Geo. R. Sims, the discoverer of "TATCHO."

And why, pray, is the successful poet, playwright and journalist an eminent authority on a hair grower? Eager for an explanation, a *Daily Mail* representative sought out Mr. Sims at Opposite-the-Ducks Villa, and asked him point blank if it were true he had forsaken the leafy paths of light literature for the concrete road of commerce.

Now, Mr. G. R. Sims, as many people know, is one of the busiest men in the kingdom, but hastily affixing his signature to a letter, he looked up and extended a characteristically cordial welcome. Then he said: "Of course there is no truth in that; but as you have asked the question, I will explain how it is that my name has been adopted as the registered title of the company. In '86 I found that I was rapidly going bald. Not seriously, you understand, but the thinning out was sufficiently marked to set me thinking out a remedy. I went to two specialists, both of whom cheerfully assured me that I should be absolutely bald in two years.

"Then I discovered the preparation which has now been placed upon the market. That is to say, I was told something, and by careful trials and experiments I found that I had hit upon a remedy capable of working wonders. Look at my hair now. Look at the colour; isn't that convincing evidence of the value of my preparation?"

Mrs. Brown Potter writes: "I use only 'Tatcho.'"

If your hair is falling or failing, you have your remedy. Don't hesitate. Use "Tatcho." The result will surprise you and will be intensely gratifying. "Tatcho" will stop the hair falling and prevent it going grey. Remember the name, the "George R. Sims" Hair Restorer "TATCHO."

It is sold in bottles by Chemists and hairdressers all over the world, 2s. 9d. and 5s., or may be had direct in plain sealed package, post free. 2s. 11d. and 5s. 3d.—Address: The Geo. R. Sims Co., 81 Great Queen Street, London, W.C.

KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR

KAPUTINE

SAFE REMEDY CURES

HEADACHE and NEURALGIA

IMMEDIATELY,

And is sold by all leading Chemists in Packets of 18 Doses, 1s.

To ANYONE HAVING THE LEAST DIFFICULTY, it will be sent post free for 12 Stamps by "KAPUTINE Ltd.," Huddersfield; or, on receipt of a stamped addressed envelope, A. M. Kaputine, Huddersfield, you will receive a free sample.

The fact that "KAPUTINE" is recommended by many leading Medical Men, and is used in National Hospitals and Infirmaries proves that it is THE, THE recognised SAFE REMEDY FOR HEADACHES.

Refuse Substitutes and demand "KAPUTINE," the Safe Remedy. There is no substitute "LIKE IT"; nothing "AS GOOD"; nothing "SIMILAR."

KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR

Digitized by Google

"NO BETTER FOOD."—*Dr. ANDREW WILSON, F.R.S.E., &c.*

Fry's PURE CONCENTRATED Cocoa.

300 Gold Medals, &c.

A half teaspoonful is sufficient to make a cup of most delicious Cocoa.

Advertisements should be sent to "Short Stories" Advertisement Department, Henrietta Street, London, W.C.

Digitized by Google

£50 FOR TELLING WHY THE WHALE WAILED, AND ANSWERING OTHER QUERIES.
See PEARSON'S WEEKLY.

SHORT STORIES

A WEEKLY MAGAZINE FOR HOME AND TRAIN

No. 602. FOR WEEK ENDING JULY 14TH, 1900. [ONE PENNY.

'SANITAS'

DISINFECTING FLUIDS, OIL, SOAPS POWDERS, EMBROCATION, and APPLIANCES &c., &c.

"How to Disinfect" Book, Free.

The 'SANITAS' Co. Lim.,
BETHNAL GREEN, LONDON, E.
Manufacturers of all kinds of Disinfectant.

FRONT VIEW.

EVER READY ELECTRIC PIN.

The "Ever Ready" Electric Pin is—as its name implies—Ever Ready, and gives a pure, bright light sufficiently strong to illuminate a room of average size, and render legible the finest print. There are no wires to become entangled, no battery to be carried in the pocket. The battery is so light that it can be readily adjusted to any tie. The entire construction is simplicity itself.

Price, 12/6.
Extra Battery, 1/6.

PRESS THE BUTTON. IT LIGHTS!

A Bedroom Blessing.
Size No. 1, price 18/-, gives over 5,000 flashes; re-fill Cartridge costs 1/6.

Post paid on receipt of Price.

INSTANT ELECTRIC LIGHT when and where you want it. No wires, no acids, no liquids. NO DANGER! Invaluable round the house! Useful for Miners, Plumbers (seeking gas leaks), Oilmen, and others (in cellars where matches are dangerous), Watchmen, Policemen, and Soldiers. Can be lighted in a Keg of Gunpowder without any danger.

Obtainable of all Dealers or Mutoscope Shops. Send for Illustrated Catalogue to the Sole Agents for the United Kingdom.

Dept. V.—**BRITISH MUTOSCOPE & BIOGRAPH CO. LTD.,**
18 & 19 GREAT WINDMILL STREET, LONDON, W.

Advertisements should be sent to "Short Stories" Advertisement Department, Henrietta Street, London, W.C.

Digitized by Google

To Economical Mothers!
FOR HOME DYEING
MAYPOLE SOAP
NO MESS
NO TROUBLE
DYES
CURTAINS, FROCKS, SILKS, SATINS
COTTONS & in fact EVERYTHING
COLOURS 4½ BLACK 6½

THE MOST NUTRITIOUS.
EPPS'S
GRATEFUL—COMFORTING.
COCOA
BREAKFAST—SUPPER.

ESTABLISHED 1851.
BIRKBECK BANK
Southampton Buildings, Chancery Lane, London.
2% on CURRENT ACCOUNTS, on the minimum monthly balances when not drawn below £100.
The BIRKBECK ALMANACK, with full particulars, post free. FRANCIS RAVENSCROFT, *Manager*.

HAIR DESTROYED.
Send me an envelope (stamped and addressed) and I will tell you how to remove all superfluous hair **free of charge.** (Send no money.) Address, in confidence, Miss E. V. (Room 3), 195 Oxford Street, London, W.

STRENGTH, VITALITY, MANHOOD.
A valuable treatise on Nervous Exhaustion, Lost Vigour, Exhausted Vitality; their cause, and means of cure by concentrated Herbal Remedies. It is written so that any person of ordinary intelligence can understand it, and so clearly defines the nature of each disease that it is impossible to make the fatal mistake which is so often made of treating the symptoms instead of the cause. This brief work is the only one that contains any sensible advice to the inexperienced, and to all young and middle-aged men will not only prove instructive, but a valuable safeguard. Sent sealed on receipt of 4 penny stamps to any address, by CHARLES GORDON, 288 Great Horton Road, Bradford, Yorks.—Advt. Copyright.—Mention this paper.

VARICOCELE.
Every man suffering from Varicocele and the allied troubles, should send for treatise, describing their Causes, Symptoms, Results, and Successful and Painless Treatment without surgical operation or the use of cumbersome trusses and electrical appliances. Will be sent sealed, post free, three stamps.
S. S. MURRAY,
7, Southampton Row, London, W.C.

A SUM of from 12s. to 25s. per week can be earned in spare hours or evenings by either sex everywhere.—Send addressed envelope for particulars to Box 24, Eclipse Works, 89 Aldersgate Street, E.C.

SULPHOLINE LOTION,
For clearing the skin from Spots, Blemishes, Redness, Roughness, giving a Beautiful Complexion and pleasing appearance.
SHILLING BOTTLES.

JOHN NOBLE
Costumes by Parcel Post
Also supplied in White Pique for 10/6
Sent without delay direct from the Largest Firm of Costume Makers in the World, and guaranteed to be exceptionally high value in cut, material, and finish, and very far superior in make to ordinary shop-bought costumes. Satisfaction given to all customers, and orders promptly executed or money refunded.
PATTERNS SENT POST FREE
(Together with the New Summer Fashion Catalogue)
of the very durable Fabrics in which these Costumes are made—**The John Noble Cheviot Serge** and **The John Noble Costume Coating.**
A Full Dress Length of either Cloth (6 yards 52 inches wide) for **7/8**; carr. 8d.
Sizes in Stock of Ladies' Costumes are: 34, 36, and 38 in. round bust (under arms); Waists 24, 26, and 28 in.; Skirts being 38, 40, and 42 in. long in front. Any other size made to measure, **1/6** extra.
Colours: Black, Navy, Brown, Myrtle, Fawn, Grey, Royal Blue, and Khaki.
MODEL 200
Tailor designed Eton Coat, smartly finished and stitched. Full Skirt in new design. Price complete, **10/6**, carriage 6d. The Skirt alone for 5/6; carriage, 5d. Also supplied in the fashionable strong Khaki Drill for 13/6, carriage 6d.
GOOD STRAW HAT, as sketch, 2/11½; carriage, 6d.
SUMMER DRESS FABRICS.
A large Box of Patterns lent to select from and sent carriage paid.
Please name *Short Stories* when writing.
JOHN NOBLE Ltd.,
BROOK STREET MILLS, MANCHESTER.

DRUNKENNESS
CURED. This can be done with or without patient's knowledge. Send me a stamp and I will tell you how. (Send no money.) Address, in confidence, Mrs. C. H. (Room 8), 195 Oxford Street, London, W.

WHY BE FAT?
When a lady, who has discovered a simple means of Self-Cure will be happy to send particulars of same to any sufferer from this distressing complaint. Free on receipt of stamped addressed envelope. ADDRESS:
Mrs. TREVOR WELLS,
63 *HIGH HOLBORN, LONDON, W.C.*

TO THE QUEEN
PURVEYORS
CROSSE & BLACKWELL'S
GREEN PEA, GRAVY, JULIENNE, MULLIGATAWNY, TOMATO, HOUSEHOLD, CRESSY, &c.
SOUP TABLETS
OF ALL GROCERS ETC. THROUGHOUT THE WORLD

Digitized by Google

THE LITTLE PINK LETTER

GWEN was sitting darning a table-cloth. Augusta, austere and spectacled, was reading the paper; Lettice was on the floor staring into the fire—doing nothing.

It was the usual sight in the little house at Earl's Court to find the three sisters thus occupied. Gwen always was mending or patching or cleaning—if not for herself, for her sisters, for Augusta wrote for the magazines, was an adept at short stories of any required style and length, and never had time to mend her clothes, and Lettice would look you straight in the face with her candid blue eyes and say she did not intend to mend hers. She was lazy and she did not care.

"Here, Letty. Here's a chance for you. Get a pen and ink, and answer this," said the eldest girl.

"Answer what?"

"This advertisement in last night's *Echo*. It will do well for you. It is to teach."

"I can't teach," coolly and not moving.

"Then you've got to," with asperity.

Lettice raised her eyebrows to the fire and said nothing.

"Let us hear this advertisement, Gus, then we will decide whether Letty will do for it or not," remarked the small voice of Gwen.

"You needn't put in your ear," cried Lettice, beginning to feel the odds were against her, and dropping into slang, a trick she had if the question of her working was mooted.

"One, two, three, four—go on Gus," replied Gwen, counting stitches.

Augusta settled her *pince-nez* and read:

"'Wanted, lessons on the banjo. Beginner. Lady professor preferred. Apply, J. B., 199, South Square, W.C.'"

"Don't see much in that—besides, I can't teach."

"Don't see much in it? Why it is grand. Here is some fussy, dried-up old lawyer wants to learn the banjo as a rest from his legal work. Capital! I could write a tale about it."

"That's right, yarn away," said Lettice aggressively.

"But why not answer it?" put in Gwen, the general peace-maker. "There would be no harm, and I don't think it is an old man. I think it is a lady."

"Why?"

"Because she asks for a lady teacher."

"Which proves it is a man," from Augusta triumphantly.

"Pooh! Proves nothing. I won't answer it; I decline to teach old men. No woman would learn from me, so what should I do?"

Augusta sighed.

Her sister sorely tried her nerves at times, for she had arrived at the age when a girl has nerves.

Lettice hadn't.

"It might be a young man. Some young men like the banjo."

This from Gwen.

"No, young men haven't got the cheek to advertise for lady teachers. I'd like to see the young man who had the nerve to."

"Lawyers have nerve for anything. He is bound to be a legal man because of his address."

"Well, give me a piece of paper. You are determined to put my nose on the grindstone I can see, so I suppose I shall get no peace till I write. What shall I say? Dear sir?"

"No, you don't know it is a sir. I should say: 'Miss Lettice Blake presents her compliments to "J. B.," and would be pleased to give him lessons on the banjo. Her terms are two guineas for ten lessons, and she is a pupil of Mr. A. D. Cammeyer.'"

"Well, all right, I'll do it. Can I use your pen?" and seating herself at the table, Lettice scrawled in her big, untidy handwriting the note that Augusta had dictated.

"Nothing will come of it," she said as she stuck the stamp on.

"You never know," put in Gwen, who was nineteen years old and had, therefore, great experience in this world.

"Now you can get the tea while I correct this proof," said Augusta, satisfied that Letty had done her best. After all, no one could do more.

About three days after this a large square envelope was delivered by the postman addressed to Lettice. It ran:

DEAR MADAM.—Your offer of lessons received. I will call between four and five to-day and make arrangements as to the time that will suit you best. I would also like your advice as to the choice of instrument.

I remain,
Yours faithfully,
JOHN BERKELEY.

"There!" cried Augusta, throwing her glasses violently upon the table. "Didn't I tell you so!"

All rights reserved.]

Digitized by Google

"My bet's off, I thought it was a lady."

"No, I'm right, It is an old man, Let me see the letter; no, it isn't an old man, it is a man of about forty-five or fifty.

"A nice, solid, respectable person."

"Ugh!" cried Lettice. "Fancy giving lessons to a person."

"Well, I'm glad he is middle-aged. I shan't have to sit in the room with you all the time," remarked Augusta.

Lettice's fair face flushed.

"Do you wish to insinuate that should it turn out to be a young man that you will sit like a glowering dragon all the time? Go on old gig lamps!"

"Really, Lettice, your language is getting beyond all bounds. No music mistress ever spoke as you do," expostulated Augusta.

"I suppose if the pupil talks too much you will ask him to hold his clapper!" said Gwen with a laugh.

"No, I shall say 'stow your lip.' That's quicker and sounds more to the point," replied Letty, who delighted in teasing poor Augusta.

"I can see you are trying to tease me as much as you can so I will leave the question, as I know you only get worse at such times. I am going up to town, girls, but shall be back before Mr. Berkeley calls. I have to go up and see the editor." and shortly afterwards Augusta went out.

Lettice tidied herself, put her unruly hair in order, tied a clean ribbon round the cat's neck, and then lit the lamp. Gwen said nothing. She did not believe in unnecessary conversation.

As the clock drew towards four, signs of uneasiness became manifest in Letty. She poked the fire and got the tea things out, making an extraordinary noise with the cups. Then she tuned and retuned her banjo, and rolled and smoothed out the blue ribbons with which it was ornamented.

At last she could bear it no longer.

"Gwen, I feel horribly nervous. Whatever shall I say to this fool."

"Just say 'How d'you do,' and then arrange the time. It's quite easy."

"Well I hate it, I wish to goodness I had never—oh, Gwen, there he is!" as the little latch of the gate snapped to behind someone.

Gwen leant forward and peered through the pattern of the lace curtain, out into the gathering dusk.

She drew back her head, a trifle pale.

"Letty! It's a young man!"

"That ends it. If anyone thinks I am going to teach young men—there's the bell!" And Lettice, feeling none of her customary self-possession, went slowly to the door.

A deep voice inquired if she were in. She said she was, and the stranger stepped inside.

He was tall, very tall, but that was all she noticed.

Silently she ushered him into the little room from whence Gwen had fled precipitately into the kitchen beyond.

"Won't you sit down," she said as she closed the door.

"Well I came to see a Miss—er—Blake about some banjo lessons."

"I am Miss Blake."

The man started and looked rather disconcerted.

"Oh, I—er—beg your pardon, of course, but I fancied somehow, that you were older," he said apologetically.

"I shall be some day. I'm not now," replied Lettice, unable to resist the repartee.

The man looked at her and caught sight of a vanishing dimple in her cheek.

"Yes, yes, of course," he said vaguely.

"You see you did not state the age you required in your advertisement, so I did not think much about it," said Lettice, regaining her self-possession as she saw the young man losing his. "And really," she added, "I think I can teach you as well as an old woman," here she drew herself up to make as much of her height as possible. "My other pupils get on very well."

It might be added, the other pupils were fictitious.

"Oh, I don't doubt it for a moment. And do you think I could learn to play the banjo?" he hastened to say.

"Why not?" with an amused glance at him.

"Well, I'm so awfully stupid about music, you know."

"You are!" she said with an unmoved face.

He looked quickly at her, rather at a loss to know if she were laughing at him.

"Yes, I am awfully fond of it and all that, but I can't read a note."

Lettice gave a low whistle of comprehension.

"I see, that will be longer then," she said.

"Could I learn, do you think, or am I too old?"

The girl laughed merrily.

"Too old! Why you're not thirty, I should think. People can learn when they are sixty years if they like."

"Thanks, awfully. You have lifted quite a weight off my mind. I am so stupid at music, you know."

"Are you? You don't look it," critically regarding his handsome features.

He turned away his head.

He did not like the candid gaze and was afraid he would turn colour and she would see it.

"And when can I come?" he said, looking at his hat.

"To-morrow at five. Will that do?"

"That will suit me—and what banjo shall I get?"

"Don't be in such an hurry to get one. I have two, you can use one until you decide what to have."

"Thanks, very much. You are very kind. Good afternoon."

"Good afternoon. Bring a copy of Cammayer's Tutor with you!" she called after him, as he went away.

Then she did a couple of pirouettes in the passage and ran into the kitchen.

Rigidly seated in a chair was Augusta, her hat and veil still on.

"I hear he is a young man," she said.

"Young, dark, six feet, and very good looking! Think of that, old dragon!" cried Letty, her face flushed with excitement.

Her sister regarded her severely.

"H'm, I'm sorry I found that advertisement now. It did not strike me he would be young and good looking."

"Well, give me my tea then, unless you want me to drink it out of the pot! If I have to work and teach stupid young men, I must be fed up!"

The next day Mr. John Berkeley called again. This time, Lettice, severely trained by Augusta, received him with solemn demeanour and gave him a little rudimentary instruction in the gentle art of music.

"It would not be much good to teach you the banjo until you can read music," she said, wrinkling her white forehead.

Digitized by Google

"No?" said the young barrister, for Augusta was correct as to his calling. "Couldn't I learn music without learning my notes?"

"Don't be stupid, could you learn to read a book without first learning the alphabet? It is the same with music. Here is a book of scales, let me teach you the lines and spaces."

He paid great attention, and being a man anxious to learn, he progressed quicker than a child who has to have the knowledge forced into his unwilling head.

Augusta attended once or twice, but the behaviour and deportment of the pupil were such as to calm her apprehensions, and she soon returned to her writing and left these two to work out the fifth position in peace.

Sometimes, if he had been less stupid than usual, Lettice would play to him after the lesson and sing also.

Little coon songs about nothing, set to a pretty air.

At these times he would lie back in the faded armchair and smoke cigarettes and see through a comfortable haze, a very pretty girl sitting in a delightful, graceful attitude, and—and—then he would pull himself up very short for fear his thoughts should carry him away.

"Oh, I—er—beg your pardon, but I fancied you were older," he said apologetically.

It was not long before he was introduced to the whole of the family, Gwen and her eternal mending, and Augusta who was father, mother, and sister to the two girls.

Sitting in his lonely chambers the young man used often to think of the three girls happy and contented, and working hard for a living.

He did not work for a living.

He had an income other than that he derived from the Bar, which was just as well as he was briefless.

An insatiable desire to travel prevented him from ever staying long in England.

An orphan himself with no relations to say him nay, and money at his command, he owned no master but his own wishes.

Lettice and he got on capitally.

She liked him because he had evidently such an admiration for her talent and she felt she could talk to him as though he were an old friend, and tell him her household troubles, and her hopes and fears for the future, secure in the knowledge that he would neither make fun of her or feel bored like some of her male acquaintances, or take advantage of the situation to make love to her, as others would have done.

He liked her because she was charming and had a peculiar and attractive grace and manner which was new to this young man, and she was pretty also, and interested in him, and his feelings towards her were perhaps warmer than is usual between pupil and teacher. But he took care to keep these feelings well under control, for he was shy and diffident with this open-hearted frank maiden.

One day, some months after their first meeting, Lettice startled Berkeley considerably by saying, one day: "You may congratulate me if you like?"

There was almost a wistful look in her blue eyes.

"What for, have you had any good luck?"

"I suppose so. I am engaged to be married."

Something seemed to strike in John's brain like a hammer.

"Married?" he cried aghast, and I am afraid with his mouth open.

Digitized by Google

"Yes. Why do you look like that? It seems to have surprised you."

He was almost too staggered to reply.

"Well—er—to tell the truth it has surprised me. I never thought of such a thing in connection with you."

Lettice felt offended.

"Even freaks get a chance sometimes, and even if my nose is long I suppose there is a man——"

"My dear Miss Letty," taking her hands in his agitation quite unconsciously. "You mistake me. But I—that is—er—well, upon my word, you have staggered me."

"So it seems."

"Tell me, who is the lucky man?"

"He lives over there, down that road, and he is a clerk in the Bank of England and has a salary of £200 a year."

"Good Heavens! Are you going to marry on that?"

"Why not, it is plenty for two people, and besides I can't live on Augusta for ever."

"No, of course not, and if you love him there is no——"

"But that's it, I don't love him. Now Mr. Berkeley, do tell me, is it right for me to marry if I don't love? You are a barrister and used to unknotting points, can you tell me?"

John Berkeley felt the case almost too much for him.

"Well, does the man love you?—but of course he does, no man could help it," he added half to himself.

"I beg your pardon. Does he love me? Oh, yes, he is never happy away from me. I like him, you know, I am very fond of him, and I like to go out with him, but somehow I can be just as happy with any other man, so that's what made me think I don't really love him."

"I should think you did not. Have you ever tested yourself?"

"No, how could I?"

"Have you ever thought what you would feel like if you were out alone one night, we'll say at Earl's Court, and you saw the Johnnie was with some other girl, and he talked to her and made a fuss of her, and she was prettier than you? Have you ever thought what you would feel like?"

She was regarding him earnestly.

"Yes."

"What would you think?"

"I shouldn't mind one bit. I told him and he was furious. He has a dreadful temper but there—I suppose I shall marry him."

Berkeley felt sorry, but, somehow, some words he wanted to say would not come out. A little encouragement, perhaps, from her would have helped him, but she was not even looking his way.

"You have not congratulated me yet," she said.

"No, and if you will excuse me, I don't think I will. I may say I hope you will not marry the fellow—who, I daresay, is all right in his way, but not good enough for you. If I ever meet him I will congratulate him, not you."

"Married!" he cried, aghast.

And abruptly rising he went away.

When he had gone, two tears rose silently into Lettice's blue eyes, and overflowing, ran down her cheeks.

The next time she gave Berkeley a lesson they both noticed a little constraint in the manner of the other.

Neither knew whence it came and each blamed the other, after the manner of young people.

Then he gave her a shock.

"I am afraid I shan't be able to do more than finish this set of lessons."

"Why?"

"I am going abroad. I am tired to death of England."

She was a better actor than he, and did not show her astonishment as he had done. She only said:

"Oh! how nice it must be to be a man and have money to go where you like."

"Yes. I have been in this hole of a place for two years, and I can't stand it any more. I am going to try gold digging in British Columbia."

She dissembled her feelings whatever they might be, and questioned him eagerly about his proposed trip and life out in the wilds.

"But you will come back, won't you, soon?" she said in conclusion, with perhaps more touch of eagerness than is usual.

"Not soon. One day I suppose I shall

Digitized by Google

come back—but I have no home to come to and no one to care about me much."

"Will you be away years?" in a low voice.

"Yes, years."

"Oh, then when you come back I shall be married. Perhaps living in a demi-semi-detached house at Upper Tooting, with two children in a basket-work mail-cart!"

She laughed a rather strained laugh and then coughed.

He was a singularly dense young man, although I suppose there was some excuse for him, he did not understand the ways of women.

All he knew was that he went away with a dull heavy pain in his heart, and the only remedy he knew for it was a trip to some wild spot. But what he did not know was that he left a sharper, more cruel pain in a tenderer heart than his own, a heart that tried to console itself by looking over houses in the Balham district and which found no relief in the near prospect of tiled hearths and brass curb fenders, bought on the hire system.

"Good-bye, Miss Lettice, you will write to me, won't you," with a pleading look. "Good-bye, Miss Gwen; good-bye, Miss Blake; you have been awfully kind to me—hope to see you again some day!" and shaking hands he raised his hat and went away.

Augusta adjusted her glasses and peered after his vanishing figure.

"H'm! a very nice man. Pity he's stupid. Good gracious, Gwen! Lettice is going into hysterics!"

* * * * *

Weeks passed and months rolled by and the New Chum, Rubber-Neck, Tender-Foot, or whatever he was called in those parts, had settled down as one of the small mining community.

But no letter came. Other friends wrote to him and occasionally he got a newspaper but the letter he looked for was never there.

One day, however, a small pink envelope bearing the unmistakable stamp of femininity was handed out to him, and his heart gave a wild thump as he recognised the sprawling handwriting.

He opened it and his hand trembled. It was a long letter and in some places was rather badly expressed, but it told him the truth that he had never dare ask for, nor knew it was there.

"I suppose I ought not to write to you like this, but Augusta is out and will never know, and it is raining and bitterly cold, and we have very little fire—coals are very expensive—I have kept it to myself and nobody has ever guessed my secret, but I feel I shall go mad if I don't tell someone, and there is no one to tell but you, I would not tell you only you are thousands of miles away and I don't suppose I shall ever see you again. I have thrown over the Bank of England fellow. I am sorry I had to do it, but I could not bear it any more. It was not fair to marry one man and love another, as I love you, was it?—even if the other didn't care a rap for you—because I know you never did, only I felt somehow I could not do it, so I told him. He was very sorry, of course, and Augusta was very angry, but then she is an old silly and didn't know all the story. Didn't know how fond I am of you. How I loved you when you were over here, only you never knew it. There! It is out now and I have read it several times and it has given me the cold shivers. Thank goodness! I cannot see your face when you read it. I don't know now whether I shall even send it to you. It is such an awful thing for a girl to say, but oh, Jack, you don't know how I love you."

"Didn't you stay for the last act?"

Here the letter evidently was put away. Berkeley turned back to the date at the head of the letter and compared it with the postmark on the envelope. There were weeks between the two, which showed she had put the letter by.

Then he went on to read, all about the others, and their little doings. Having come to the end of the missive he turned it back and read it all over again.

Then like the luminary of the law that he was, he folded up the little pink sheets and slept on it.

Next morning he rose with a look of extra determination on his sunburnt face.

Having had his breakfast he went down to head-quarters and made inquiries about the passages for England.

In between whiles he called himself a fool and other hard names for having left England at all.

His impatience during the voyage home was a source of continual amusement to his fellow passengers.

One man of a witty turn of mind said one day, he was in as much hurry as if he were going to be married.

Berkeley turned sharply round and catching the man by the sleeve propelled him swiftly towards the bar.

"What is yours, sir?" he said briefly.

And the man being sensible profited by his opportunity.

When at last, bag, baggage, and all, he found himself standing on the platform of Waterloo station, he could

Digitized by Google

almost have leapt for joy. Throwing his luggage pell-mell into a hansom he told the driver to take him to the Weirdor. Having there shaved and changed his things, he called another cab and gave the man an address of a quiet little street in Earl's Court.

Arriving at his destination he rang the bell.

The door opened and a voice said:

"You are home early, didn't you stay for the last act?"

"No," said Berkeley briefly as he stepped inside the passage. "I have come home to hear that——"

Lettice started back with a little cry and leant against the wall very white and trembling.

Berkeley with astonishing promptitude, placed his arm between the wall and her. He thought the idea very neat. He looked down at her fair head resting against his shoulder, and noticed how thin her face was and how dark the lines were under her blue eyes, and he called himself a fool and more hard names still.

"Oh Jack!" she gasped at last, "how you startled me."

"Did I, dear?" he said, devouring her with adoring eyes.

"I got your letter—and I am come home."

"I am all alone to-night. Gwen and Gussy are gone to the theatre, and when you came in I thought you were a thief."

"So I am, Lettice. I am come to take your heart away with me."

"You did that a year ago," she said, giving him one of her old candid glances. Then something in his face caused her to look down. But she forgot to take her head from his shoulder, and he did not trouble to move his arm from round her waist.

"I always told you I was the greatest fool on earth—or I should have guessed you cared for me long ago," he said.

"Yes, I always thought you rather dense," she replied.

"But, however I don't think we'll quarrel over the depths of my folly. I have suffered quite enough, let us kiss and be friends. Lettice, shall we?"

And Augusta said afterwards that it was like a tale in a book, and that after the wedding when she had more time she would write a tale about it.

And she did, for here it is.

Erroll Stanhope.

Willie: "Now that sister is going to marry Mr. Jenks, why is it called an 'engagement,' pa?"

Mr. Underthum: "Probably because the real battle comes later, my son."

Clara (after a tiff): "I suppose you would like your ring back?"

George: "Never mind, keep it. No other girl I know could use that ring, unless she wore it on her thumb."

Mother (suspiciously): "If you haven't been bathing how did your hair get so wet?"

Little Dick: "That's perspiration—running away from bad boys wot wanted me to disobey you and go bathing with them."

Mamma: "Dorothy, do you know you ate my raisins?"

Dorothy (turning over the leaves of her book more rapidly): "Mamma, you told me yesterday some things are better left unsaid. Isn't that one of them, don't you s'pose?"

Little Bobby: "Mamma, the boys is goin' to have a circus. May I act?"

Mamma: "Oh, I suppose so. What are you going to do?"

Little Bobby: "Nothin' much. They is going to have a pyramid of sixteen boys, an' all I has to do is to stand on top."

Mrs. Watts: "That man who sat next us in church put in half-a-crown, and you put in only a threepenny piece."

Watts: "Yes, and he goes only once in about three years, and you make me go every Sunday. If you haven't forgotten your arithmetic, just figure out the proportion, will you?"

Wife (to her husband): "I say, my dear, how badly the tailor has put this button on your waistcoat. This is the fifth time I have had to sew it on again."

"Did you fall?" asked the officious one of the man who had slipped on the pavement.

"Fall?" roared the man, witheringly; "no; I merely sat down to think over the situation in South Africa."

As the family were at dinner the news of the death of a distant relative was received. Little Nellie looked longingly at her well-filled plate, and said:

"Papa, must we be sorry now or can we wait until after we finish eating?"

"Mrs. Higgins is still wildly in love with her husband."

"Does she put the buttons on his shirts for him yet?"

"No; but he told her he sat up all night playing cards without any stakes—and she believes him."

"Did you ever," asked the young husband, "have your wife look you in the eyes when you came home and ask you if you had not forgotten something?"

"Many a time, my boy," answered the old married man. "She does yet. In the early days it used to mean a kiss; now it is usually a reference to wiping my shoes."

"What a wonderful painter Rubens was," remarked Mr. Jones at the art gallery.

"Yes," assented Mrs. Jones. "It is said of him that he could change a laughing face into a sad one by a single stroke."

"Why," spoke up little Johnny, in disgust, "my schoolmaster can do that."

Digitized by Google

The Rajah's Vengeance.

AN INCIDENT IN THE INDIAN MUTINY.

It was the summer of 1857, and the world was still shuddering at the atrocities enacted at Cawnpore. The natives of Lucknow had revolted, and the Residency was in possession of the British, who were defending it tooth and nail. The stubborn resistance offered by the besieged was infuriating still further the always savage Nana Sahib, who was striving to devise some means whereby he could conquer and annihilate the hated "Feringhees."

He had imprisoned in a mosque, a short distance from the Residency, Captain Vincent, of the 42nd, and the young soldier's *fiancée*, Rose Deering. These two had been captured when the rising set in, and after Doctor and Mrs. Deering, the parents of Rose, had been brutally murdered in their own bungalow by their own native servants, so deep and subtle was the treachery that prevailed at the time.

The possession of these two prisoners suggested to the plotting and calculating mind of Nana a scheme, infamous in its conception, by which he might bring about the speedy fall of the Residency. Once the idea presented itself he was not slow to act upon it.

The position of affairs stood thus: If the Residency were not captured soon it would be too late, for Havelock, Outram, and Campbell were rapidly advancing to the relief, and might be expected any day. Mines had been constructed from the mosque to within destructive distance of the besieged, the trains being laid ready for lighting. This new idea of Nana's, however, held his hand, and caused him for the time to refrain from applying the match.

One day Captain Vincent received a visit from the Rajah, who appeared in a conciliatory mood. The English officer at once suspected treachery and kept on his guard. The boom of artillery could be heard without at intervals.

"Ah, you hear the firing," remarked Nana, as he eyed his captive with subtle cunning. "Has not enough blood been shed? Your countrymen are obstinate, they are ignorant, they are foolish. They do not know Nana Sahib, they do not know that if they will come from their stupid hiding-place they will be allowed to go free, unmolested. They wait for help, but that help will never come. The Sahib Havelock has been beaten, and cannot come to their assistance. They do not know it. Who will tell them?"

As he said this he looked askance at Vincent, and waited for some indication that his meaning was comprehended. But he only received a glance of contemptuous indifference for response.

"You promised mercy to the women and children of Cawnpore," said Vincent, "did you keep that promise?"

Nana appeared somewhat disconcerted at this thrust.

"What do you know of Cawnpore!" he exclaimed irritably, "you are dreaming!"

"News travels fast in these terrible times," replied the English officer coolly, "and the deeds of assassins go before them to warn."

"I tell you you dream! I offer your countrymen safety, if they will come from their hiding-place."

"They will not believe you, they will not trust you!"

"They will, if you write the message," said Nana, deliberately.

"*I* write such a message!" exclaimed Vincent hotly, "*you* must be dreaming to suppose such a thing. I play the traitor to my own people—never!"

At this Nana's patience gave way, and he burst forth in fury.

"Dog," he hissed, thrusting his quivering face into that of his captive, "do you defy me—you whose life has been spared when others have perished. You shall write, or beware my vengeance!

"Listen. Beyond that wall is the woman Deering. Her life has been spared as well as yours. But it is not too late to repair this omission. Now, if you do not write as I shall dictate, if you do not inform your people that help will never reach them from their own soldiers, that they may go free, that the Nana Sahib in his great mercy will spare them—if you do not write this the life of the woman Deering shall be spared no longer! She shall hang from the roof of this building, and you shall follow her! But not before you have seen your people blown into the air by the mines which are ready laid."

"Surami!"

A Sepoy entered the apartment.

"Let the woman Deering be secured to the rope which hangs from the roof," continued Nana in envenomed tones, "have your men in readiness, and upon the stroke of ten let the rope be drawn up." Then turning to Vincent, he added, "I will give you a little time to think it over—you shall speak with the woman. I warn you do not incur the vengeance of the Nana Sahib!"

A few moments later Captain Vincent was alone. He was in a terrible plight, and mature deliberation could not reconcile him to either course open to him. He was called upon either to sacrifice his helpless countrymen or be party to the execution of the woman he loved.

Digitized by Google

He knew the bloodthirsty nature of Nana too well to doubt the sincerity of his intentions. He would never betray his comrades, that was certain. But think how he might he could not conceive any other alternative than the terrible one offered by his merciless captor.

Before he had time to further debate the subject an attendant waited upon him and conducted him to the adjoining apartment, where Rose was already bound.

They exchanged a look of anguish—their sufferings were too heavy for many words. Briefly Vincent explained the situation, and wound up with:

"Tell me, dear, what shall I do?"

"Do, Jack?" replied Rose, sadly; "your duty. Do you think I would receive liberty at such a price? I am not afraid to die. I have lost nearly all who were dear to me, why should I shrink from a fate that sends me to join them where they are gone?"

"We shall go hence together," said Vincent solemnly.

"There are worse things than death, Jack," said Rose, impressively, "much worse."

"I have no thoughts for myself—a soldier does not fear death. 'Tis for you I am concerned. Cannot you escape some way?"

"There is no escape, I feel it. The man is implacable. It is death or dishonour. If you love me, Jack, never write that letter."

"I never will. My own brave lass, we will die together!"

He clasped her in his arms, and their lips met in a long, loving but despairing kiss.

The sun had already set, the shadows were deepening, and night was fast closing in. The attendant who had conducted Jack to Rose now returned and intimated that the interview must cease, and that the Nana Sahib desired to see and speak with Captain Vincent at once.

Jack took leave of Rose, and each felt it was their last meeting on earth. Returned to his own apartment, which communicated with that of Rose by means of an opening masked with heavy curtains, Jack found Nana with two attendants waiting for him.

"Has the Sahib Vincent made up his mind?" began Nana.

"He has," replied Jack indifferently.

"And his reply is?"

"That he will never write the letter that the Nana asks of him!"

"Cursed Feringhee!" burst forth Nana with potent fury, "then you die, you and the woman, Deering, and your people in the Residency! Bind him to that pillar!"

A couple of Sepoys fell upon him with a rope, and in a few moments he was bound hand and foot. He made no resistance, he was quite resigned.

"Now listen to me," went on Nana to Jack, when the latter was left helpless by the Sepoys, "watch the window yonder, and at the stroke of ten you will see the body of your helpless and hated countrywoman carried past on the rope! Then prepare for your own doom!"

And with these bitter words he and his attendants quitted the apartment.

It was now quite dark, the moon had risen and was shedding a flood of silver light upon the mosque. The window referred to by Nana was in the party wall, and lighted the central apartment in which Rose was secured. The rope from the roof was clearly to be seen by the light of the moon, travelling past the window to the floor beneath. It was slack and swung about occasionally. The apartment in which Jack was had no light other than that from the moon.

The position he found himself in was truly hideous and conceived with fiendish interest. No doubt Nana had some idea that his prisoner would give in rather than face the horrors of the penalty of refusal. But Jack was firm against this—he would endure to the end.

It was terrible waiting, the hour before the appointed time being agonising suspense. At last he felt it must be nearing ten o'clock. He averted his gaze from the window, he closed his eyes and tried not to think. He offered up a prayer, and——

Boom!

The first stroke of ten from a neighbouring turret! His heart seemed to stand still, and the ropes about him felt drawn to their utmost tension.

Boom!

He could hardly breathe, something in his throat was surely choking him!

Boom!

His brain was on fire, and somebody must be beating him on the head. He swayed from side to side, helpless as a log. He would not count the strokes, he would shut his ears. He seemed numbed from head to foot. Suddenly his senses seemed to clear, he drew himself up and listened.

Silence!

The tenth stroke was passed, and—Heavens! it was done. He could not look up—the window! He prayed for the speedy hand of the assassin to put an end to his mental torture. Thank goodness, at last, his executioner. But no, a friendly voice!

"Hush!"

A sword flashed in the moonlight, and in a trice he was free.

"Not a word; follow me."

He followed, unquestioningly, into the next apartment, through an aperture in the floor, into the bowels of the earth.

* * * * *

The Residency did not fall and Rose Deering did not die.

While the besiegers were busy mining, the besieged were similarly employed. The latter fortunately struck the mine from the mosque, and removed the charge. Then they explored further into the enemy's tunnel and captured a Sepoy, who was on his way to fire the mine. This individual they bound and gagged, and took along with them until they found themselves in the mosque.

They soon discovered and rescued Rose Deering, who told them of Jack's whereabouts. The Sepoy they put in Rose's place on the rope, and all got safely away through the mines to the Residency. H. L. Adam.

Digitized by Google

Mr. Bowser's Tribulations.

XIV.—HE TRIES HORSEBACK EXERCISE TO CURE HIS MANY AILMENTS.

Mrs. Bowser stood looking out of the window the other evening as Mr. Bowser came home from the office. There was a strange man with him, and they were in earnest conversation. He had a half guilty look on his face as he opened the door, and he seemed to want to be questioned, but the mystery was left unsolved until after dinner. Then she quietly asked:

"Well, what have you been buying this time?"

"Nothing at all," he replied.

"Then you've got some scheme on foot."

"There's no scheme about it. I have simply decided to do what any sensible man ought to do. When a man finds that he is the victim of a dozen ailments, he ought to set to and cure himself, oughtn't he?"

"Of course, but what are your ailments? Now and then you have a headache, or you get a corn on your toe, but your general health is excellent. It was only the other day that you were boasting how hardy you were."

"My dear woman," he said as he walked about, "you know very well that I'm not in the habit of complaining. If I were dying, I should say nothing about it till the last moment. I may have boasted of my health, but is it a husband's place to alarm his wife? You now force me to tell you that I have a dozen different ailments at the present moment, any of which may prove fatal, but I am going to make a heroic effort to live on. If you hadn't driven me into a corner, I should have kept my secret."

Mr. Bowser fell on to a heap of ashes.

"I see," she quietly observed as the family cat came downstairs and cocked her eye at Mr. Bowser. "Is it a spring tonic or what?"

"I have been recommended to try horseback riding and this evening I make my first experiment."

"And you imagine you will joggle the complaints away? I think I see you bouncing about in the saddle and the stirrups flying."

"Joggle! Bounce!" he shouted as he turned on her with a gesture which scared the cat out of the room. "You'd be sarcastic if I lay dead in the house! A nice wife you are to encourage a dying husband! Why should I joggle or bounce about in the saddle?"

"You shouldn't," she answered. "However, if you are going to take your first ride this evening I hope you'll stick to the lane and that the horse is a gentle one. I haven't the slightest objection to your scheme. Indeed, I hope it will do you lots of good."

She spoke so kindly that Mr. Bowser recovered his good nature, and twenty minutes later he was with the boy holding a horse in the lane. It was a soft, moonlight evening, and the lane was clear of vehicles and just the place for a gallop.

"Is this a gentle horse?" asked Mr. Bowser as he was all ready to get into the saddle.

"He's like a lamb, sir," replied the boy. "Excuse me, but you are trying to get up on the wrong side. That's better. If I was you, I'd let him walk at first. Some folks are dizzy when they first move off."

Mr. Bowser had climbed into the saddle like a cow climbing over a fence, but as no one but the boy had seen him he didn't feel very bad about it. He had never been on the back of a horse three times in his life, and he was no sooner up than he wished he was down. The boy got his feet in the stirrups for him and encouraged him with quiet words, and after the horse had walked up and down for five minutes confidence was restored. Then the boy said:

"This hoss is one of the easiest trotters in the whole country, and if I was you I'd let him go a bit. When he starts to trot you'll think you are in a rocking chair."

Mr. Bowser doubted it; but, looking over the back fence, he made out Mrs. Bowser standing at one of the windows. She had referred to "bounce" and "joggle," and he felt that he was being tested. He drew a long breath, uttered a silent prayer and chirped to the horse to strike into a trot. The horse obeyed. Had the rider caught the motion it would have been plain sailing, but

Digitized by Google

he didn't catch it. There were half-a-dozen bobs, and three or four clutches at his mane, and Mr. Bowser rolled sideways out of the saddle and fell on to a heap of ashes. It was a good boy, and a sympathetic boy who had brought the horse round. He helped Mr. Bowser up, insisted that it was an accident that might have happened to the best rider on earth and in various ways encouraged him to ride again. The fallen rider kicked at the ash heap and struck the fence and was for giving it up, but the boy soothed him and made him understand that he would lose prestige if he failed to mount again.

"I intend to, of course," replied Mr. Bowser in defiant tones as he noticed Mrs. Bowser still at the window. "I don't claim to be much of a rider, but I'll get the spirit of it in a minute. I think the horse tripped the other time. Look through that knot hole in the fence, will you, and tell me what you see in my back yard?"

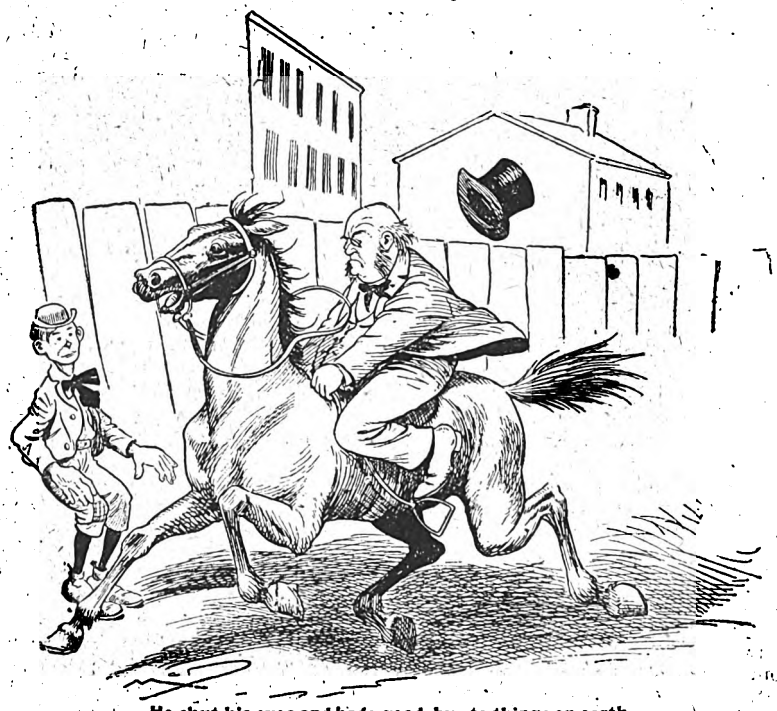
"The cook is sittin' on the ground an' laughin' herself to death," reported the lad after a look.

"She is, eh? Sent out by my wife to spy on me! Well, let her giggle. I'll stick on this time if I have to have my legs tied under the saddle."

"That's the way to talk. When you git into the saddle, jest move with the horse. All ready now?"

Mr. Bowser had another climbing match, but in due time he found himself filling the saddle again. Prudence warned him to go slow, but when he thought of Mrs. Bowser and the cook he determined to run all risks. As he got his feet well planted in the stirrups he struck the horse with his heel, and the animal started away at an easy canter. It was the rocking chair motion the boy had referred to, but Mr. Bowser didn't notice it. He found himself bobbing about and his feet out of the stirrups, and before he knew what he was doing both heels struck the horse and set him off at a full gallop. There was a yell that could have been heard half a mile away and then the rider clutched the saddle, shut his eyes and bade good-bye to things of earth—all except Mrs. Bowser.

The horse set off down the lane with his mind full of wonder, but the wonder soon changed to alarm as his burden lurched about, and before he had gone a hundred yards he made a shy and a kick, and Mr. Bowser went rolling over the ground and came up against a fence like a barrel of cider. It was a long time before the world returned to him. Then he opened his eyes to find Mrs. Bowser, the cook, a policeman, the boy and a workingman hovering over him.



He shut his eyes and bade good-bye to things on earth.

"I think he's coming to," he heard the policeman say, "and you can make your mind easy that his neck is not broken. What on earth possessed him to ride a horse, ma'am?"

"He wanted exercise," he heard Mrs. Bowser reply.

"Well, we'll drag him home for you, of course, but it won't do no good. He'll keep on making a donkey of hisself till something drives him through a brick wall."

Mr. Bowser was dragged along the lane to his own back-yard gate, his back gathering ashes at every step, and it was not until outsiders had retired that he sat up and said to Mrs. Bowser:

"Woman, I understand! I know who threw a stick at the horse and jumped me out of the saddle! Hands off! I want no more of your help, and the cook is discharged on the spot. Follow me into the house. I want you to confess in writing to this attempted assassination, and then we will call in the lawyers and settle matters!"

M. Quad.

[Next Week: He puts in Two Hours' Work with a Neighbour's Boy.]

Digitized by Google

How their V.C.'s were Won.

"THE battle was over, and we had won, but the Death Roll was a heavy one, and Roger Simmons' name was on the list.

"For my own part I had escaped with a bullet wound in my hip, and a graze on my left forearm—bad enough, some people might think, but the Colonel had just been in the hospital, and murmured the magic words 'Recommended for the Victoria Cross' over me, so what did I care for wounds?

"How had I won it, you want to know? Well just this once I will tell, if you give me your solemn promise not to pass it on to any reporter. As you know, my regiment, the Irish Fusiliers, were to charge the enemy whilst Colonel Simmons commanded the Artillery, but, when the word was given to charge, and the Artillery were ordered to protect us by their fire, Colonel Simmons was missing from the head of his Battery.

"No one had time to go and look for him, so the next officer took command. Half way up the hill, there was a little boulder, which I was just dashing past, when I heard a well-known voice close beside me, and turning round in the saddle saw Simmons. He was literally blue with terror, a man who had seen service on the Afghan frontier too. I could not make it out, could he be funking the engagement? As you know, he was the uncle of the girl I am engaged to, so I felt it would be best to say nothing, but invite him to take my horse, as his had evidently run away.

"All this occupied but a moment in the doing, and with a look of gratitude that I shall never forget, the Colonel mounted my charger, and spurred to join his men.

"I sped along on foot at the head of my men, and soon we were in touch with the Boers, when a hand to hand fight began. I had no time to try and see what Simmons was doing, though I felt there was more in his conduct than met the eye, for my men were falling thick and fast, through sheer force of numbers. On and on we went to gain the last ridge and get the enemy's guns silenced, but just as I was stretching out my hand to strike down a Boer who was attacking me, a horse rushed past, and in another instant Simmons had literally swept off the man's head with his sword.

"But his face as he turned round, I shall never forget it, it was filled with a nameless horror, as a man might look if he saw a ghost.

"In the forefront of the strife, he seemed to woo death, but fate is ever fickle and would not listen to his advances, till at last, just as the recall was sounded a bullet found its billet in his lungs.

"I was near him as he fell from the horse, and went to him.

"With a great gasp, he pointed to his chest, and said: 'There you will find the explanation, do not let it be known—I did my duty—farewell, Maxwell.' With another deep sigh, he fell back dead, internal hemorrhage having ensued.

"Thus was ended the career of a man who it seemed earlier in the day was on the point of disgracing his long line of military ancestors, and it was with a feeling of deep curiosity that I took the letter from his breast, and transferred it to my own. It was on the way back that I received my second wound, from a Boer who fired from behind a large boulder.

"It was three days later before I felt equal to reading that document, and then I admit that, soldier though I am, I shed tears over it.

"It seems that the Colonel had an only son, a wild, harum-scarum youth, who three years before had gone out to the gold mines, in the hopes of making his fortune, but instead, had fallen in love with a Boer woman, and married her.

"The last his father had heard of him, was that he intended to fight on his wife's side, and a few minutes before the charge, it had come to his ears that the man in command of the opposing forces, that he was to fight against, was a fellow of the name of Simmons.

"Poor Colonel, he had scribbled these lines, as in the first horror of knowing that he might kill his own son, he had slipped out of camp, and hidden from his regiment, hoping for death from some chance bullet. I suppose the sight of me flying by at the head of my men awoke the soldier to a sense of his duty, and the chance I offered him of regaining his place was eagerly clutched at.

"I have learnt since that it was his son whom he felled, and only after severing his head did the father know the awful truth.

"I know the tale is safe with you, for having a son of your own, you can sympathise."

"Indeed, yes, poor fellow, what an awful predicament to be placed in, no wonder he sought death," replied the chaplain.

"But, Maxwell you have not told me how you won your V.C.?" he continued.

"Oh, that was a very simple affair. You know Trooper Maynard, well the boy is the only son of an old soldier servant of my father's and he has only been out here a week. He was killed by a Boer, who turned round as he was flying after the charge just to empty his rifle, and the shot told on poor Maynard, whom it caught in the chest. The rest of his Company were well in front at the time, having been summoned back by bugle, as the General feared an attack from another quarter.

"I should not have seen him if I had not stooped over

Digitized by Google

Simmons for a minute, and so got left behind, myself. I just flung the poor chap over my shoulder, and was making my way as best I could to regain my men, when that dastardly shot was fired at my leg, with the object I suppose of killing both myself and my burden. I had to shift him to the other shoulder, how, I don't know, fortunately the fellow was unconscious, so the pain that it must otherwise have caused was not felt by him. That's all."

"Bravo Maxwell, I've heard of many plucky things, but for a man to carry another with his left arm wounded, and his thigh more or less shattered, well, I don't know how you managed it."

"It's the hatred of being beaten that did it, I expect, you see if I had dropped my man, I should have done just what the Boer wanted me to, so I set my teeth, and resolved that we would drop together or not at all till we regained our own lines."

The gallant Captain spoke with a faint tremor in his voice, but a twinkle in his eye, that showed the indomitable spirit of the man as he lay there, in what, his friend knew, must be intense pain.

Trooper Maynard was going on well, in fact would be about again far sooner than his rescuer.

The Chaplain did not tell his friend that he was the other man whose name had been mentioned for the same coveted honour.

But the next time he visited Maxwell, he found his friend with reproaches on his lips at his having kept it from him, and congratulations for the cause.

This was what he had been told:

"There was a little drummer boy, only thirteen years of age, and how it happened no one ever knew, but he was left alone in a bare space on the veld, playing the advance on his drum. He seemed bewildered by the noise of the battle, and stood there an easy prey for any bullet. Nor was he left in doubt long, for a shot rang out and the boy fell, whilst the Boers were about to pass just over the spot where he lay.

"Snatching a rifle from a dead hand, the Chaplain who was watching the fight took in his perilous situation, and without stopping to ask permission, bounded across the veld, picked up the child, and made his way back to camp amidst a perfect rain of bullets, none of which did more than tear his clothes."

As he ran into the British lines, a great cheer went up from the men, and from that day onward the Chaplain would find his way to their hearts laid bare they having once seen that his courage was even superior to their own.

There was yet plenty of work to be done, but the example of such heroes as these two had shown themselves, only served to brace up the wills of others to follow in their footsteps, and win if it were possible that small piece of bronze, which is a soldier's most valued reward.

M. Hoey.

Tommy: "Mamma, why have you got papa's hair in a locket?"

His Mother: "To remind me that he once had some, Tommy."

Little Tompkins (on his dignity): "Marie, I've been a good husband to you all these years, have been patient and have put up with every humiliation, but," fiercely, "the worm has turned at last—you shall not have my son's trousers cut down for me."

"Papa, didn't you whip me once for biting Tommy?"

"Yes, my child, you hurt him so much."

"Well, then, papa, you ought to whip sister's music-master, too, for he bit sister, yesterday, right on the mouth, and I know it hurt her, because she put her arms round his neck, and tried to choke him."

Policeman (on duty in the park): "Excuse me, sir, but isn't that your dog?"

Mr. Portley: "Certainly."

Policeman: "You see what the notice says, 'No dogs allowed in this park.'"

Mr. Portley: "Yes, but that dog can't read; he is very illiterate. Good morning!"

Sue (who has just been asked to play something on the piano): "I really can't play anything."

Tommy: "But, I say, Sue, why don't you play that piece you spoke to me about?"

Sue: "What piece?"

Tommy: "Why that one you told me to ask you to play when we had company, 'cause you know it better'n any of the others. I forget the name."

Then Tommy was sent to bed

THE PRIVATE LIFE OF THE QUEEN.

By One of Her Majesty's Servants. With Portrait and numerous Illustrations. Crown 8vo, cloth. Price **2s. 6d.**

Some of the Twenty-Seven Chapters are:

The Queen Among Children	**Chap. III.**
The Queen's Fads and Fancies	**Chap. VIII.**
The Queen's Fortune and Expenditure ...	**Chap. IX.**
The Queen as a Housekeeper	**Chap. XIII.**
What the Queen Eats and Drinks ...	**Chap. XVII.**

"It gives a charming sketch of Her Majesty as the mistress of her own household, and as the head of her large family."—*Pall Mall Gazette.*

"A delightful little book."—*Vanity Fair.*

C. ARTHUR PEARSON, Ltd., Henrietta Street, W.C.

GREAT QUERY COMPETITION.

Why did the Whale wail?
Because the Smelt smelt.

You know that Query and Answer well enough, don't you? Well, what Query and Answer does this sketch suggest? Why did the—— ah, that's for you to say. A prize of £50 will be given to the reader who sends in the greatest number of correct answers.

SEE THIS WEEK'S "PEARSON'S WEEKLY,"
NOW ON SALE.

Digitized by Google

A PRETTY ROUNDHEAD MAID.

AN EPISODE OF THE CIVIL WAR.

WHEN I say that I have taken part in the wars of a dozen different states and have been involved in the intrigues of at least half that number of rulers, you will understand that my career has been far from an uneventful one. Yet, strange to relate, only once in all my numerous ventures and experiences did I fail to emerge triumphant; and, stranger still, this one rebuff brought me my greatest happiness in life.

'Tis possible I owed my egotistical and reckless nature to my parents having both quitted this earth soon after I had made my appearance on it; however, my bringing up proved my undoing, for I quarrelled with my relatives and left England to wander forth and seek my fortune beneath other skies.

Having but my sword and my wits to support me, 'twas only natural I ended by becoming a soldier of fortune, bareing my blade now in defence of the oppressed, now in favour of the tyrant, as one or the other fanned the flame of my ambition, or aroused my mercenary instincts with visions of possible riches.

Nevertheless, however deeply buried it may have been, loyalty must have found a place in my heart, for otherwise I could not explain my having enlisted in the army of Charles I. of England, for I neither expected to satisfy my avarice, nor humour my vanity by trying to uphold so fickle a monarch. But be this as it may, when the news reached me in the Lowlands of the outbreak of hostilities between the King and the Parliament, I hastened to London and placed myself at his disposal.

He received me with the graciousness he extended to all, and so flattered my self-esteem that I swore no matter what happened, so long as King Charles's standard floated aloft, I would draw my sword beneath no other.

In this hopeless struggle, I seemed to lead a charmed life. Although I was in the thick of the fight everywhere, my injuries were restricted to a few scratches. When the Royalist cause received its death-blow at Marston Moor, my clothes were cut from off my back although I had but two or three slight flesh wounds. I must have presented a sorry appearance on the evening of that memorable day, when, my horse and myself smothered with blood and mire, I endeavoured to make my way to the east coast in the faint hope of getting safely across to Holland.

I have always since come to the conclusion that my ignorance of the country proved my salvation; for except that I must travel towards the east I had no inkling of the road and thus unwittingly avoided the frequented routes.

I had ridden several miles along a narrow lane that followed a tortuous line low down between two ridges of hills, and was dimly wondering if my beast would hold out much longer, when, as I turned a sharp angle, a squat red brick mansion loomed in sight, standing back from the pathway and flanked by a clump of trees.

The building was surrounded by a high wall pierced in front by large iron gates.

I reined in my horse and tried to obtain a better view of the place but the moon rising at the back threw it in shadow.

Dismounting clumsily, for my limbs were stiff with fatigue, I approached the gates to reconnoitre before determining whether to make myself known to the inhabitants.

I was astonished to see no lights in any of the windows, and feared that the house might prove deserted, but, on again peering between the bars of the gate, noticed that the lawn showed signs of recent gardening care.

Leaving my animal to look after itself, I opened the gate, and walked inside. I now saw that one of the ground floor windows was only partly closed.

Digitized by Google

I was barely six paces from the window when the moonlight gleamed on the barrel of a pistol and a small white hand just within the casement. Astonishment mastered me for an instant, and I stood there gaping like a fool.

An order to remain where I was, given in a feminine voice, recalled me to my senses.

"Madam," said I, whipping off my shabby beaver, "whoever you are I pray you give me a morsel to eat and let me rest awhile, I——"

My speech was cut short by a second command, this time to throw away my sword.

Ever reckless, I hastily unsheathed my blade and sent it flying over the lawn.

"Madam, I have fought half the day and ridden the other half without food," I cried appealingly, approaching the window to get a sight of my interlocutor.

It was instantly slammed to and bolted.

Mad with anger at the trick that I thought had been played upon me, I was about to thrust my scabbard through the glass when I heard the front door being unfastened.

I ran round to the porch to find the door open and a young woman with a lighted candle, on the threshold.

Finger to lip she bade me enter.

I obeyed with alacrity, and found myself in a large square hall adorned with arms and trophies of the hunt. Following my guide, who was enveloped in a hooded cloak, I crossed the hall and proceeded along a corridor evidently leading to the servants' quarters. Everything was in darkness but for the light the maid carried.

She passed into a large kitchen, went to a cupboard and took out some viands and a mug of beer.

She had not yet addressed a word to me and I watched her silently, with, I fear, little thought save for the food she placed before me and which I ate greedily.

While I was eating she pulled a chair up to the table opposite me and, slipping off her cloak, sat down.

When I had somewhat appeased my wolfish craving, I looked up and waited for my hostess to speak.

She was evidently of gentle birth and not one of the domestics of the house as I had at first supposed. Slender and of average height, this fair maid was hardly twenty years of age. She wore a becoming gown of some cream-coloured stuff, the bodice cut low, exposing the shapely throat, white as the string of pearls that clasped it.

With her elbows on the table, and her pretty face supported in the palms of her hands, I thought she made the sweetest picture it had ever been my fortune to behold.

"Since you have satisfied your hunger, sir," she said, "you will perhaps not object to do the same for my curiosity."

"Permit me but one question and I will gladly answer any you may choose to put to me, Madam. Has the King or the Parliament the honour of your favour?"

"I do not meddle with politics, sir, but rumours of an impending conflict reached us and I could not rest. Our house lies off the beaten track and we gladly give food and shelter to any travellers who may stray this way. But these are troublous times and my uncle, with whom I live here, gives his support to the Parliamentary cause. If, as I suppose, you represent his enemies, you must not stay here. Both he and the servants have retired for the night, but at any moment one or the other might awake and come down."

"The rumours that disturbed your sleep, Madam were well founded," I said, grateful for the chances that had thus befriended me; and I told her of the morning's fight and its issue.

"Where have you left your horse?" she suddenly asked, when I had finished speaking.

"In the lane!"

"'Twill never do there; 'twould arouse suspicion should chance bring another this way."

I sprang up, shamed by her forethought, went out, and led the animal to the rear of the building, where I tethered it to a post.

Having obtained permission from her to fetch my sword, I picked it up and crept noiselessly back to the kitchen.

"I have not yet asked you a single question about yourself," she said. "But 'tis no time for idle curiosity. Lie down and sleep awhile, and I will keep watch. Should no one stir, you shall sleep on for three or four hours, and then you must be up and away. 'Tis but a poor bed you will have at best: for I dare not let you quit this room," and she turned to leave.

"Oh! Madam! How can I thank you! What can I say?" I exclaimed, touched to the heart by her kindness.

She did not speak, but inclined her head slightly and passed through the doorway.

I remained for a while standing where she had left me. 'Twas the first time I had been made welcome in the house of a foe and it affected me strangely. The day that had promised well, had proved but the crisis of a series of failures, my spirits had been so low that I cared not what became of me; and now—— But fatigue stifled my thoughts; I wrapped my cloak round me and lay down on the floor and slept.

I was aroused by a gentle tap on the shoulder, and sprang up immediately but was hardly on my feet ere the intense stillness of the night was broken by the sound of horses' hoofs on the hard road.

My pretty companion paled with fright, but did not for an instant lose her self-possession.

"You must away before they reach us," she exclaimed, running to a door at the far end of the room and motioning me to follow. She once more put her finger to her lip and I was about to close the door behind us, when we were again brought suddenly to a halt. This time it was a sound in the house itself. The staircase groaned beneath the weight of heavy footsteps, but my fair guide had all her wits about her.

"'Tis my uncle." She turned, and opened a big closet just behind us. "Inside! You could not get away without his seeing you," and giving me no time to reply she pushed the door to, turning the key which I heard her take out of the lock, and her swift footsteps echoed back from the way we had come.

Not being of a patient disposition I was at first inclined to chafe under this treatment, but my gratitude to my protectress outdid my doubt. I folded my arms and leant against the wall awaiting the development of affairs.

Left thus in the sole company of my own thoughts, for not a sound of any kind reached my hiding place, I had ample opportunity for reflection.

As it was, the workings of my brain were more concerned with my guardian than with the prospects of my own safety. I doubted not for a moment that her mind was occupied on my behalf and that she was exercising her wits to help me.

What kind of a man should I have been? I pondered,

Digitized by Google

if I had always had a creature like that by my side to help me mould my life. A better one? Possibly. A happier one? I thought not, for until then I had been well content with my lot. But had not virtue and happiness something in common? True, some philosophy had it so. Thus my thoughts wandered on.

But a vision of kind eyes disturbed my meditations, the apparition seemed to claim my attention against my will.

My new goaler approached the door of my temporary prison and unlocked it.

"Be still," she whispered. "You cannot yet leave. A dozen Roundheads are in and about the house. They do not appear to be seeking anyone, but they may remain for an hour or so as my uncle is having a meal prepared for them," and she made as if to lock me up again.

"Run you no risk in thus harbouring an enemy?" I asked vehemently.

"They do say there is a reward of one hundred guineas for the person of every Royalist officer, and untold punishment for hiding one," she said, musingly.

I sprang out of the closet with an oath.

"You shall not suffer on my account, madam!"

She laid a restraining hand upon my arm.

Though I guessed she spoke in jest, it angered me that she should trifle with so serious a matter.

Finding I paid no heed to her entreaties she slid down on her knees, clasped my cloak, and besought me not to give myself up.

"On one condition, fair mistress, that you give me a kiss."

When she discovered that I had been playing with her, she rose to her feet, eyes blazing and bosom heaving with indignation.

"'Tis too high a price, sir; you may go."

'Twas now my turn to be confused. Her anger however was short-lived.

"A truce to play-acting, sir. If you value your unworthy skin go back."

Thus was I reincarcerated in the closet.

In about ten minutes she returned.

"They are all at table; come!"

I followed on tip-toe into a yard and round to the right. She had made sure that all the windows looking in this direction had the curtains down. Once safe from observation, I soon found my horse.

Here was fresh proof of my gentle benefactress's care. She had stowed provisions for two or three days in my saddle-bags.

I led the beast out on to the highway at the back of the house, where she accompanied me, giving instructions to enable me to pursue my journey to the coast. When she had finished and it was time to mount, I hesitated.

My life ahead looked so empty and dreary after the last few hours. I could not leave her thus, and, perchance, never set eyes on her again.

"Why do you wait; there is danger in delay?"

"We do not even know each other's names," I said lamely.

"Mine is Margaret Hanworth."

"And mine, madam, Neil Bransome, at your service." In a few words, I told her of my past career and what was before me should I get safely out of England. "But in a while I shall return, and will come back if I may hope for your assistance to start life anew."

"I fear you over-rate my help," she answered, looking on the ground.

"Do not refuse it," I pleaded. "'Tis all the world to me."

She did not reply, but stood fidgeting a stone with her tiny foot.

"Shall I come back a free man and seek the acquaintance of your uncle," I urged. "Say the word, madam, and I will wear your image in my heart of hearts."

"I have already burdened my soul with too many falsehoods on your behalf to care to add to them. Farewell, sir!" she said smiling, and then, without waiting for me to speak, ran back out of sight, turning to wave her hand she disappeared. Something white fell to the ground as she ran. It was her glove.

My heart leaped as I picked up her gage and kissed it fervently. Then I sprang on my horse, and, waving my beaver for joy, flew towards the coast.

GEOFFRY RHODES.

Digitized by Google

EINAR OF THE LONG SWORD.

. . By George C. Wallis . .

Author of "The Winning of Gunhild," "The Gladiator," etc., etc.

CHAPTER XI.

How Sigmund the Skald went over Saddleback Ridge.

I told none of my purpose, but drew all within the house by persuasion, and sang them a saga that was likely to find them food for talk. Then I sought out a house-carle I had once befriended named Norri, and bringing a couple of ponies from the stables, we mounted and rode forth.

I glanced back at the homestead a many times, fearing lest we should be seen and Sweyn should send after us, but all was silent, and presently the sky was overcast and we were safe. We put the ponies to the trot then, but in the face of the gale that swept down upon us it was hard for the animals to keep their pace. If the wind was shrill and cold in the garth it was tenfold shriller and colder as we went up the long hill. It shrieked and howled around us dismally; its chilliness bit us to the bone.

"Whither go we, skald?" asked Norri. "But for your claim on me it would not have been so easy to draw me from the fire to-day."

"I go to Trollfell," said I, "to get the use of Othnar's ship, *Long Dragon*, so that we may sail in pursuit of Alfdane."

"'Tis a brave thought, but, methinks, a vain one," said Norri. "But why need I go? And look there on Saddleback; it is white with snow, and no horse can get across."

"Leave that to me, Norri," said I. "I have a deed to do to-day."

The carle ceased grumbling openly and we rode on in silence, the gale increasing in rage and coldness ever as we rose. At last we came to a piece of level ground where its full fury burst upon us, and so icy and fierce was its breath that the warm blood in us seemed to burn the cold flesh through which it ran.

The ponies, steaming with exertion, could scarcely stagger across to the shelter of the rock on the farther side of the flat. There we rested them awhile, bringing some slight glow into our hands by violent exercise, then began the hill again. When we came to the top, where the real danger lay, it was rapidly growing dusk.

At the top of the hill, where on a clear day one may look down and see both Raven's-nest and Trollfell with but a turn of the head, the path narrows to a footway, and rises and falls in a double curve like a saddle. This it is that is called Saddleback Ridge.

On the right of the ridge the rock breaks away and goes sheer down to a fork of the fiord, a swallow's flight, and on the left is a treacherous bog that reaches to the margin of an inland lake, from whence, in winter time, a torrent springs. To come at Trollfell from Raven's-nest, except by Saddleback, would mean a journey of at least double length, and always uncertain because of the flushing of the torrent.

And on Saddleback, even in the summer, it is chill, and the white frosts sparkle in the mornings. In winter it glistens with ice and snow of daily-increasing thickness.

I sprang from the pony and looked across. It was white and smooth and hard, and so steep and narrow in the hollow of it that it seemed impossible any man should creep along it let him go as carefully as he might.

"Now here we must turn back," said Norri. "Neither man nor horse may cross Saddleback Ridge when Thrymm's white mantle is cast over it."

"That we will see," said I, binding on my feet a pair of wrestling shoes that I had brought. "Though I have to creep I have a mind to get down to Trollfell to beg Othnar Wolf'sfang's ship that we may rescue Astrid. You will see now, Norri, why I brought you. You will be able to go back and tell them that I have got across, and my purpose, and to be ready at the landing-stage at dawn. I brought the horses to gain time, and you should have no trouble returning with the wind at your back. Waste no more words on your wonder now, but watch."

He cowered behind the nearest rock at my bidding, the ponies standing tail-to-wind, and I walked out on the white ridge. At first I went easily, for there was a lull in the gale, and the surface was level, but when I came to the downward slope, whose roughnesses were coated with ice and held hard snow between them, I had to be more wary.

I stumbled often, and once Norri shouted with fear, thinking I had lost myself, but I got safely to the lowest part of the saddle. I rested there a moment to regain my breath, which was not easy facing that fierce wind, though I was warm now with excitement; then I began the ascent.

The Trollfell side was the worst of the two, and now I caught the full force of the storm, and white flakes began to fall slowly. It was all that I could do to keep foothold, and at last I had to go down and creep stealthily as a cat, rising but a little with each move. And ever as I rose I met a stronger wind, and now it bore keen ice needles and hard snow dust in its mad whirls, pricking my face and blinding me. Yet I thought of Astrid and Einar, and of Bifrost Bridge, that was barred to me unless I kept on, and I went up slowly.

Now I was almost at the top of the rising curve when the weakness that has beset me since I can remember came upon me. It was like a heavy blow on the back, and it unloosed every muscle that I had on the strain. I let go of the rock ahead, and slid back to the cup of the ridge again, and heard Norri's second cry of fear, though to me it was faint and far-off. An instant I hung there despairing, thinking that all men have a time and that mine had come and it was no use striving against the Nornas, and then the spasm passed, and I crept up again.

Once I glanced above, and through the dim hail I thought I saw a gigantic white form beckoning me on. I looked again when I had risen another step, and it was still there, and this time I saw its face distinctly, and knew that it was the ghost of Harald, Einar's father. He was in full armour, and in his right hand, white and vaporous, was the semblance of a long sword. With this he waved me upwards, pointing ever and anon behind him, but his lips were closed firm so that he spoke not at all.

"Othnar's garth is well called Trollfell," said I, "since trolls beckon one to it. But troll or fey I care not so long as it tends to good."

Digitized by Google

Thus saying I went up steadily, as though nerved with fresh strength, keeping myself flat on the slippery rock so that the howling wind could not tear me off, and Harald, still waving his sword, stepped back as I stepped up. At last I came to the top and pulled myself over and went down the further slope, and so was safe upon the mountain side where the path lies easy down to Trollfell.

The ghost vanished suddenly then, and I shouted across to Norri to do what I had told him. He obeyed at once, nothing loth to be stirring, and I made all speed on my way. But there was the strangeness about the troll; that though Norri had been watching me all the time he had seen nothing of it.

It was very dark when I came to Othnar Wolf'sfang's, and his hall was noisy with song and mirth and the crackle of pine logs. Everyone stared when I went in, and Othnar most of all.

"'Tis a queer night for Sigmund the Weak to be afoot," cried he, "yet no man is more welcome here to-night. We have no skald like you in these parts, and my men are in the mind for jolly songs. We sail on Viking path to-morrow with a taut ship and a staunch crew. We are tired of home-staying, and are thinking of being in warmer waters for Yule. But how came you here?"

Now this was news that might be either good or bad, as Hödr willed, but I thought it good.

"As to how I came what matters it," said I, "so long as I come at the right time and to the right place? Though, to be sure, my way of coming will make a short saga for you when I have got some of the cold out of me and some of the ale in."

They took the hint, asking no more questions until I felt ready to answer them, and then I said:

"I came over Saddleback Ridge, alone, to ask a favour from you, Othnar Wolf'sfang, for old Sweyn, who is sorely stricken."

They sat open-mouthed with surprise at that, and Othnar's great tooth was bared to the gums. He bade me say on, and it would be strange if I asked anything he would not grant.

So I told him of Alfdane's coming and going, and of our despair, and how I had fared over Saddleback to ask him for his ship that we might go in pursuit of the traitor.

"It seems that the gods are with me," I said, "for you have the galley ready and the men also, and you will not have far to seek a fight if you want one. It is a neighbour's quarrel and a just."

"So it is, good Sigmund," the men cried, and one said: "And Odin is with you, or you would never have crossed Saddleback, having your weakness. 'Tis more than a strong man would dare this weather. It is a deed—a deed worthy of Valhall."

"In truth, yes," said Othnar slowly. "It was a brave thing to do. But concerning this quarrel I am not so sure. We need the ship ourselves, and it were ill to risk it in a woman's cause. There is no weregild that touches me in this affair. Yet it was a foul deed of Alfdane's, and a brave one of yours, skald."

I saw that he was yet sore because of Astrid, though half-inclined to grant my wish, and when some of his men had spoken in my favour, I said:

"It were ill to risk your ship, Othnar, and it is not my wish since we should but need it to carry us to Tvedestrof or to Strongness, wherever Hardrada may be. But it were also ill for me to have risked my life to-day to no purpose; and also, Othnar, bethink you how Einar fought for you in *your* hour of necessity. You have no grudge against him, surely, because he has won Astrid?"

He hesitated a moment, but he was good of heart when the need arose, and thought better of his chagrin.

"You are right, skald," said he with a laugh, and then seriously: "To-morrow at dawn the *Long Dragon* sails as agreed, but we will take up at Raven's-nest as many of Sweyn's men as we can hold, and we will search the seas for the nithings who burn ships and steal women by stealth. Yes, we shall make food for the vultures of Hardrada Hardskull and his crew. And now, skald, sing a merry song, and then all to sleep while we have solid beds under us."

There went up a roar of applause at his words, and I sang as he wished, my heart seeming light by compare with the heavy fear of the morning.

And at sunrise the *Long Dragon* moved out upon the dark fiord to the rythmic sound of many oars, and soon we were taking up fifty of Sweyn's best champions, and before the day was well begun were sweeping out to sea. But Alfdane had now been gone a whole day.

CHAPTER XII.

THE DOINGS OF ALGAR ERIKSON.

WHEN Algar saw that no effort was being made to recapture him, he struck out for the shore with strong, hopeful strokes. Though it was a long swim, and the sea was rough, he reached land. A fisherman coming down to the water-side saw him stagger up the shingle and fall, and drew him back from the wash of the waves so that his breath and strength might come to him. Then Algar got to his feet and inquired for those of his comrades who were left.

"Why, the house is scarcely astir yet," said the fisherman. "They drank as deep last night as though the twilight of the gods was upon us, and they meant not even the clamour of the fight of Ragnarok to wake them. But your men will come to no harm here, Viking. Borg is a man of peace, and whatever Thora does is not made worse by him."

Now Algar Erikson was no shorter of cunning than of

He was in full armour, and in his right hand, white and vaporous, was the semblance of a long sword.

Digitized by Google

When it came to Thora's turn Algar barred the way with his sword.

courage, and as he went up to the house he gave much thought to the matter of how best he might rescue Einar. He held himself guilty in having drunk so much, and resolved to leave no artifice untried to undo the mischief his besetting habit had wrought.

Within the house was now much talk and confusion, and old Borg, now that he knew something of the truth, was so angry with Thora that he had bidden her out of his sight. Sullen and defiant she retired to her bower—to look on Einar's sword and to feel wretched because she had sent him to his fate. All were amazed when Algar entered and told his tale, and when he had done some cried out that he was favoured of Rana to have lived so far through the sea. He turned and faced Borg and the household scornfully, having first bidden his men to go towards the great door, and said:

"I am Einar's man, and he and we have done so many deeds that none need marvel at anything more we may achieve. It is well for you, Borg, that Einar is not here with me, or we two alone would wipe out the insult in blood. Is this treatment your usual hospitality to those who have eaten and slept under your roof? Are you a nithing that you let us be attacked in our sleep and dare raise no hand in our aid? Shall I call you Borg the Nithing before all men, and spread the name over all the northlands?"

Borg, already mad with rage, rose to his feet with something of the quickness of youth, and out flashed his blade.

"No man ever came here to call me that who lived to tell the tale!" cried he. "Though I am old I am not that."

"Nay," said Algar, making no move, "I fight not with you, Borg. I did but wish to know how you felt on this matter—I did not say you were a coward. I see now that it grieves you as much as myself, but it is your fey daughter's work, not yours, and one cannot fight with women. Yet because it was done under your roof, Borg, and we were your peaceful guests, you will see that some recompense is needed from you."

To this fair speech Borg could not say nay, and he calmed at once.

"If I can do aught for you and Einar and so rid myself of the taint of treachery it will be well," said he. "Say on with your desire. As to this girl of mine, who has ever been a trouble, it will go hard with her if Einar comes to his death through this. Say on, Algar Erikson."

"It is no light thing that I ask, Borg. You have a good ship at anchor here, which has carried you far in its day. You have also some seventy hale warriors in and about the garth. I have, as you see, thirty, whom the traitors spared. Let me have the ship and the hundred men and I will sail to Tvedestrof and rescue Einar by force."

Now Borg did not like this proposal, nor being made to seem so guilty by a ready agreement, so he answered:

"It is overmuch to ask, friend. The ship has done me good service, and I would fain keep it safe until it rots or I die and my body is carried out to sea in its blazing embrace. And if you take my men away you leave me an easy prey to the first red-hand who sails near. And I am not sure that I need be so hasty in making amends for what was not of my doing."

"That is as you may think, Earl," said Algar, "but time is short if we would do any good. I will leave you a score of warriors, taking fifty only besides my own, and our glory will be the greater. I pray you be wise, Borg, before harm is done."

And his dagger flashed out, and at a sign from him the champions at his back drew sword. There were not more than twenty of the home warriors in the hall, and Borg thought it best to grant the request while he might do so with good grace, so he consented, and bade some set out food for breakfast and others see to the making-ready of the ship, his beloved *Garfreda*.

Algar and his men ate with zest, feeling full of hope again, for one and all loved Einar as a brother, and the men of Borg's-hold were glad to have the chance of fighting alongside such champions. But though Borg had more beer brought out Algar would have none of it, vowing that never a mouthful would he taste until Einar was once more free.

By noon they were eager to be going, but in overlooking the *Garfreda* the men found two great leaks which required mending, and with having lain idle so long she must needs be caulked. Algar chafed at the delay, and had it in his mind that Thora was not ignorant of how the *Garfreda* had

Digitized by Google

come by her leakages, but of this he said nothing, biding his time.

It was past noon of the third day when the figure-head was fixed upon the bow, the shields hung along the sides, and the ship was ready for sea. When Algar and his eighty men were aboard Borg and his wife and Thora came to give a last look at the vessel in case any mishap should cause her to be lost. This Algar had expected and waited for, and, to make it more certain, had even spoken smoothly to Thora that day.

He bade them farewell coldly as they went along the gangway plank, Borg and Svenna going first; but when it came to Thora's turn Algar barred the way with his sword, and two of his men drew in the plank and cut the ropes, and the oars slid out, and the *Garfreda* was ploughing the water of the open bay. Thora was taken by surprise, and turned fiercely on Algar.

He met her haughty anger with a grim smile, the sword still in his hand, and Thora, looking at it again, saw that it was Einar's own Longsword, which should have been hanging in her bower. And one of the men near held Einar's great axe and the axe-head that Einar had found under the charred embers of his father's house.

"You would trick the wrong men when you would trick Algar Erikson and his friends twice," said Einar's champion. "None of these men will help you, nor are your parents troubled, for they all know my design. It will not do to raise Hardrada's suspicions when first he sights us, but with you on the forecastle he will think we are friends."

So the galley swept out into the tossing sea and the dreary waste of grey waters swallowed her. In due time she lay off Tvedestrof, heaving idly to the ground swell, and the white frost was thick upon her masts and cords and spars. And now the smile was on Thora's face and the anger in Algar's, for they learnt from the shore-folk that Hardrada had not been home since just before last Yule.

A week and more the *Garfreda* cruised about the inlet, hoping to catch Hardskull unawares, but no ship greeted the gaze of the anxious watchers. Yet one night, unseen, the *Eagle* passed them, bearing Alfdane the Were-man and Astrid to Strongness.

At last, when Algar was driven to mute despair, a ship came hissing round the north point in the midst of a storm that would have driven most vessels to shelter, and she would have swept on had not those aboard her seen the *Garfreda* lying at anchor. She altered her course and tacked slowly in, and Algar saw that she was the *Long Dragon*, Othnar Wolf'sfang's ship.

CHAPTER XIII.

How Astrid Wore the Silver Shoes.

Now the *Eagle* was a faster ship than the *Long Dragon* in rough water, and Alfdane reached Strongness, which is two days sail to the south of Tvedestrof, on the evening of the same day that we fell in with Algar at the latter place.

That night there was great rejoicing in Hrolf's house at the success of the were-man's trick, and loud mirth over the story of the burning of the ships. Einar, bound, kept in a small room near the hall, heard their words and their laughter, and Astrid's voice, and writhed in agony because his bonds held so well. For himself he would have endured his fate with a Viking's stern silence, but that Astrid should be near him and in Hardrada's hands was more than he could bear.

He twisted and rolled about on the floor amongst the rushes trying to break the cords, but they held fast, and the talk and laughter went on unabated. He heard them arrange the wedding-feast for the next afternoon, and heard with despairing joy how Astrid pleaded for his life and scorned Hardskull. And when the night came and some of Hrolf's women took her away so that her tongue was stilled to him, Einar tasted the bitterness of an utterly hopeless fear. In the silence and the darkness of the sunless hours came the helpless terror that goads to madness.

The next day there was great stir in Strongness. The huge beacon on the height was replenished ready for firing, and a watchman placed to scan the sea. The men strewed fresh rushes in the hall, brought plentiful store of resinous pine-logs for the fire, great variety of food and drink from the ships. The women laboured in the kitchen over the roasting joints, and the children, encouraged by their elders, wrestled and fought mock duels on the hillside.

But Hardrada Hardskull spoke ever with Astrid, seeking to win her by fair words before he used force. He promised her much, and when his patience was exhausted darkly hinted at his power. At length Astrid lost her patience, too, and turned upon him with disdain before all the house-folk.

"Do you name yourself a Viking, a son of the sea, a Norseman, one of Odin's men?" she asked scathingly. "Rather should you be named niddering, cub of Fenrir, murderer and outlaw. Is it a *man's* deed to force a defenceless woman into marriage against her will? But I tell you, Hardskull, that I, too, am determined. I shall not come meekly to your bridal chair, and unless you grant me speech with Einar and promise me his life I will do that which will put me out of your power forever—yes, even if I leap into the fire!"

(To be concluded.)

A NEW SERIAL STORY,

ENTITLED:

"WITH THE BLACK FLAG,"

BY WILLIAM WESTALL,

Author of "With the Red Eagle," "The Phantom City," etc., etc.,

Starts in SHORT STORIES next week. Order a copy to be reserved for you, and tell your friends to do the same.

Digitized by Google

SHORT STORIES ABOUT BIRDS.

We devote, every week, two pages of *Short Stories* to pithy, humourous anecdotes similar to those which appear in these columns. A prize of £1 1s. will be sent to the reader who submits the best storyette this week, and a copy of "A Millionaire's Daughter," by Percy White, to each of those whose attempts are used. The anecdotes may be either original or selected; in the latter case the source *must* be stated. The prize of One Guinea offered for the best Storyette in this competition has been won this week by Mr. A. Hutton, 3 Lapage Street, Bradford. Attempts for this week's prize must deal with FUNNY STORIES ABOUT Plumbers, and must reach the Storyette Editor, *Short Stories* Office, Henrietta Street, Strand, London, W.C., by Monday, July 16th, Post-cards only, please.

It was a Prize Bird.

AN old Scotchwoman had a reputation far and near for her fine fowls, for which she had often been awarded prizes at the neighbouring shows.

During the Christmas season a gentleman, staying in the neighbourhood, and hearing nothing but praise of her poultry, resolved to give her a trial.

He thereupon sent an order for the finest turkey she could produce, and after a little delay was delighted on receiving as fine and plump a specimen as he could wish for.

His delight, however, was short-lived, for on attempting to carve the bird he found it so tough as to resist all his efforts.

Enraged and chagrined, he sallied forth to find the woman who, he believed, had swindled him.

After listening to his outburst of righteous wrath and indignation, the old Scot exclaimed:

"Hoots, mon! Why, ye canna tell a guid fowl when ye see it. That turkey has ta'en the first prize at the show for the last seven years."

A. H.

Flying a Pigeon.

A RURAL policeman walking over Romsey Hills early one morning met a man struggling along with a huge clock in his arms.

After passing the man, he observed him carefully set the clock down and look very mysteriously around. This aroused the officer's suspicions. He thereupon walked back up to the man.

"Hello," he inquired. "What's your little game?"

"Oh, it's all right, gaffer," returned the man, "I've come from Stourbridge to fly my blue checker," and so saying he produced the bird from a deep pocket. "My uncle 'as got my watch, so I 'ad to bring the kitchen clock with me to time him. Our Sal 'll look at next door's."

After which the man tossed the bird into the air, picked up his burden, and trudged contentedly home.

A. W. H.

Answered.

A PARROT owned by a doctor gave signs of possessing almost human intelligence the other night.

A party of young folks were spending an hour in guessing riddles.

Finally, a little voice asked. "Why does a dog turn round twice before he lies down?"

Before anybody could answer, the parrot croaked: "One good turn deserves another."

B. Y.

It Died a Natural Death.

IT was one Christmas Day in a mining camp that a Chinese cook brought a steaming fowl to the rough plank table.

Instantly my pards sniffed suspiciously.

Seizing the bird, I found that the only treatment it had received prior to being thrown into the pot to boil was to have its feathers indifferently plucked.

"Who killed this fowl?" I roared.

Ah Chin smiled pleasantly, and replied:

"Me no kill him, sah. He died all by himself!"

W. B.

Mr. Bowser as a Cook.

"YES, Mrs. B., as the cook has gone I purpose making the dinner to-day myself. I can roast that brace of pheasants beautifully. You may go into town, as, when you get back, I will have the best dinner ready you ever sat down to."

During Mrs. B.'s absence, Mr. B. overdid the pheasants—in fact, roasted them into a cinder; and when Mrs. B. came home he had buried the remains in the back yard and told her that the cat had eaten the pheasants when he was looking after something else.

"Indeed," said Mrs. B. "The two pheasants weighed two pounds apiece, equals four pounds. Now I weigh the cat. You see, Mr. B., she is exactly four pounds. I suppose" (pointing to the cat) "that is the birds, and if so where's the cat?"

J. M.

A Gale Blowing.

A CERTAIN lady having bought a parrot of a bird fancier was shocked by certain expressions it used. She took it back, asking to have her money refunded.

The man refused, saying it was quite easy to cure the parrot. He told her the next time the parrot offended her to take it out of the cage, grasp it by the tail, and swing it violently round her head several times.

On reaching home, the bird at once commenced to use a choice selection of language, and the lady proceeded to "take it out" of him.

After swinging the bird round her head till she was tired, she laid the parrot on the table. The bird then got up, and shaking his feathers together, quietly remarked:

"By thunder! What a gale!"

W. J. B.

Digitized by Google

Picked up in the Kitchen.

A PARROT was usually kept in the dining-room, but during the winter was removed to the kitchen for warmth.

When the winter was past it again made its appearance among the family, whom it amused with the new remarks it had picked up in the kitchen.

The first time the bell was rung for something the parrot was heard remarking from his cage:

"Let 'em ring again."

A. A.

A Smart Bird.

AN Irish hen-woman from a Clydeside village went into the Glasgow dog and bird market to sell a live cock which had unfortunately lost an eye in warfare.

While exposing the bird for sale, a man offered her three shillings for it.

"Be off wid yer," exclaimed Biddy, "three bob for a fowl like that!"

"Well," said the man, "it has only one eye."

"Wan eye, did yer say?" roared Biddy; "can't yer see the intelligent cratur is only giving me the wink not to take yer offer?"

W. T.

Then Polly Spoke.

YOUNG HANKINSON (making a call): "You have had that parrot a long time, Miss Laura."

Miss Laura: "Yes, we have had him several years."

"Quite intelligent, is he not?"

"Very. He can imitate almost anything."

"They have a remarkably clever one over at the Casterlins', Miss Laura. It can imitate the sound of a kiss to perfection. Is that among the accomplishments of our feathered friend in the corner?"

Miss Laura (indignantly): "No, sir, he does not attempt an imitation of a sound he is not accustomed to hear, Mr. Hankinson."

The Parrot: "Wait, George, dear, till I take this bird out of the room."

A. L. B.

Rather Vain.

"Do you knew," said an observant gentleman, "that with the exception of a peacock, I believe a canary bird is the vainest of all creatures? Both my wife and myself are very fond of pets, and we keep several of these little songsters always in the house.

"One of the cages was very old, having been in the family for years, and was used as much for tradition's as for economy's sake.

"I had frequently remarked to my wife that I believed the occupant of this cage was ashamed of his shabby dwelling-place, and observed with envious eyes the fact that the other songsters were more artistically lodged.

"Eventually the old cage collapsed and it became necessary to purchase a new one. In order to test my belief in the intelligence of my feathered friend, I made it a point to get him the prettiest little brass house that I could find.

"The effect was magical. No sooner was he turned into his new house than he began to sing as he had never sung before, completely drowning out the music of the other birds and behaving otherwise in a manner altogether becoming to his sudden rise in life."

M. E. R.

"Have You Been at the Raisins?"

SOME time ago in a country house a servant, while cleaning the parrot's cage, was called away during the operation, and inadvertently left the cage door open.

On the servant's return the parrot was out of its cage helping itself to some raisins.

The servant caught the bird by throwing her apron over it, and pulled out the bird's head feathers during its struggle to free itself, causing the parrot to be quite bald-headed.

A few days later a bald-headed gentleman called at the house, and on entering the room in which the parrot was, was greeted by the bird thus:

"Oh! oh! have you been at the raisins?"

R. H. B.

A Ventriloquial Bird.

A CERTAIN collier possessed a linnet which he always maintained was the "finest warbler and cleverest linnet that ever grew feathers."

"Enter him in a show," said a friend to the proud owner one day.

He acted on the advice, but the wonderful bird was passed over altogether by the judges.

"He can't be so clever as you thought he was, Jack," said the friend.

"Oh, but he is," said Jack, "in fact he's a deal too clever. You see, it's this way, one o' my lads at home is a—what d'ye call 'em—a ventriloquist. Well, that bird's listened to my lad till he can do it just as well as him. At this 'ere contest, instead o' opening his mouth he sung wi' it shut as he 'ad learnt, and the idiots o' judges thowt it wor t'other birds. See?"

C. R. F.

Nature and Art.

OLD LADY TO TAXIDERMIST: "You can see for yourself, man. You only stuffed my poor parrot in the summer and here's his feathers tumbling out before your eyes.'

Taxidermist: "Lor' bless ye, 'm, that's the triumph of the art. We stuff 'em that natural that they moults in their proper season."

E. H.

Hard on the Old Lady.

THE crew of a British ship that was cruising off the Norwegian coast had a parrot on board noted for its clever imitation of the human voice.

The hospitable Norwegians were invited to visit the British vessel. Ladies were hoisted on board by means of a chair fastened to a rope running along the yard arm.

Whenever the chair reached the deck the order was given "Let go!"

Mistress Polly had been quietly watching and listening very intently to the whole proceedings, and when the last of the visitors was being boarded, a dignified middle-aged woman, suddenly in a voice that was a capital imitation of the boatswain's, and utterly deceived the sailors, Polly cried out "Let go!" just when the chair was swinging in mid air, and to the dismay of the onlookers, down went the portly old lady into the sea!

M. E. W.

Digitized by Google

Mephistopheles.

THE Franco-German war was just over when I commenced my medical studies in Paris.

I lived in the Rue de l'Ancienne Comédie, which is just at the back of the Odéon Théâtre, in the heart of the Quartier Latin. I lived on the fourth floor—I and M. Magloire.

We were both students—I of medicine, he of the culinary art. Magloire was an enthusiast; so was I. I believe we each of us loved his particular art, as a true artist should, above everything else.

Magloire had begun life as a *marmiton*, he rose to be a journeyman, he became a *sous-chef*; and then he came to Paris to carry out the ambition of his life; he came to Paris to study under the great Capilotade—Capilotade, the cook of cooks, the Napoleon of the culinary art. He was ambitious, you see, this M. Magloire, my fellow-lodger.

"The day will come," he would say to me, "when my talent will be recognized. The day will come—ah and you will live to see it, my friend—when every fashionable dish will be accommodated *à la Magloire*—soup *à la Magloire*, fish *à la Magloire*, *entrées*, pastry, all *à la Magloire*. The bills of fare of the fashionable restaurants will bristle with *plats à la Magloire*. Discreet waiters, on being consulted by their habitual customers, the great *bon-vivants*, will suggest that the latest style is *à la Magloire*; and the man who intends to dine well will order the artistic masterpiece of his proposed dinner to be confectioned *à la Magloire*; and he will never, never, never repent that decision. The recipes for those inestimable *plats* are here," the little man would say with a self-satisfied smile, pointing to his bomb-shell forehead.

But his art was not his only passion; he hated the enemies of his country, the Germans, with a ferocious hatred.

I believe there is nothing that he would have cooked with greater pleasure than Prince Bismarck himself.

"There's nothing good about a German," he would say, "except his enormous appetite and his wonderful digestion."

We lived in adjoining rooms then, M. Magloire and I, and we had a little box of a kitchen, as is frequently the case in French lodging-houses, in common.

I was only too glad to mess with M. Magloire. We lived for next to nothing, but he always gave me a *déjeûner* of four *plats* at twelve o'clock.

Magloire had not an enemy in the world, except Mephistopheles, the cat of our landlord, who occupied the first floor.

This Mephistopheles pervaded the house; and he was a past-master in the predatory art.

Mephistopheles was a red cat, a fiend in feline form. The measure of his iniquity was full; he had eaten the canary of Mlle. Lucie, the pretty milliner on the floor above; he had devoured the favourite starling of the wife of the *concierge*, and, many a time and oft, he had stolen choice morsels from the laboratory of my friend Magloire.

"Magloire," said I to my fellow-lodger one night, as we were consuming a *grog au vin* in my room. "I've taken a liberty with you; I have invited my friend, Dr. von Wurst, to breakfast to-morrow. I felt certain you wouldn't mind when I gave the invitation; but after I left him, I remembered that he was a Prussian, and, knowing your hatred for Prussians, perhaps I had better take him out to breakfast. Can you lend me five francs, for I am dead broke?"

M. Magloire upset his tumbler over his trousers; what was in the tumbler was hot.

"Doctor," cried M. Magloire, and his eyes sparkled with mingled pain and rage, "when you ask me to cook for the enemy of my country, you insult me. I would cook for the ignorant, for the uncultured, even for the converted cannibal; but for the enemy of my country, never. Farewell, perfidious Englishman, you've hurt my feelings," and he rushed from the room.

I heard him lock himself into his bedroom, and there was a dead silence for full a quarter of an hour.

It was suddenly broken by a confused noise of running about in my fellow-lodger's room.

Then there was the sound of a heavy blow—then a silence.

Five minutes afterwards, there was a rap at my door, and Magloire appeared.

He was very red in the face, and he looked very much ashamed of himself.

"Dr. Labels," he said, "forgive my loss of temper; forgive my apparent rudeness, I have repented; embrace me, my friend. Labels," he cried, hurriedly, "your friend—your Prussian friend—shall not be disappointed. I will do my best for you to-morrow, and for him. You are hard up, my friend, but you still have crédit with the wine merchant. Send in a couple of bottles of wine, then, and look to Magloire for the breakfast; leave that to me. I will provide a breakfast

Digitized by Google

—such a breakfast!—a breakfast that Lucullus himself would not be ashamed to assist at. But I've one stipulation to make," cried the little man: "I will compose a special dish of honour for your friend, the Prussian a '*civet de lapin à la Magloire*,' a delicious *plat*, but you must promise me not to partake of it."

"You're not going to poison him?" I asked.

"Heaven forbid!" cried the disciple of Soyer; "but I know the German taste. I prepare a special dish for him, and there will not be enough for all."

I agreed to the bargain; I thanked Magloire effusively, and we bade each other good-night.

"Don't forget that you're to provide the wine," cried Magloire, as he disappeared.

At ten minutes to twelve the next day I arrived with my friend, Dr. von Wurst, at my humble home in the Quartier Latin.

On the road, I broke it very gently to him that my fellow-lodger was an amateur cook.

Prussians are very proud, you know; they were prouder than usual at that particular epoch.

Dr. von Wurst laughed.

"I don't care how the food's cooked," he said, brutally, "so long as there's plenty to eat."

As we ascended the stairs, a delicious odour assailed our nostrils.

There was Magloire in his Sunday clothes; he looked much more like a Marquess than a cook.

He received Dr. von Wurst with effusion. He bowed, he gesticulated, he smiled—there seemed something treacherous and diabolical about that smile of his; and I noticed that he never shook hands with the Prussian.

The table was decorated with flowers; there was a written menu upon it. It ran as follows.

Snail-Soup à la Trochu.
Pied de Mouton à la Gambetta.
Pigeons à la Franc-tireur.
Civet de lapin à la Magloire.
Confitures Diverses.

I must confess it, Dr. Von Wurst swaggered in an offensive manner; but my friend Magloire bore it bravely. The German was helped twice to snail-soup.

"We didn't live like this during the war," he said, with a great laugh. And then the conversation turned upon cooks and cookery, and the miserable German was guilty of a wretched epigram. "Every man should stick to his trade," he said, with his mouth full of *pied de mouton à la Gambetta*; "we Germans are soldiers born—haw, haw!—Frenchmen should leave fighting alone, and stick to cookery; the finest of the fine arts; that's where they shine."

M. Magloire made a horrible grimace and helped the doctor liberally to a great plateful of the rich and fragrant stew that he had entitled "*civet de lapin à la Magloire*."

For full five minutes my German acquaintance did not speak a single word. He ate—how he ate!—silently, enthusiastically, voraciously; and then he held out his plate for more. He picked the bones, he mopped up the rich gravy with his bread, and then he had a third helping, and he finished the entire dishful.

"I never tasted anything like it," he said; and there were tears of gratitude in his eyes.

"I don't suppose you ever did," said M. Magloire, dryly.

"France is avenged," he whispered to me behind his hand.

Then the German gorged himself with *confitures* and drank a good deal more than his share of the wine.

"I verily believe," said Dr. von Wurst, turning a little pale, as he took his leave, "that I've eaten too much breakfast."

A dreadful thought passed through my mind. Had Magloire poisoned him?

We were alone, and then M. Magloire began to laugh till I thought he had gone mad; my friend the cook must have laughed for five minutes by the clock.

When he left off laughing, I asked him what he meant by his mysterious statement that France was avenged.

"Swear you will never betray me, my friend, and I will tell you."

I gave the required pledge.

"You have not seen Mephistopheles to-day," he said in a whisper, "at least, not to recognise him. Last night," he went on, "last night he died. I slew him—alone and unarmed I did it. Mephistopheles is dead, my friend; and I have buried him—buried him, all except his skin and his head, in a living tomb. The man—the German man with the unpronounceable name, the man who has insulted my country and my noble profession—has swallowed the mortal remains of Mephistopheles; he is now digesting him. I hope it will disagree with him; but I don't think it will. A Prussian medical student, sir, can digest anything, even a tomcat. Hadn't we better have a glass of Chartreuse?"

S. J. G.

Digitized by Google

JOHN TREVELYAN, of Kimberley, was still a young man.

Early in life the young Cornishman had discovered that the prospects offered amid the closed-down mines of his native county afforded little scope for ambition such as his; so he said "Good-bye" to the land of Tre, Pol and Pen, and carved out a name and wealth for himself in South Africa, whither so many of his countrymen had gone before.

That he had been eminently successful, was shown by the fact of his return to his native shores—while still in the prime of life—as John Trevelyan, of Kimberley—John Trevelyan, the South African millionaire—the rival of the Barnatos, and the daring speculator, in whom Africa's uncrowned king had scarcely found an inferior.

And society received him with open arms. Before the powerful lever of his vast wealth, the doors of the most exclusive houses of fashionable London opened wide to him.

Unused to the companionship of women—for he was a bachelor still—he was shy and awkward in their presence. Yet the proud eyes of the Lady Gwendolines or Lady Mauds of society were wont to dwell very kindly upon him.

Though the frank simplicity of his character—out of place as it was amid the artificial surroundings of a London drawing-room—earned for him the barely-concealed sneers of the men, yet every match-making mamma, with a marriageable daughter, found his company singularly refreshing.

Thus, before he had been in town a month John Trevelyan found himself the lion of the season.

The men, who envied him his success, wondered how it all came about, until they knew him better.

Then they realised that behind the shy, nervous manner lay a will of iron, and that it was not brute strength, but a keen intellect and daring courage, which had won him such a mighty share of the treasures of the Rand.

Gradually they recognised that the great blue eyes, set in the broad, good-tempered face, had not the expression of a fool; that the massive head was not a proof of intellectual weakness, but necessary for the holding of the great brain within.

And, too, as his fame spread, a hundred stories of his African career were buzzed about, showing how cleverly he had checkmated Rhodes, or outwitted Beit, often turning his opponent's schemes to his own advantage, in the manipulation of the stock and share markets of Kimberley and Johannesburg. Thus he grew to be recognised as a strong man—a man whom it would be good to have as a friend—bad as an enemy.

Yet in the hands of Lady Mildred Fane, he had seemed but as wax. From their first meeting, the man had been her slave, worshipping mutely, and at a distance, till she gave him the cue to speak. Then, forgetting his humble ancestry, and that she was the daughter of an earl, he had summoned up courage to speak, and gone almost mad with delight at the whispered "Yes!"

Afterwards, when alone and puzzling his soul to discover what the beautiful, high-born woman could see in him—Black Trevelyan as they had called him out yonder, even among the swarthy Africanders—he little realised, poor fellow, how carefully the little scene had been thought out. From the drooping of the white lids, every time his eyes met hers, and the clinging touch of the slender hand, which rested upon his, as he led her towards the paddock, that day at Doncaster, when his horse, Pretoria, bearing her colours, raced in a winner of the Cup, to the moment, when standing by the horse's head, she touched his hand with her lips, in mistake for the soft nose of the noble creature, on which that hand rested.

It was all so delightfully artistic in its unconsciousness—the act itself, the after confusion—that it was little wonder that the man, of a man's world only, was deceived. He forgot the temptation of his vast wealth. That the Earl of Mountford—her father—was poor, miserably poor, he knew well, but that that had, in any way, influenced his daughter's choice, strange to say, he never dreamt. The awakening to him, was therefore, all the more bitter.

It was some time in coming, for his wealth—enabling her to gratify every desire of her shallow, pleasure-loving nature—inspired, for a time, some feelings of gratitude, and kept her true feelings within bounds. It was only when he asked some sort of return, that she betrayed herself. He had asked his sister Mary to pay them a visit. She was some ten years older than he; and, save himself, the last of his race. All the rest, including his old father and mother, whose last years had been made comfortable by his toil, slept in the little church-yard of Portcawl.

Mary still lived alone in the old farmhouse, in which he had been born, and the old folks had died.

He had often enough pressed her to come up to London, but she, shy and home-staying, had as often

Digitized by Google

asked to be excused, her woman's instinct telling her how unwelcome such simple homely folk as she would be to the "grand lady," whom brother John had made his wife, and whom she had never seen.

But brother John had been persistent, and at last, with sore misgivings, she had written to say she would come.

It was after reading to his wife the contents of Mary's letter, that John Trevelyan obtained his first glimpse of the smallness of Lady Mildred's soul.

The news of his sister's coming had made him as excited as a school-boy. They had been very dear to each other, these two, and the prospect of making her known to that other one, who had entered his life, and of whom he was so proud, had filled him with delight. But his wife's first words chilled him.

"Really, John, you ought to have had more sense, than to have asked your sister here, in the height of the season, too," she said, a deep frown settling upon her forehead, and her white teeth gnawing her somewhat thin lips. "You know what a lot of engagements we have, and—" with increasing irritation, as he stood silent before her, "how is it possible we can take her into Society?"

"Where is the difficulty?" he asked, "Society made no objections to receiving me, and"—with a generous disparagement of self—"Mary is a thousand times better and more clever than I."

The lady gave a cynical smile.

"Oh, that is quite different!" she returned, "you were a man, you see, and—and—a man of note."

"Rich man" she was about to say, but checked herself.

He read her thoughts.

"You mean that I was a rich man?" he said bitterly.

"Since you put it bluntly—yes!"

"Ah! It is strange, but that never occurred to me before. But to return to Mary. Then I am to understand that you would be ashamed to be seen about with her, though she is my sister, and I give you my word, that she would do you no discredit."

Though stung to the quick, there was still much of pleading in his tones. She might have undone the harm that was done even then, although she had wounded him in what to a Cornishman is a tender point—his family pride.

Instead, she tried an evasion.

"Not quite that, John! Only it might be unpleasant—for her, I mean."

It sounded what it was—a lie.

"I understand," he said, "and I think perhaps the wisest plan would be for me to run down and spend a week or two at the old place. I dare say," with a sigh, "Mary will be just as well pleased."

"Yes, do!" she returned eagerly, relieved to find the matter so easily arranged. "Eustace Lambert will be in town to-morrow, and he can look after me in your absence."

For a moment his love got the better of his mortification, and he caught her in his arms.

"Won't you come with me, Mildred?" he cried. "Spare me a week or two, out of this gay life of yours, and come down with me to the old home in which I was born."

A little laugh escaped her.

"What? Bury myself alive for a whole fortnight in a Cornish fisher village, just at this time too? Why, John, you must be mad!"

The big West-countryman released her as suddenly as he had taken her to his breast.

"Yes, I must have been mad!" he said. "Quite mad!"

A day or two later a Society journal announced in the same column that John Trevelyan, Esq., of Kimberley, had left town for a short stay at his country seat in Cornwall; and that the Honourable Eustace Lambert—

He had summoned up courage and gone almost mad with delight at the whispered "Yes."

Digitized by Google

The Cornishman had made himself conspicuous.

attaché to the Embassy at Vienna—had received leave of absence, and returned to England.

It was three weeks later when the millionaire returned.

Finding his wife was attending a reception, he resolved to spend the evening at his club.

It was eight o'clock, and most of the members were at dinner.

The Cornishman had, however, dined *en route*, so made his way to the reading room, where he buried himself in the pages of a paper.

The room at the time of his entry, was unoccupied, but shortly, two gentlemen entered, and not noticing the man ensconsced in a big arm-chair, continued the conversation upon which they had evidently been engaged before entering.

"So he has not yet returned?" observed the one.

The first speaker gave a long, low whistle.

"Uncommonly confiding chap he must be. I wonder if he knows what spoons she and Lambert used to be? Everyone thought before Lambert went to Vienna that they were going to make a match of it."

Trevelyan gave a cough to apprise the speakers of his presence, but in the rattle of a passing vehicle, it was unheard.

The conversation proceeded.

"Ah! Old Mountford put a stop to that. Not that it would have made much difference either way. Lady Mildred liked the cub well enough, but she knew her value in the matrimonial market, and—and preferred a cheque in payment on the Bank of England, to the Bank of Love."

Three weeks before, and Trevelyan would have risen to his feet and struck the speaker senseless to the floor, but now he kept silent.

"And what a prize Trevelyan was!"

"And how useful to the family! They tell me old Mountford has cleared off the mortgages on his estates——"

"And," interrupted the other meaningly, "Lambert has paid his debts."

"Indeed!" and the speaker laughed softly. "Lucky chap! Wish I'd a pretty cousin with a wealthy husband to take a sisterly interest in me."

"Yes, I think you'd be rather more to be envied than the husband. Poor devil!"

"Poor devil indeed!" and the speakers strolled out.

John Trevelyan sat as if carved in stone, his eyes fixed vacantly upon the glowing embers of the fire, his great brown hands gripping the sides of the chair, till it seemed as if the wood and leather alike must give under the strain.

For some minutes he sat thus in silent thought, then a peculiar smile passed over his face, and he rose suddenly from his chair, and with the air of a man who had come to some great decision, strode out of the club house and away.

The next issue of the Society paper, which had previously announced John Trevelyan's departure from town, gave publicity to his return, and stated furthermore that the millionaire had sailed for South Africa, with the intention of serving in one of the irregular regiments, now being formed at the Cape.

* * * * *

Twelve months had passed.

The Union Jack had replaced the Vierkleur over the Staat Haus of Pretoria.

Once again had the Empire's sons added a glorious—if bloody page to the Empire's history.

But alas! the cost in human life had been heavy, and the tracks of the victors might almost have been retraced by the mounds marking the graves of those who had fallen by the way.

Under one of these raised in the very shadow of the Drakenburgs—lay John Trevelyan of Kimberley; the great mountains which towered above him, forming a fitting monument for the great millionaire who slept below.

The news of his being "killed in action" had not surprised those who had witnessed his conduct on the field—for in an army where bravery was a quality

Digitized by Google

common to the humblest soldier—the Cornishman had made himself conspicuous. Indeed, such was his reckless disregard of danger, that in any other man it would have aroused the suspicion that he courted death.

But in John Trevelyan, upon whom Fortune had smiled so kindly that at forty he was a millionaire, and the husband of the daughter of one of England's proudest peers, and the, perhaps, most beautiful woman of her time, such a supposition was manifestly absurd.

So the great world, who read of his death, spoke of the pity of it, that one to whom life must have been so sweet had been so prematurely cut off.

But so many other "great ones" had met their deaths in the war, that John Trevelyan was soon forgotten.

It was only when, six months later, the rumours of his widow's intended early marriage to her cousin, Eustace Lambert, leaked out, that the interest in the dead millionaire re-awakened.

He was dead, and Lady Mildred and her lover were very, very lucky. And so thought Lady Mildred herself, as she and Eustace Lambert stood one bright, spring morning, at the altar of the fashionable church—St. Ethelred's-in-the-west—for no tender feeling with regard to the dead husband cast a shadow over her path.

The clergyman, who officiated, was one of the most talked of men of his time, for his heroic services in the recent war, in attending the wounded, had made him a popular idol.

A scion of royalty itself had consented to stand as the Hon. Eustace Lambert's best man, while the *élite* of Society had gathered to witness the ceremony. Could anything be more promising of future happiness.

With the ring upon her finger, beside that other one placed there by the man lying under the African veld, and the last words of the ceremony still ringing in her ears, as she followed the clergyman to the vestry, Lady Mildred thought not.

Not even when the clergyman—leaning over her to direct her signature in the marriage register—gave a start of surprise, as she signed herself for the last time, Mildred Trevelyan, widow, did she have the slightest premonition of evil. And though the question which followed annoyed her, it gave her no inkling of what was to come.

"Pardon me," he said, speaking in a startled tone, "but is it possible that your late husband was the celebrated Mr. Trevelyan of Kimberley, who was killed in South Africa?"

"He was," she replied impatiently, thinking the reference to her late husband at such a time, singularly mal-apropos.

The cheerful face of the cleric, which, a few minutes previously had been wreathed in smiles of congratulation, became troubled.

"Then"—speaking in grave, constrained tones—"I have to confess myself guilty of terrible negligence—my only excuse for which must be, that the effect of a bullet wound in the head, received during the campaign, has caused me frequent lapses of memory. But"—with a glance of sympathy at the bridegroom, and a second, rather less sympathetic, at the bride herself—"perhaps it will be better for me to call upon your lawyers? Possibly the same firm—Strongall and Travers—who, I believe, managed your late husband's affairs, still represent you?"

The lady inclined her head in the affirmative, restraining her mingled curiosity and indignation, under a mask of cold indifference. But her husband had less self control.

"You have some message from the late Mr. Trevelyan, I suppose? You were present at the engagement in which he fell, I believe?"

The clergyman bowed gravely.

"I was!" he said, "John Trevelyan died in my arms. I regret that I have not carried out his instructions sooner, so that Lady Lambert and yourself might have been spared the shock of hearing them now."

A silence fell upon all within the vestry, broken only by the impatient hum of those who awaited the bridal party without.

After what seemed an interminable silence, the clergyman proceeded:

"It was at Klepfontein where the late Mr. Trevelyan fell," he said. "He was dangerously wounded while taking part in a charge of Brabant's Horse, in which, as you are doubtless aware, he held a captaincy. From the first he recognised that his case was hopeless, and when the bearers arrived to carry him to the collecting station, by his own request he was allowed to remain on the field where he had fallen.

"He stated, however, that he wished to see the senior surgeon or myself, as he had something of importance to communicate. But the surgeon was needed elsewhere, by others to whom his services were of some aid, so I hurried to his side. I found him dying fast, but perfectly conscious. Without going into details, the hearing of which would be of a necessity, painful,"—here the speaker looked hard at Lady Mildred—"he communicated to me his wishes with regard to his property—or in other words, made a will."

Lady Mildred smiled superciliously.

"He made that in my favour before leaving England, and the will has already been proved," she said, "so another was quite unnecessary."

"But the second revokes the first, and leaves his sister Mary his sole heiress."

"What!"

The exclamation arose from one and all.

Had a shell exploded in the midst of the party, the consternation could not have been greater.

It was Lady Mildred who first recovered herself.

"But this is mere nonsense," she said. "I shall make his sister an allowance suitable to her position, but I shall certainly not be quixotic enough to give up the fortune, which is rightfully mine, in obedience to the whim of a dying man."

The clergyman shook his head.

"I'm afraid you will have no choice," he replied. "On the battle-field, the spoken will of the dying revokes all others."

Lady Mildred made no reply.

Like one in a painful dream, she placed her arm within that of her husband's, and staggered out of the vestry while the rest of the bridal party followed.

And those who waited without marvelled much what had happened to cast such a gloom on the proceedings.

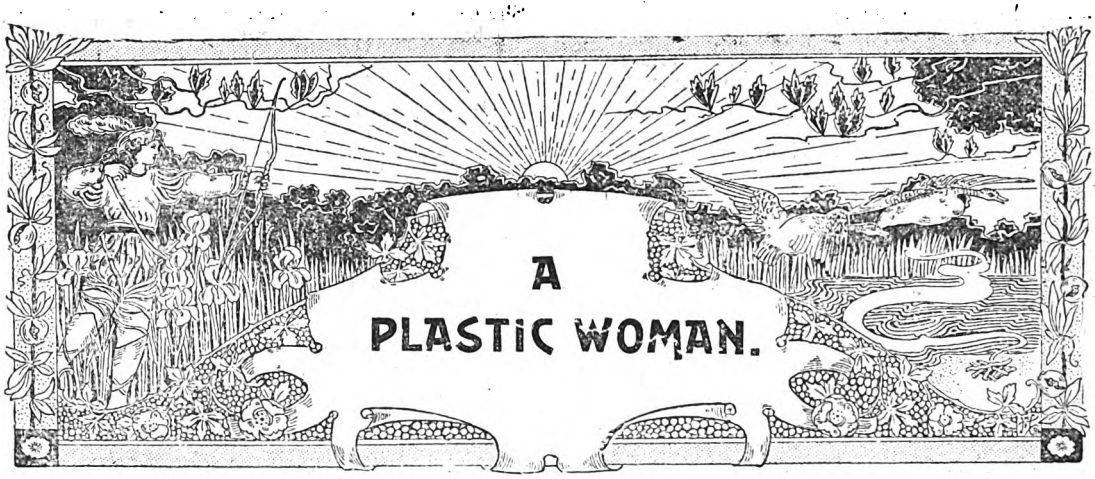
But by-and-bye the story got wind, and the few who had known the millionaire in Africa, said they were not surprised; no matter how the game went against him, John Trevelyan, of Kimberley, generally managed to win the odd trick.

H. BARTLETT.

"SEE how I can count, mamma," said Kitty.

"There's my right foot. That's one. There's my left foot. That's two. Two and one make three. Three feet make a yard, and I want to go out and play in it."

Digitized by Google



A PLASTIC WOMAN.

For many nights now he had sat up until midnight simply worrying about her, and trying to see a way by which he might place her, his little ailing wife, in some sheltered nook of the world where only the softest winds blew. He was willing enough to face tempests himself, and to forget even Dot his only child.

The night preceding the day of his death he never undressed at all—through sheer preoccupation of mind and utter weariness.

Upon leaving his office early in the evening he had forgotten his hat, and had to return for it, so deep was he in thought. He neglected to light his pipe, took a wrong tram, and had to walk a long way to another that ran crosswise; and, finally, when he arrived home he sat on the bottom stair just dangling his boot by its lace until Dot spoke.

"Shall you take your boots up with you, or leave them down here?" she asked, and leaning her elbows on her pinafored knees looked eagerly into his disturbed face as she put the question.

"Eh?" he asked absently. Then he drew off his other boot, and dangled that by the lace, too,

The little girl wrinkled her forehead impatiently.

"You're not listening to me, farver," she said, "you're just finking!"

The man started, grasped his two boots firmly, and stood up.

"Come along, Dot," he said. "I'm ready."

He turned towards the staircase, his boots in one hand, and the other outstretched for his small daughter's.

She stooped, and gathered her tiny tan shoes into one hand, and slipped the other into her father's.

Together they went up the wide staircase, pausing at every creak, now and again uttering a whispered "H—s—h!" now and again pressing each other's fingers encouragingly.

They stopped outside a door which stood ajar, and the man peeped into the fire-lit darkness of the room. Under his arm the little girl peeped too. Then they stepped softly into the room together.

In an easy chair beside a slumbering fire a thin, white woman was sitting. The firelight showed the hollows under her eyes and in her cheeks. The man stooped over her and kissed her forehead.

"My poor little sufferer!" he said tenderly.

The little girl possessed herself of a white, blue-veined hand.

"My poor little muvver!" she murmured gently.

The woman moved fretfully, drew away her forehead, drew away her hand.

"Every time that child can manage it she gets into this room," she said. "Send her away."

"Go away, Dot! Go to bed," ordered the man. "Why, good gracious, it's after nine—and you up yet! What's Jane about?"

"What, indeed," sighed his wife. "I can't look after her."

"Of course not," said the young husband in a shocked tone.

The child tip-toed to the door. She had kissed her mother's hand, but only on the landing outside did she remember her father, and then because he was beside her, and speaking to her in his gentle, repressed way.

"My little girl forgot daddy," he said, and lowered his fair head to her fairer one. "She is always forgetting him, isn't she?"

He kissed her, patted her head, and returned to the room. Its heaviness struck him again.

"I suppose the room doesn't seem close to you, darling?" he asked his wife, looking tenderly down to her white, wan face.

"The whole world seems close to me," she answered, and began to sob hysterically—"and you come home at nine o'clock, and——"

"I had so much to do," said the young man eagerly, "and I brought home what I could to do later on to-night."

"And you never even asked me what the doctor said, and——"

"I was coming to that, my queen," he said eagerly. "To tell the truth, I was too anxious. What did he say?"

The woman's sobs stilled gradually.

"He—he was most sympathetic," she said. "I knew it was not nerves, though forty Dr. Prings said it was. And I the sort of woman for nerves?"

"Good gracious, no!" said her husband quickly.

"Dr. Feversham says I am suffering from extreme debility. I'm to have no house-keeping worries—Dot had better go to school; she is six, and very noisy. I'm not to sit reading, or sewing, or practising. In fact, he seems to think I'd better go right away."

Her husband wrinkled up his forehead.

"Well?" she asked.

Digitized by Google

He touched her head softly.

"I must think of a plan to make my wee bird sing again," he said. "You decide where you would like to go, darling, while I run over these ugly papers. Just decide where—in reason—and I will work the pros and cons."

He pondered over them next day—until he died. His wife had decided to warehouse the furniture, send Dot to boarding school, and spend the summer months in Cornwall.

"When I return," she said, "we can decide whether it would be better to start another home or to live in a hotel. The last is the freer life."

Merely to think of selling his furniture worried him immeasurably; and boarding school for his wee daughter! He wondered vaguely whether in the plan of things he and the child might not live together. She liked him well enough, he knew, although she gave him none of that absorbing love she showered on her mother.

He left his office, wondering and pondering. Afterwards his utter absent-mindedness was referred to in the newspapers, for he drew back a door and stepped forward to a lift that was two floors above his head. The drop was thirty-five feet and his death instantaneous, so that he may verily be said to have been worrying over her unto the very depths of the Great Shadow.

She sold the furniture, sent Dot to boarding school, and went to Cornwall, for the shock of his death laid her low and brought on an attack of "nervous prostration," as was to have been expected, of course.

* * * * *

She married again, eighteen months later. She was still young—twenty-eight—fragile, and girlish-looking. She had not out-lived sentimental words and ways, and her health was still declared to be "only fair." It was a matter of regret to her that her second engagement was so brief. A "brief song" she called it. She was engaged and married in the twinkling of an eye almost. Her second husband was the city manager of a big iron company and always busy.

On the honeymoon (which was limited to a week) she told him that she was breathless from the bustle of being married, and he laughed at her, taking her face between his capacious hands the while.

"I'm sorry in a way for you to have missed all the bridal flummery you women think so much of," he said, "but we hadn't time for it, had we? Moreover, it would have been purchased too dearly—a lot of worry and loss of money and health—and what to gain?"

"What indeed!" she said, and looking into his face the far-away attractions of the loveliest of gowns were as nothing to her—she was still sentimental.

They talked "plans" on the last day of the honeymoon, and the big, strong-limbed bridegroom lay stretched out on the grass, his bride keeping the flies from his face with an improvised fan. Upon her previous honeymoon the positions of bride and bridegroom had been reversed.

"I think I will leave Dot at school," said Dot's mother; "she used to worry me terribly when poor Arthur was alive."

The bridegroom laughed.

"Why, little woman, that would never do," he said. "To begin with, we can't afford the expense of that school for Dot. You must teach her till she's older. It will do you no end of good to go over your A B C again. Then, I don't believe in separating a child from its

THE
BEST OF ALL BEVERAGES
AND THE
CHEAPEST.

GOOD!
IT'S
MASON'S
Extract
of Herbs

8 Gallons
Prime Beer
for 6d.

Sample Free for 6 Stamps.
AGENTS WANTED EVERYWHERE.
NEWBALL & MASON,
NOTTINGHAM.

"WORTH A GUINEA A BOX."
BEECHAM'S
PILLS
FOR ALL
BILIOUS & NERVOUS DISORDERS,
Sick Headache, Constipation, Wind and Pains in Stomach, Impaired Digestion, Disordered Liver, and Female Ailments.
SALE OVER SIX MILLION BOXES YEARLY.
In Boxes, 1s. 1½d. and 2s. 9d. each, with full directions.
Prepared only by the Proprietor,
THOMAS BEECHAM, St. Helens, Lancashire.
Sold by all Druggists and Patent Medicine Dealers everywhere.

Digitized by Google

mother, providing of course the mother's influence is for good."

"And you think mine would be?" asked the woman eagerly.

Even those first and early compliments of his were rare, and longed for by her.

"If I didn't," he said bluntly, "I'd be one of the first to separate the pair of you. Oh, by the way, I've decided for us to live in a house of my own that has fallen vacant. I'll give you a cheque, and you must arrange it as well as it and your woman's wit will let you with furniture."

"Where is the house?" asked his bride, and felt a glow of pride in that this careless big man should intrust the purchasing of his household gods to her.

"A good way out of London, little woman; a good twenty miles. But it's country, and the train service is good and that's the main thing. You won't be lonely, for you'll have your house and Dot and me—enough for any woman to look after. There's a lovely view from the front of the house and a big wood at the back."

* * * * *

It was after they had been in the heart of the country for four months that she had her first ailment—she called it a "return of her debility."

Dot was tender and tip-toed about the house, her little face all puckered up with its old-time anxiety. When her stepfather rushed home at mid-day she held up a warning finger to him as she had done a hundred times to her own father. But the big man only looked at her from under his bushy eyebrows, and said:

"Eh?" absently.

"Poor mother is ill again," said the child. "Come and peep at her. H-s-h!"

But he strode quite noisily to the door indicated, and omitted to take off his boots.

On the sofa in front of the fire, was his wife, so well as he could make out for rugs and wrappings.

"What's the matter?" he asked abruptly.

"A return of her old debility," answered the child softly. Then, catching his look: "She's very bad. She has too much housekeeping worry, and I'm so noisy generally and such a nuisance."

"Fiddle-de-dee," said the man.

He crossed to the sofa.

"What's the matter, Allie?" he asked.

"I really don't know," she whimpered. "I suppose I'm beginning to be run down again."

"Good gracious!" he said, in tremendous disgust. "Are you one of those clockwork women, who 'run down' every now and again, and send their relations stark mad."

A flush ran into her face.

"Oh, no," she said hurriedly. "Oh, no, Jim, there's very rarely anything wrong with me."

"That's a good thing," said the man. "Then it's nerves, or biliousnesss. We'll treat you for the latter. Go and fetch that bottle of fruit salt from the dining-room, Dot, and a tumbler of cold water. Now my good woman, get up and mix yourself a dose, and then go out into the sunshine. Dot too. I've got to catch the first train down to the works."

"But I thought you'd come home," said his wife, her lip drooping.

"Only for papers. I'm worried; the men at the works are threatening a strike."

"Higher wages?" asked his wife.

"Yes, and any amount of privileges which they're not likely to get."

"I'll get you some lunch," said his wife, casting aside her wrappings.

"Well, hurry up, then," said the man carelessly; "I've only half an hour. Call me when it's ready."

He forgot her "debility." He tramped round the room, muttering, and wrinkling his forehead, and striking one hand now and again with the other.

And his wife bustled round the house and in and out of the kitchen. She bent over the fire herself, in spite of her debility, and both she and Dot spoke in rapid whispers, in case loud tones should disturb the master of the house.

And when all was ready, he said, "By heavens, the woman in the kitchen can't cook a chop yet. A woman who can't grill is neither fit for man nor anything else; so sack her."

It was after he had gone that his wife opened the cookery-book, and read the chapter on "Grilling."

"We'll have chops to-day, Dottie," she said. "I'll experiment on us, and then when father wants a chop, I'll say, 'I'll do it myself, if it's to be well done.' That's what he always says, isn't it?"

"Yes," said the child, and heaved a sigh. "What a good man father is, isn't he?"

"The best man on earth," announced the woman. "We shall never be half good enough to live with him, Dot, but we'll try. And, Dot, never tell him again if I've been ill; you see, men don't like women to be ill."

"But my own daddie didn't mind."

"No, but he was different," said her mother, and left the impression that "different" was "inferior."

So into the woman's and the child's heart now entered the desire and determination to "live up to" the man they had come to live with.

They gave him a sort of worshipping love with as strong an admixture of tenderness in it as they dared to introduce. The worship he accepted blindly enough, being, possibly, unaware of it, but the tenderness he would have none of, and only met it with rough neglect and bluntness.

It came to be a rule in the house that all home worries must be kept from him, aches and pains be slurred over, tears be covered with smiles, so long as he was by to see.

At the close of their first year of married life, his wife said smilingly:

"Darling, I was thinking all day of your worries. Couldn't you let them slip, and take a tiny holiday?"

"Eh?" he said absently. "It's what I need, goodness knows, but I can ill afford it."

"Leave that to me," said his wife eagerly, "I've been plotting and planning, and saving. I've enough for you to go to Hastings or Eastbourne for a fortnight."

"But you and Dot?"

"Oh, we'll be all right. To us life is all a flower-garden, but you fight the world."

"True enough," said the man. "Well, you'll have to screw down house expenses a bit. A woman and a child should cost very little. Then I'll go."

"I'll be very saving," said his wife. "Only trust me—and take care of your precious health."

And she kissed Dot joyfully that night, whispering:

"We'll pack him away, won't we? And make him get a bit of brightness into his life. Poor father, who works so hard for mother and Dot!"

Lilian Turner.

Digitized by Google

CHIVERS'

DELICIOUS! WHOLESOME! REFRESHING!

FLAVOURED WITH RIPE FRUIT JUICES.

DR. A. B. GRIFFITHS, Ph.D., F.R.S.E. (Edin.): "I have no hesitation in stating that Chivers' Jellies are the best I have ever examined."

WOMAN'S SIGNAL: "Absolutely clear and pleasant to look at on the table, and the flavour simply perfect."

A FAMILY GROCER: "We think them superior to any others, consequently have given up selling any other makes."

FREE SAMPLE on receipt of post-card. S. CHIVERS and SONS, Histon, Cambridge.

JELLIES.

IMPORTANT TO WEAK MEN

And those suffering from nervous exhaustion, loss of vigour, Varicocele, &c., can be successfully and permanently cured without operation or detention from business by THE DR. COLLINS most improved and rational method medical science has ever yet produced.

Particulars and proofs of successful cures sent free on receipt of address.

THE COLLINS REMEDY CO.,

Gothic House, 9 Erskine Street, Liverpool.

TOO STOUT

I was for years; by chance I came across a simple home remedy that reduced me from 17st. to 10st. 12lb., and I will willingly send particulars **free** to any sufferer enclosing stamp. Mrs. L. E. FELL, 195 Oxford Street, London, W.

NOSE

MACHINES. LEES RAY. S. S. Dept., South Castle St, Liverpool, is a specialist on Ugly and Red Noses. Send stamp for particulars of his patent scientific Nose Improvers. Red Nose Cure, medically approved, 3/9. Outstanding Ear Machines 11/6.

SILVER QUEEN CYCLES.

IMMENSE STOCK. New and secondhand, FROM 10s. MONTHLY. Carriage paid. Free wheels and rim brakes. Illustrated Price Lists Post Free.—THE SILVER QUEEN CYCLE Co. Ltd., 221 Tottenham Court Rd, London, W

Send for Dr. EVANS'S (U.S.A.)

PAMPHLET ON NERVOUS DISEASES

OF ALL KINDS.

THIS PAMPHLET describes all the symptoms which arise from Diseases of the NERVOUS SYSTEM. It is up-to-date, having been compiled after years of labour and experience in the Treatment of these Maladies. It is complete, practical, and can be readily understood and acted upon. It gives pure and simple advice to Sufferers. Send stamped addressed envelope to GEORGE WRIGHT, Esq., Colne House, REMBRANDT ROAD, LEE, LONDON, S.E. Name this Paper.

KEATING'S POWDER

KILLS BUGS FLEAS MOTHS BEETLES

TINS 3D 6D & 1S THE NEW BELLOWS 9D

BETTER THAN DUMB-BELLS

THE

Health and Strength

Grip Machines

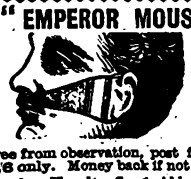
—because their use secures an ever-varying width and intensity of grip, instead of one fixed tension. A varying grip stimulates the rapid circulation of the blood in all directions, whereas the dumb-bell fixed grip draws the blood from the heart to the extremities. The H. & S. Grip Machines are now used by all the leading strong men and athletes, and in all the principal schools of physical culture. We will gladly send you a pair ON APPROVAL on receipt of cash. Prices (including wall chart of photo exercises from life and copy of HEALTH AND STRENGTH Magazine):

Wood Handles, 2/3 per pair, 2/6 Post Free.
Rubberoid " 3/3 " 3/6 "
Cork " 4/3 " 4/6 "

Four strengths—Lady's, Men's, and Athlete's, Extra Strong Athlete's, or Special Finish, 1/- per pair ex.

HEALTH-STRENGTH Co., 73a Farringdon St., E.C.

"EMPEROR MOUSTACHE TRAINER."



Invented by German Imperial Barber. Used by the German Emperor. Cures a straggling, ragged, etc., moustache, and quickly forces it to assume any desired style of arrangement. Worn at night. Sent per return post and free from observation, post free for 2/6 or (finer quality) 3/6 only. Money back if not satisfactory.

London Novelty Co., 1 Abbotts Road, Upton Park, E.C.

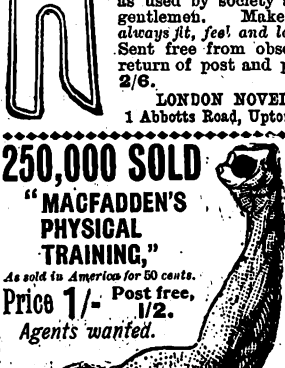
DON'T BE "BAGGY" AT THE KNEES OF YOUR TROUSERS

K

when for 7/6 you can have a pair of the "K" Trousers Stretchers, as used by society and military gentlemen. Makes Trousers *always fit, feel and look like new.* Sent free from observation per return of post and post free for 2/6.

LONDON NOVELTY Co.,
1 Abbotts Road, Upton Park, E.C.

250,000 SOLD



"MACFADDEN'S PHYSICAL TRAINING,"

As sold in America for 50 cents.

Price 1/- Post free, 1/2.

Agents wanted.

The Famous Book By Professor B. A. Macfadden, the Leading American Physical Culture Authority.

128 Pages, Art Paper, 60 American Art Engravings. Chapters on Everything connected with development, maintenance of Health, Strength, etc., by Author, who transformed himself from a likely consumptive into a Champion Welter Weight Wrestler. Wrestling is the severest of all tests of physical fitness. Forewarned is forearmed. Be forewarned. Send for book now, and learn how to make yourself as fit as possible for the battle of life.

A COUPON VALUE 1s. FREE with Book.

"Health-Strength" Co., 73a Farringdon Street, E.C.

The Trainer of several well-known Cycling Champions tells in the form of a small illustrated book how everyone may become possessed of a pair of well developed legs with big calves. The advice if followed will transform the worst pair of 'spindle shanks' into symmetrical and strong legs. No medicines, food, or anything costing money required. Send P.O and stamps for 1/1 and book will be sent under cover and post free. *Money back if not satisfied after month's trial.*

Champion Cyclist Trainer, 1 Abbot Rd., East Ham, E.

WHO TO MARRY. WHEN

PLAIN TALK by the most celebrated American Medical Author and Specialist, Dr. Foote. A wonderful book. Nearly 1,000 pages. 200 anatomical illustrations. 36 true-to-life coloured illustrations. Over a million copies sold. *Ours is the genuine unabridged American Edition, with coloured plates.* Post free, 6/6.

SHOULD MARRY London Novelty Co., 1 Abbotts Rd., Upton Park, E.C. **TO MARRY**

GOOD HEALTH,

or, The Physiology of Dietetics and Massage. By F. C. IRELAND, B.Sc. Food is the fuel of the human system, and has the most important bearing on health. A Clergyman writes: ". . . Simply worth its weight in gold." The *Liverpool Courier* says: "A readable and suggestive book on the means by which good health may be secured through the regulation of diet and intelligent use of Massage. . . . Mr. Ireland's book will doubtless be welcome to many persons desirous of amending their imperfect health." 224pp., Cr. 8vo, cloth gilt. Price 2/6 net. Post free 2/10 from

HEALTH-STRENGTH CO., 73a Farringdon St., E.C.

Digitized by Google

. . . THE . . .
BRAIN GYMNASIUM.

IN these competitions a prize of £2 will be awarded each week to the competitor whose attempt we receive giving the correct solutions of all the puzzles. If more than one is absolutely correct the prize of £2 will be given to the first correct attempt dealt with.

If no lists of absolutely correct solutions are sent in the first prize will be awarded to the competitor whose attempt is first dealt with showing the fewest mistakes.

Each week we shall award in addition to the above, either ten of our silver-plated pencil-cases or ten popular six shilling novels, to be distributed amongst the competitors whose attempts are absolutely correct and have failed to win the first prize, or, if no complete lists of correct solutions are received, to those whose attempts show the fewest mistakes.

Write all your solutions on one sheet of paper, putting the number against each. Post the batch in an envelope marked "Brain Gymnasium," to reach the Editor, SHORT STORIES, 18 Henrietta Street, Covent Garden, W.C., by first post on Monday, July 23rd, 1900.

Readers are invited to submit puzzles, acrostics, conundrums, word-squares, etc., for publication on this page. A gold-plated pencil-case will be given to each reader whose attempts are used. All attempts must be vouched for as original, and, of course, it is distinctly understood that the sender of a puzzle must neither compete in the competition nor divulge to anyone the solution. Any reader found infringing this rule will be severely dealt with.

No. 169.

NAME at least three English words, each of which contains all the vowels and the letter "y."

No. 170.

I AM an article of adornment; change my head and I am part of the body; again, and I am a spice; again, and I am a fish; again, and I am a step.

No. 171.

THE first and third letters, in order, of words signifying: A fruit, crooked, food, a drink, passion, will give the name of a battlefield in South Africa.

No. 172.

RE-ARRANGE the following letters to form a double word-square, the connecting word of which is the name of an English town:

AAAAAAAA DD EEEEEE GG II NN RRRRRR S TTTT.

No. 173.

MY initials, when re-arranged, will form the name of an English general: A kitchen utensil, a flower, a dance, a foreign country, a puzzle, a town in Germany, a garden implement, a battlefield, a means of locomotion.

No. 174.

I AM a word of ten letters.

My 10, 3, 2, 1, is a part of a flower.
My 6, 5, 7, 8, is a piece of water.
My 3, 4, 8, 1, is to cut.
My 10, 5, 8, 2, is a fish.
My 8, 9, 6, is a part of the face.
My 4, 7, 10, 2, is a flower.

RESULT OF BRAIN GYMNASIUM.
Nos. 142 to 147.

THE prize of £2 has been awarded this week to Mr. William Armstrong, 11 Marchmont Road, Edinburgh, whose solution was the first correct one dealt with.

A copy of "The Reverend Annabel Lee," by Robert Buchanan, has been sent to:

George Ward, 1 Anngir Street, Dublin.
Miss C. O. Baikie, 161 Plashet Grove, East Ham.
W. H. Bailey, 54 Milton Street, Westoe, South Shields.
J. C. Shingler, 29 Lower Breck Road, Liverpool.
Ben Davies, 7 Tanybryn Street, Aberdare.
E. Friend, Eastern Road, Romford.
A. W. Johnson, Woodland House, Manor Road, Barnet. N.
H. Dangerfield, Plymouth House, Kingham Hill, Chipping Norton.
Mrs. Jemima Ineson, Kinloch Terrace, Arbroath, N.B.
Newton Hinder, 44 Brigstocke Road, St. Paul's, Bristol.

SOLUTIONS TO PUZZLES.
Nos. 148 to 155.

No. 148. Lovers are blind to obstacles.
No. 149. Be kind, and mind you don't tease.
No. 150. Took our forces to seize the enemy's positions.
No. 151. Be underhand in nothing and essay to excel.
No. 152. Be wise and honest too.
No. 153. I excel in obesity.
No. 154. Be in time for tea between five and six.
No. 155. Envy none and be content.

"THE DOMESTIC BLUNDERS OF WOMEN"

By "A Mere Man." With Sketches by "Yorick." Crown 8vo. Cloth, price 3s. 6d.

"Clever and severely—but not more than justly—critical upon women's economy."—*Sunday Sun.*

"Bold, unsparing, comprehensive, and it raises questions of absorbing interest to both men and women . . . his criticisms show penetration and sagacity."—*Hearth and Home.*

C. ARTHUR PEARSON Ltd., Henrietta Street, W.C.

THIS MAN IS . . . .
GROPING BLINDLY
for a good weekly newspaper. If he'd keep his eyes open he'd see that
The Illustrated Weekly News
IS THE BEST.

SHORT STORIES ADVERTISEMENT RATES.

Single column, per inch, per insertion	£0 10 0
Double " "	1 0 0
Full page inside, facing page of matter, either white paper or 2nd or 3rd page of cover, or back page, per insertion	10 0 0
Half-page " " "	5 9 0
Quarter-page " "	2 10 0
Eighth-page " "	1 5 0
Front page, whole "	12 10 0
" half	6 5 0

All spaces above one-eighth of a page are charged at per page rate.
Series discount: 5 per cent. for 13, 10 per cent. for 26, 15 per cent. for 52 insertions.
Black blocks are charged 25 per cent. extra. All advertisements are subject to approval. All copy must be sent in by Noon on Tuesday, July 17th, if intended for the issue on sale July 31st, and dated August 4th. The Proprietors reserve the right to hold over or suspend the insertion of any advertisement without prejudice to other insertions on order. All communications should be addressed to the Advertisement Manager, "Pearson's Weekly" Offices, Henrietta Street, London, W.C.

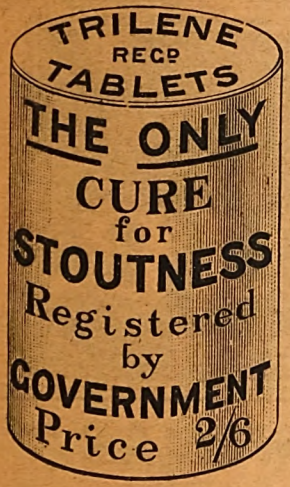
Printed and Published by C. ARTHUR PEARSON LTD., at Pearson's Weekly Buildings, Henrietta Street, London, W.C.

Digitized by Google

ALL FAT PEOPLE

Can be **CURED** by taking

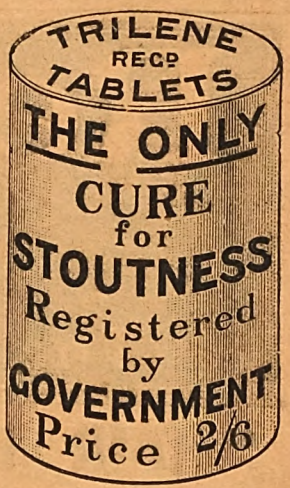
TRILENE TABLETS Regd.



For a few weeks. They will safely REDUCE WEIGHT and CURE CORPULENCY PERMANENTLY, whether Abdominal or General. They are small, agreeable, harmless, sent privately, and never fail to Improve both HEALTH and FIGURE without change of Diet.

An English Countess writes: "Your Trilene Tablets act admirably."

Send **2s. 6d.** to **THE TRILENE ASSOCIATION**, 66 Finsbury Pavement, London, E.C.



SAMPLES OF TESTIMONIALS.

"87 Alexandra Road, Norwich, October 19th, 1896.

Gentlemen,—In reference to Trilene Tablets, I may say that my wife found the greatest possible benefit from the use of them; their action was rapid, and exceeded our utmost expectations, as they were also most beneficial to the respiratory organs. My wife was many years growing so stout, but although the disease was, I consider chronic, the Tablets soon reduced the same completely. You have our united thanks, and if I can do anything to promote your interests I will freely use my utmost endeavours to do so.

"Yours faithfully, J. R. CANHAM."

Mrs. DARNLEY SMITH, Landscove Vicarage, Ashburton, writes: "Trilene Tablets have reduced my weight very much. I am so much lighter in every way, and better in health."

COUNTESS SECKENDORFF, of Berlin, writes: "The Tablets greatly benefited me personally, and I am recommending them to friends."

Miss CHATTERTON, 7 Salisbury Villas, Banstead, Surrey, says: "I weighed 12st. 8lb., but am now 11st. and getting much better."

Nurse CROUCHER, at Mrs. Bennett's, 14 Buckleigh Road, Streatham, says: "I lost 9lb. from the box I took."

"77 Hindhill Street, Heywood, February 5th, 1898.

"Gentlemen,—I have not quite finished the box of Tablets and am 21lb. lighter. The change is great, and several friends are beginning the treatment, which not only reduces fat but strengthens rheumatic joints—such has been the case with me. "Yours sincerely, M. A. HEYWOOD."

Mrs. D. BURTON, of Silverleigh, Tunbridge, writes: "I am very pleased with difference in size, my friends all telling me how much thinner I am getting."

Miss NORTHLEDGE, The Laurels, Riseholme Road, Lincoln, says: "The Tablets reduced me 1st., so that I am cured."

West Cornforth, Ferryhill.

Mr. WM. USHER says: "A sister of mine, who was 17st., was greatly reduced by your Tablets to 15st."

Extract from *The Lady*, September 3rd, 1896: "Many stout persons have suffered untold agonies in unavailing efforts to reduce their bulk, either by means of severe dieting, or by taking more or less deleterious drugs; but all these pains would have been saved if they had only invested in a box of the wonderful Trilene Tablets which are quite harmless, containing neither mercury, arsenic, nor any other mineral poison, and which are an unfailing cure for obesity."

Mrs. T. BOSTON, Cambridge Villas, Clifford Street, South Wigston, says: "I congratulate you on your wonderful Tablets. My weight at first starting them was 11st. 7lb., and I now weigh 9st. 11lb."

Mr. McLEOD, 44, Calside, Paisley, writes: "I have been cured. If you want to know my weight now, it is 10st.; reduced 1st. 8lb., and I am quite content."

A. M. PRATT of Ongar House, Ongar, says: "My weight is so much reduced it is unnecessary to take more. The reduction of weight was from 12st. 6lb. to 10st. 4lb."

Mrs. H. COX, 28 Watnall Road, Hucknall Torkard, writes: "The box of Tablets has reduced my weight 1½ stones."

Mr. WALKER, 236 London Road, Hazelgrove, Stockport, says: "I have used one box and am 14lb. lighter. Send another soon as possible."

Col.-Sergt. WHITTLE, of East Lancashire Regt., Burnley, Lancs, says: "A man in our regiment in 1891 lost several stone from taking your Tablets."

Mrs E. ALEXANDER, 102 Dixon Street, New Swindon, says: "They have reduced me quite 2 stone, and I am now quite cured."

Mrs. W. A. RADFORD, of High Street, New Brinsley, Eastwood, writes: "Before taking Tablets I was 46 inches round waist, now I am 32 inches. I hope soon to be 23. I could hardly move or get up, now I get about easily. Please use this as you wish."

Countess FURSTENBERG, of Germany, writes: "They act speedily and well."

The Princess LIECHTENSTEIN writes from Landsberg, Austria: "Pray send your excellent Tablets."

Mrs. WEAVER, of Greenpits Villa, Ross, Hereford, writes "I am reduced from 13st. 8lb. to 11st. You may use this if you like."

Mrs. CROSSLEY, of Rose Hill, Torver nr Coniston, says: "There is a very decided diminution of fat. I am delighted, and cannot speak too highly in praise of Tablets. My heart is better, and I can breathe so much easier. You may refer to me as often as you like."

Lady C. CONRAD writes from Wiesbaden: "I am very pleased with your Tablets."

Mrs. TAYLOR-ROBINSON, of Tweed Green House, Whalley Range, Manchester, says: "I feel so much lighter and better since taking your Tablets, and am so much thinner that I hardly recognise myself."

Miss A. LONG, of 9 South Parade, Waterford, writes: "Your Tablets have reduced me 14lb."

Miss A. DAWSON, 62 Orchard Street, Weston-super-Mare, says: "Glad to say the Tablets have sufficiently reduced me. I shall always recommend them."

Miss F. L. BALL, 47 Chesterfield Road, St. Andrews, Bristol, writes: "I am quite cured through your Tablets. They improve the figure, and greatly relieve shortness of breath."

Miss PATIENT, of Woodberry, Theydon Bois: "Feel great benefit from Tablets. I have lost 2st., and am sufficiently reduced."

Mrs. DREW, of 1 Bellevue Gardens, The Nursery, Devizes, writes: "I took Tablets some years ago; they soon reduced me and I have not got stout since. Send me a box for my mother."

THE TRILENE ASSOCIATION, 66 FINSBURY PAVEMENT, LONDON.

Digitized by Google

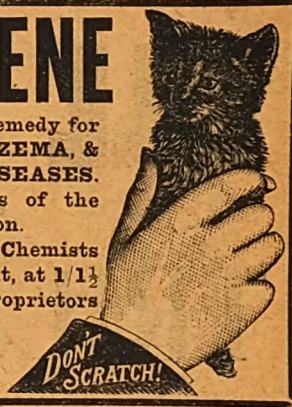
"OROCO SOX"

18 Pairs for ONE SHILLING Post Free.

KEEP THE FEET DRY & PREVENT FATIGUE.

"OROCO" Manufacturing Co., WIGAN.

PARASITENE



is a new and important remedy for GOUT, RINGWORM, ECZEMA, & all IRRITANT SKIN DISEASES.

Prescribed by members of the London Medical Profession.

Can be obtained from all Chemists as a Lotion or an Ointment, at 1/1½ & 2/9, or Post Free from Proprietors

The WEDNESFIELD CHEMICAL SYNDICATE Limited,
WOLVERHAMPTON.

Reckitt's PARIS Blue.

The Best is the Cheapest.

"HAIR LIKE AN ENGLISH WOMAN."

That is the generally expressed desire of a foreigner. To have hair like an English woman. Hair is a woman's chief adornment, but hair to be nice must have nice treatment. Hair must be stimulated to live.

Continual brushing does this, and nothing else does it as effectually. Our grandmothers, and even our mothers, knew this so well that hair brushing was one of the most important features of their toilet. Half an hour at night and half an hour in the morning were thought none too long a time to devote to this. If this attention cannot be given, recourse must be had to a stimulant, and as a stimulant for the hair there is none so safe and so effective as the discovery of Mr. Geo. R. Sims, called by him "TATCHO," which is the Romany word for "genuine."

GEO. R. SIMS'
HAIR RENEWER
"TATCHO."

"TATCHO" is a brilliant spirituous liquor, the colour of whisky, free from all grease. A sprinkle of a few drops on the scalp and five minutes with the brush daily works marvels with every head of hair, but more especially with those that have not received their quantum of care.

If you value your appearance—and who does not?—get a bottle of "TATCHO" to-day. The result will surprise you and be intensely gratifying.

"TATCHO" will stop the hair falling, and will make it beautiful in texture and double in volume.

"TATCHO" gives vitality to the hair at once, and after a few days of treatment its youthful brightness; and what is more, this vitality and brightness may be retained.

Mrs. BROWN POTTER, whose beautiful hair is the envy of her sex, uses nothing but "TATCHO."

Geo. R. Sims' Hair Renewer, "Tatcho," is obtainable of all perfumers, 2/9 & 5/- per Bottle; or can be had direct in plain wrapper on sending 2/11 or 5/3.

ADDRESS

The Geo. R. Sims Co.,

81b Great Queen St., London, W.C.

SAMPLE TRIAL BOTTLES 1/6 TO-DAY.

Sent post free in plain package, twenty-one stamps.

Digitized by Google

NEW SERIAL STARTS TO-DAY.

SHORT STORIES

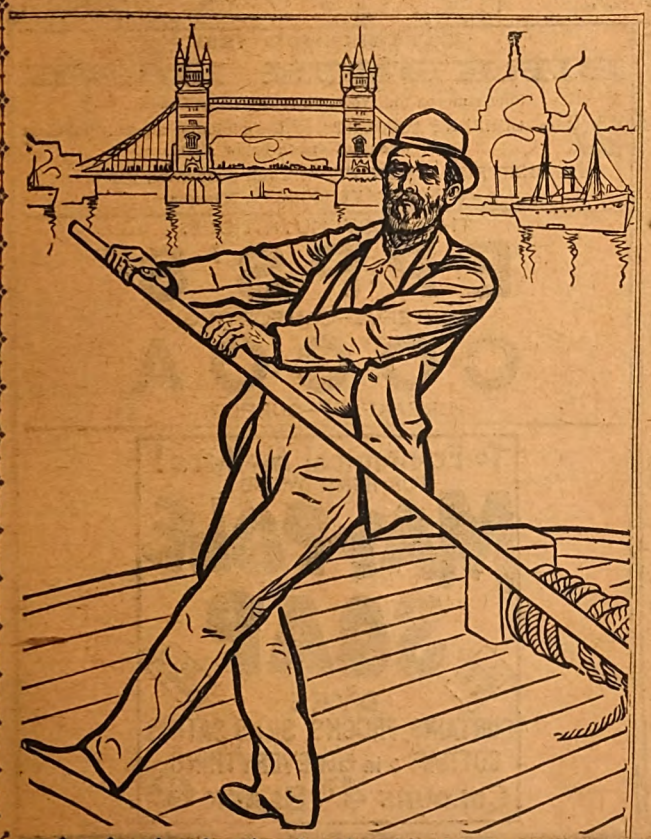
A WEEKLY MAGAZINE FOR HOME AND TRAIN

No. 603. FOR WEEK ENDING JULY 21ST, 1900. [ONE PENNY.

A LIGHTERMAN AND

DR TIBBLES' Vi-Cocoa

A CUP OF VI-COCOA ENABLES HIM TO GO OUT AT ALL HOURS.



Mr. H. BRUCE, 41 George Street, Blackfriars Road, S.E.

"I write to speak of the good qualities of Dr. Tibbles' Vi-Cocoa. I am a Lighterman, working according to the tides of the River Thames. I am out all hours, and I do not feel as if I can go out without a cup of your valuable Vi-Cocoa. I shall always recommend it to my workmates.

"You are at liberty to use this as you like."

"UNDOUBTED PURITY AND STRENGTH."
—*Medical Magazine.*

"IN THE FRONT RANK OF REALLY VALUABLE FOODS."
—*Lancet.*

DR TIBBLES' Vi-Cocoa

FAVOURED by the HOMES and HOSPITALS of GREAT BRITAIN.

Dainty Sample Tin Free to any Address.

Address: DR. TIBBLES' VI-COCOA LTD., 60 Bunhill Row, London, E.C.

DAINTY SAMPLE FREE.

Advertisements should be sent to "Short Stories" Advertisement Department, Henrietta Street, London, WC.

"HAIR LIKE AN ENGLISH WOMAN."

That is the generally expressed desire of a foreigner. To have hair like an English woman. Hair is a woman's chief adornment, but hair to be nice must have nice treatment. Hair must be stimulated to live.

Continual brushing does this, and nothing else does it as effectually. Our grandmothers, and even our mothers, knew this so well that hair brushing was one of the most important features of their toilet. Half an hour at night and half an hour in the morning were thought none too long a time to devote to this. If this attention cannot be given, recourse must be had to a stimulant, and as a stimulant for the hair there is none so safe and so effective as the discovery of Mr. Geo. R. Sims, called by him "TATCHO," which is the Romany word for "genuine."

GEO. R. SIMS'

HAIR RENEWER "TATCHO."

"TATCHO" is a brilliant spirituous liquor, the colour of whisky, free from all grease. A sprinkle of a few drops on the scalp and five minutes with the brush daily works marvels with every head of hair, but more especially with those that have not received their quantum of care.

If you value your appearance—and who does not?—get a bottle of "TATCHO" to-day. The result will surprise you and be intensely gratifying.

"TATCHO" will stop the hair falling, and will make it beautiful in texture and double in volume.

"TATCHO" gives vitality to the hair at once, and after a few days of treatment its youthful brightness; and what is more, this vitality and brightness may be retained.

Mrs. BROWN POTTER, whose beautiful hair is the envy of her sex, uses nothing but "TATCHO."

Geo. R. Sims' Hair Renewer, "Tatcho," is obtainable of all perfumers, 2/9 & 5/- per Bottle; or can be had direct in plain wrapper on sending 2/11 or 5/3.

ADDRESS

The Geo. R. Sims Co.,

81b Great Queen St., London, W.C.

SAMPLE TRIAL BOTTLES 1/6 TO-DAY.

Sent post free in plain package, twenty-one stamps.

THE

BEST OF ALL BEVERAGES

AND THE

CHEAPEST.

GOOD! IT'S

MASON'S

Extract of Herbs

8 Gallons Prime Beer for 6d.

Sample Free for 9 Stamps.

AGENTS WANTED EVERYWHERE.

NEWBALL & MASON, NOTTINGHAM.

ESTABLISHED 1851.

BIRKBECK BANK

Southampton Buildings, Chancery Lane, London.

2% on CURRENT ACCOUNTS, on the minimum monthly balances when not drawn below £100.

The BIRKBECK ALMANACK, with full particulars, post free.

FRANCIS RAVENSCROFT, *Manager*.

THE MOST NUTRITIOUS.

EPPS'S

GRATEFUL—COMFORTING.

COCOA

BREAKFAST—SUPPER.

To Economical Mothers!

FOR HOME DYEING

MAYPOLE SOAP

NO MESS. NO TROUBLE.

DYES

CURTAINS, FROCKS, SILKS, SATINS

COTTONS & In fact EVERYTHING

COLOURS 4½ BLACK 6½

Advertisements should be sent to "Short Stories" Advertisement Department, Henrietta Street, London, W.C.

Digitized by Google

NEW SERIAL STORY.

A ROMANCE OF LAND AND SEA.

By WILLIAM WESTALL.

Author of "With the Red Eagle," "The Phantom City," "Nigel Fortescue," etc., etc.,

CHAPTER I.

The Starting of the Expedition.

I had read for the twentieth time the letter in which Araminta curtly and coldly renounced our engagement and demanded the return of her presents, and was musing bitterly over her treachery and my disillusion, when the door of my room opened, and John Callier, the famous head waiter of Limmli's Hotel, ushered in Dr. Macfarland of "Ours," a dear old friend who had pulled me through after I was so nearly killed at Waterloo.

"You look hipped, Rufus. What's wrong?" he asked kindly, after we had shaken hands.

"Read that," said I, giving him the letter.

"So, she has given you the sack! Well, I am not surprised. I did not like to say so before, but Miss Somerset's not worthy of you, and the time will come when you will deem yourself very lucky in having got rid of her."

"I daresay; in fact, I almost think so now. All the same, it is a beastly unpleasant thing; lets a man down so, and we shall have it in the papers in a day or two."

"There is no denying the unpleasantness. But you will get over it, Rufus, sooner than you think, and before long we shall hear of your betrothal to some young lady——"

"No you won't," I interrupted. "Once bitten, twice shy. I forswear matrimony for ever. I shall never be engaged again."

"Nonsense! A man with your advantages has no right to remain single. Still young, robust, and good-looking, a soldier who distinguished himself at Waterloo, a country gentleman with five thousand a year and a fine old place. You, the last of your race, too! Surely you won't let the old family die out and the estate pass to some distant relative, perhaps an old maid for whom you don't care a fig. You must marry, Rufus. It is your duty."

"I am in no hurry, Mac, and you may be sure of one thing. I shall not marry a fine lady with a false heart. The girl of my choice must be too unsophisticated to be designing, too sincere to be worldly, too good to be untrue, too——"

"Stop, stop! You want an angel, but being a mortal you will have to put up with something less heavenly."

"I can wait, and meanwhile I shall go abroad. I was looking forward to settling in the old home and taking my place in the county. That dream is at an end. I am no more cut out for a hermit than for a man about town. Besides, a change will do me good."

"Where shall you go?"

"To some wild, out-of-the-way country, the wilder the better, provided one can get sport. Bison hunting on the prairies of the Far West, or lion hunting in Africa would suit me equally well. I think I shall toss up—heads, lions; tails, bisons."

"Would not active service suit you better?"

"Decidedly, if I could get it. But people say there will be no more war in Europe for half a century, and for the sake of Europe I hope they are right. They won't let Bonaparte escape a second time, and, as you know, half the army is being disbanded, and the officers put on half-pay."

"I was not thinking of Europe; I was thinking of America."

"Where there?"

"Columbia. Another British legion is being formed to help the patriots in their heroic struggle for liberty. And it is a good cause, Rufus, the cause of freedom and humanity."

"Columbia! Is not that somewhere in Venezuela?"

"The other way about. Columbia includes Venezuela and New Grenada, and is a vast territory, almost as extensive as all Europe."

"Yes, I believe it is a big country, and, strangely enough, I have a sort of hereditary interest in Venezuela, or, at any rate, in the Spanish Main, and that is about the same thing."

"It is the same thing. Some people think that the Spanish Main means salt water, but it does not, it means dry land. And this hereditary interest, how does it arise?"

"Well, towards the end of Queen Elizabeth's reign, Gilbert Wyvenhoe, my four times great grandfather, joined a band of adventurers who crossed the sea in two barques, and sailed up the Orinoco in quest of the fabled city of Manoa. After several encounters with the Spaniards, they were obliged to abandon their ships, take to the woods, and make a long march inland. Shortly afterwards my ancestor fell ill, and was left in the care of some friendly Indians, who were very good to him, and with whom he lived till he became almost an Indian himself. In the end, however, they helped him to get down to the sea, and he

All rights reserved.]

Digitized by Google

eventually reached England with a whole skin. There is a full account of it all in the muniment room at Wyvenhoe, written by Gilbert himself, together with the names of all his companions. I read it so often when I was a boy that I almost know it off by heart."

"And what became of his companions?"

"Heaven only knows. They either died of hardship and sickness or, more probably, were slaughtered by the Spaniards."

"So that you have no great-love for the Spaniards?"

"Not I, indeed; they are a blood-thirsty race, as I had frequent opportunity of seeing when we were campaigning in Spain, and I should be very glad to lend a hand in driving them out of Venezuela. But how is it to be managed? I must have a commission."

"Of course you must, and one at least a step higher than your present rank in the British Army, and I have little doubt that I can get you a majority."

"If you can do that I am your man. But how?"

"Well, I happen to know Don Luis Mendez, the accredited agent of the Venezuelan Government. He has authority to grant commissions to suitable men, and on my recommendation I am sure he will grant you one, especially if you would not mind advancing £500 for the purchase of military stores, to be repaid with interest."

"Oh, hang the interest! I will make the Venezuelan Republic a present of £500. It is not much for a major's commission, and as my marriage has missed fire, I shall have more money than I need. So we may regard the matter as settled. How soon can I start?"

"A ship is being fitted out, the *Campanella*, once a French cruiser, which will convey to Margarita a contingent raised by Major Barnish, formerly of the old 131st, you could go with her. She is expected to sail about the twenty-fifth."

"That will give me just time enough to run down to Wyvenhoe Court, arrange my affairs, and say good-bye to my neighbours and friends. I will give you the cheque now, and if you will kindly do the rest——"

"With pleasure, my dear fellow. I shall send the commission to Wyvenhoe, and when you return you will find everything in order."

And then we parted to part again a fortnight later at Gravesend, where I joined the ship, and whither the doctor and a few other friends had come to see me off.

The *Campanella*, once a French cruiser, was a brig of 500 tons, and carried in her hold sixteen carronades, which were to be brought on deck when we got out to sea. Her commander, Captain Cautley, a brave Irishman, who had served in our Navy, was going out in the hope of obtaining employment under the Venezuelan Government, as he did. He had two hundred troops on board, all of whom had served in the Peninsular War, and were to call at Cork for some two hundred more, all raised, clothed in British uniform and equipped by Major Barnish, who was even a greater enthusiast in the "noble cause of liberty" than Doctor Marfarlane.

On the faith of an undertaking from Don Luis Mendez that the Republic would repay him, with interest, he had put nearly the whole of his fortune into the enterprise. The ship and everything on board had been bought with his money, except some military stores, purchased mostly with my £500.

The major had brought his wife with him, a charming woman several years younger than himself, whose face reminded me of Araminta's, though it showed more character, and she had those sweet Irish eyes, which whether bright with mirth or beaming with love are equally fascinating and equally dangerous.

I had brought with me my old soldier servant, John Ready, a veteran of many campaigns, a fellow full of resource, able to turn his hand to anything and possessing the further qualification of a colloquial knowledge of Spanish, picked up in the Peninsular.

The officers were two captains, Martley and Duckett, and two subalterns, all of whom had seen active service.

At Cork, where we waited a week, the remainder of the contingent came on board, nearly half of whom were in every way equal to those who had embarked in the Thames, but the remainder were a terribly mixed lot and as ignorant of soldiering as so many tailors.

"Never mind," said Barnish, who always made light of difficulties; "we will lick them and the recruits into shape on the voyage."

We had also passengers. At the last moment, when the Blue Peter was flying at the head of our fore-top-gallant mast, there came on board a noble warrior, a portly priest with a rosy face, and a short, broad-set, dark-complexioned man, whose ears were adorned with rings, and whose head was roofed with short black hair, which stood bolt upright, like the bristles on a blacking-brush.

The warrior was long and lanky, his countenance might have served an artist as a model for a caricature of that of the Knight of La Mancha. He sported moustachios, the points of which curled fiercely upwards, and was as gorgeously attired as a French Field-Marshal in full rig, wore high boots and gilt spurs, and, to crown all, carried a birdcage in one hand and led a poodle with the other.

"General Molyneux, of the Venezuelan army, Mr. Conroy, his Excellency's private secretary, and myself, Father Bartrum, his Excellency's private chaplain," announced the priest pompously to the skipper and those of us who happened to be on the poop.

We all bowed profoundly, and Captain Cautley, who, like the rest of us, had much ado to keep his countenance, was about to reply, when Major Barnish appeared.

"Ah! General Molyneux, I presume?" he said. "I am delighted to make your acquaintance, and to have an opportunity of thanking you in person for raising me so fine a contingent, and for all your other kindnesses."

Whereupon the general, having transferred the birdcage to the secretary and the poodle to the priest, shook hands with the major.

"And I, sir, am delighted to make your acquaintance," he answered in a booming bass voice, which, coming from a man so meagre, was rather startling. "Raising recruits for the glorious cause of South American independence has been a work of love for me. They are good men and true, and if you would kindly have them assembled on deck I should like to make the fine fellows a speech. I think they would be encouraged."

"I fear that is not possible just now, general," said Barnish with an amused look at the skipper. "We are just going to sail, the men are below getting their things into shape, the sailors, as you see, are very busy. Otherwise, I should be only too glad to comply with your wish."

"Another time, then. You were good enough to offer me a passage to Venezuela?"

"Certainly," answered the Major politely, albeit with a side glance of dismay; "but as you said nothing further about the matter, we have made no preparations for your reception. All the same, I daresay we can find you quarters."

"That is all I ask, my dear sir, suitable quarters for a gentleman of my rank. Father Bartrum and my private secretary can occupy the same cabin. I am going to Venezuela to confer with my friend, General Bolivar, on the affairs of the Republic, and solicit the command of one of his armies, and if my plans are adopted, as doubtless they will be, we shall make short work of the Spaniards—very short work."

"Of course we shall, but won't you come into my cabin and have some refreshment while your own is being made ready. Will you kindly see to it, Captain Cautley?"

And Major Barnish, followed by the general, the priest with the birdcage, and the secretary with the poodle, disappeared down the main hatchway.

Friendships grow fast on board ship, and I soon grew

Digitized by Google

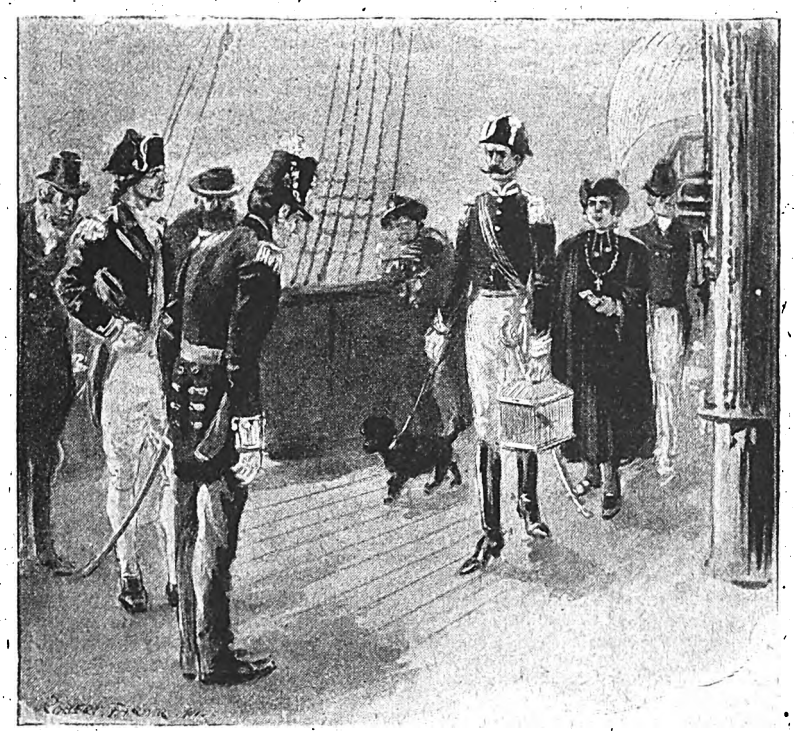
fairly intimate with my brother officers, and especially with Major and Mrs. Barnish, in whose society I spent many pleasant evenings. The amount he had laid out for the Venezuelan Government was greater than I had supposed. Upwards of ten thousand pounds. He had also made himself responsible for the men's pay until they were landed in Venezuela.

CHAPTER II.

RUMOURS OF MUTINY.

WE were now well on our way. The Western Isles had been sighted and passed, the days were delightful, the nights, whether moonlight or starlight, glorious, the winds propitious, the weather perfect, and the *Campanella*, spreading her white wings to the full, speeded swiftly towards the land where, as many of us believed, we should find fortune and fame.

Yet amid all the beauty of sea and sky, the harmony that apparently prevailed among the officers, both naval and military, and the seeming contentment of the troops, there were not wanting signs which made me at times fear that the voyage might end less towardly than it had begun. From John Ready, who had found some old comrades among the men and saw much of them, I gathered that there was a good deal of simmering discontent in the ranks.



The warrior carried a bird cage in one hand and led a poodle with the other.

The men did not like the drills, guard-mounting, keeping watch, and the rest, having, as it seems, expected they would have nothing much to do until we reached our destination but drink rum and bask in the sun, which did not greatly surprise me. Old soldiers are not precisely angels, and the young ones we had taken on board at Cork were utter riff-raff—gaol birds and worse, some of them, John said, who had left Ireland because they had made it too hot to hold them.

All the greater reason for maintaining a stringent discipline and keeping them well employed, and this, as Barnish left a good deal in my hands, I took care to do.

At the same time I told John to keep his eyes open and report—not tittle-tattle or mere talk, but any facts which he thought it behoved me to know.

Not long afterwards he brought a report that gave me great concern and suggested alarming possibilities.

Somebody had told the men that Major Barnish and his officers had no legal authority over them whatever, and that there was no reason why they should obey orders, undergo drill, submit to punishment, or do aught they did not like to do. Nor was this the worst. Two subalterns, Price and Bryan, who had received their appointments from General Molyneux, were making common cause with the disaffected among the men, and the chief promoter of sedition was his private secretary.

These were grave tidings, and had we been on service and Major Barnish my superior officer, I should have reported them to him without either hesitation or delay. But we were not on active service and he was not my superior officer. I was not even his guest, for when I learnt that he had fitted out and provisioned the *Campanella* at his own expense I insisted on paying my fare.

He commanded the battalion because he had raised it, I asked for a post because I wanted occupation, and he had made me his acting adjutant because he was not much of an organiser and had no great liking for work.

For these reasons I thought I had a discretion in the matter, and in the exercise of that discretion I decided not to tell Barnish, for the present, what I had heard.

Yet if I had thought the danger imminent, and prompt action necessary, I should have told him. But for the present, at least, I had no apprehension of concerted action amongst the men, much less open mutiny. If Ready's information were correct, they would not make a general move until the malcontents had succeeded in winning over the others.

This would take time, and as every day brought us nearer to our journey's end a day saved was a day gained. Individual acts of insubordination were, however, quite possible, and I expected that on some such occasion the offender would be backed by his comrades when, unless we were well prepared and supported by the main body of the battalion, our authority would end and anarchy begin.

In any event I did not intend to yield without a struggle, and presently found that others were of my way of thinking. For after further reflection I resolved to impart (under a pledge of secrecy) my apprehensions to the three captains, Cautley, Martley and Duckett, which I did one evening in the skipper's room.

"I guessed there was something in the wind from what my boy and the bo'sun told me," said Cautley, as he lighted another cigar.

"And I smelt a rat from what my fellow told me," observed Martley, who had been waiting to hear what the skipper said, before committing himself to an opinion.

"So did I, from what my man told me," echoed Duckett, who always took his cue from Martley.

Digitized by Google

"Well, now that the matter has been mooted, and we know pretty well how the land lies, what do you think of it all?" I asked, addressing the company in general, but Cautley in particular, who, besides being the skipper, was the oldest man present, though still under thirty and he had sailed the seas since he was thirteen.

"What do I think of it all?" he repeated. "What do I think of it? I think that if you soldier officers cannot keep your men in order we shall be in a dickens of a mess."

"Of course we shall," I answered curtly, for I felt nettled at so inconclusive a reply. "It is for that reason that I have brought the matter to your notice, and being now fully alive to the danger, it behoves us to devise a way of preventing it, if we can, or of meeting it if we cannot."

"Right you are, and the question is: What shall we do to prevent this mutiny from coming off, or, failing therein, crush it when it does come off? What say you, Captain Martley?"

"Find out who are the ringleaders, give each of them a good dose of the cat, and put 'em in irons till we get to Margarita."

"I suppose that is also your opinion, Captain Duckett?"

"It is, sir; it is the conclusion we came to when we first smelt a rat."

"And a very natural conclusion, though, I fear. However, Major Wyvenhoe having heard what his brother officers think, will perhaps give us the benefit of his opinion."

I said that in my opinion flogging would be madness, and that we could not do better than go on exactly as we were doing, getting all the information we possibly could and keeping a sharp look out for the first symptoms of an outbreak, yet acting before the men as though we suspected nothing.

"So as throw them off their guard? So far good. Anything else?"

"The magazine should be guarded. Can you put two of your sailors there?"

"Certainly. Only when all hands are piped on deck you will have to provide substitutes from your soldier men, a good many of whom must still be trustworthy. You should also post a sentry at the spirit room, it will be one of the first objects of attack if your fellows get out of hand. And how about the small arms? They are racked between decks at present, I think, those that are not in store?"

"Yes, and easily accessible as well by night as day."

"That won't do. Keep them in the cuddy. I will tell the carpenter to put up racks for them. I shall easily find an excuse."

"The orders are 'as we were,' then, major?" said Martley rising.

"Yes, the word for the present is wait and watch. If you hear anything particular don't fail to mention it to me or the skipper."

"Of course. Come along Duckett, we are due for that game of whist in Walker's den. Good evening, gentlemen."

"They won't set the Thames on fire, those two," observed Cautley with an amused smile when the two captains were gone.

"Well, they are not men of many words, nor is the little they do say of much value, but they are decent fellows for all that, and may be trusted to keep their word and do their duty, which is a good deal."

"Gad, it's everything. Almost sums up the law and the prophets. If everybody did his duty and kept his word, this would be a better world and we should be spared this bother, which is likely to be more serious than you suspect, major."

"Do you think so? How?"

"Well, if my intelligence be correct, there is a plot afoot to seize the ship."

"By whom?"

"Your soldier men; but the conspiracy is being hatched among the convicts from Cork, as I call them. The others are thinking of nothing more heinous than refusing to be paraded and drilled, and leading an idle life till we get to Margarita; but the Corkers want the ship."

"To what end?"

"That, as yet, is a mystery, and the only thing that makes me doubt the accuracy of my information. I should have thought it would be enough for these fellows to seize the spirit room. If they got the ship I don't see what they could do with her. There is no port into which they could take her without the certainty of being detected and detained by the authorities."

"How do you know that a plot is being hatched? Is it a matter of evidence or inference?"

"Both, or perhaps it would be more right to say my own inference from Carol's evidence."

"That's the boatswain."

"Yes, some time after we called at Cork he spotted among the convicts an old chum of the name of Mellican, though it used to be Flanagan. Carol says he is a fair sample of the bulk, which means, I take it, a frightful ruffian. At first the bo'sun fought shy of him; but hearing or guessing that mischief was brewing, he spoke to me, and I encouraged him to cultivate the fellow's acquaintance. This he has done, and it is from that source I have heard of this plot. Full particulars are as yet to seek; but Mellican, *alias* Flanagan, has agreed to act as spy—of course, for a consideration—and report to me regularly through Carol."

"So in a day or two you may be able to lay your hand on the culprits?"

"Yes, and though risky, it will perhaps be the best thing to lay them by the heels, quietly and at night. But we should have to tell Barnish first, and I think on the whole we had better."

"There I agree with you. So long as it is a case of suspicion and hearsay we may keep our own council, but if we get positive information it would not be right to keep it from the man whom it most concerns. When will Carol see this fellow again?"

"I am going to see him myself as soon as we can arrange an interview, we are to meet in the bo'sun's cabin to-morrow night, time not yet fixed, but probably during the morning watch."

On which, all having been said that, for the moment, could be said, I went on deck.

It was a superb night. In the purple sky, unflecked by a single cloud, hung a great yellow moon; there was barely enough wind to give the ship steering way; golden-hued wavelets lapped lazily against her sides, and her wake was marked by a long streak of phosphorescent foam. And the pleasantness of the evening was enhanced by music. Some of the buglers had been practising the calls, and presently one of them, an excellent performer, played several lively airs on the key bugle, another followed suit with a clarionet, and when he had done a man with a rich baritone voice gave "Oh, list, ye landsmen, list."

"Quite a musical evening, Major Wyvenhoe," said a low, sweet voice behind me, made all the more melodious by a slight touch of the brogue.

"And a very delightful evening otherwise, Mrs. Barnish," I answered, turning away from the taffrail over which I had been leaning.

"You are right. Nothing could be more delightful, the weather is simply perfect."

"For enjoyment, unquestionably, but I fancy your husband and Captain Cautley would like to be going through the water a little faster. I don't suppose we are making more than two knots an hour."

"The ship is going quite fast enough for me."

"For me, also. I don't think we shall find better quarters ashore."

"How very matter-of-fact you are! I was thinking of separation, not of quarters, of the time now not far off, when I shall have to part with my husband and the kind friends we have made on board the *Campanella*."

Digitized by Google

"Yes, it will be very sad, and I, for one, shall be very sorry."

"But you are going on a glorious service, to help these brave Venezuelans in their struggle for liberty. Your lives will be full of excitement and glory, while I shall be eating my heart away in solitude and suspense, and nobody will so much as give me a thought, except, perhaps, Alfred—occasionally," and she sighed deeply.

"You are quite mistaken Mrs. Barnish, I am sure we shall all think of you and of the pleasant time we had on board the *Campanella*. Where do you propose to pass your time while we are campaigning?"

"At Port-of-Spain, Trinidad, which I believe is easily accessible from Margarita. Do you think we shall get there easily?"

"Why not? The first part of the voyage is accomplished, and we shall soon be in the Caribbean sea, which is said to be as calm as a lake—barring hurricanes."

"That is barring a good deal, isn't it?" said Mrs. Barnish, laughing. "I was not thinking of storms and tempests, I was thinking of the danger of being captured, a danger which, as we approach the Main, is more likely to increase than diminish. It must be a danger, or the underwriters would not have refused to insure the ship against capture."

"On the ground that she carries contraband of war?"

"Yes, I believe that was their reason."

"Well, considering that the *Campanella's* cargo consists almost exclusively of contraband, I fear that if we were boarded and overhauled by a Spanish cruiser, it might be rather awkward."

"For us it would be more than awkward, Major Wyvenhoe. The *Campanella* carries both my husband's fortune and my dowry. The ship and cargo would be confiscated, and we should be ruined."

"No fear of that, Mrs. Barnish. Captain Cautley is too smart a sailor to let himself be caught, and if it were by any chance to come to a fight it is not the *Campanella* that would get the worst of it. For the rest, I have not the least doubt that the voyage will end as happily as it has begun."

"I am glad to hear you say so, very glad," quoth the lady earnestly. "True, my husband has said the same; but he is so very sanguine, and laughs at my forebodings. However, you are a man of sober judgment, and I gladly take your word for it that all will be well."

This was putting it rather more strongly than I liked, and I foresaw that when she was informed, as within forty-eight hours she almost certainly would be, of the danger by which we were even then threatened, I should find it difficult to reconcile my assurances with the facts, and she might think I had been intentionally deceiving her. But on the principle of *qui s'excuse s'accuse* I said no more, and reflected that a great deal may happen in forty-eight hours.

As to which I was quite right, the next day being one of the most eventful of my life. It began with a tragedy so sudden and appalling that even yet, though so many years have gone by, I cannot think of it without a shudder.

CHAPTER III.

THE DEATH OF MAJOR BARNISH.

THE morning was as fair as the evening had been, and a freshening of the breeze made it all the more bracing and enjoyable. When I went on deck the sun had just risen, and the *Campanella* with a full spread of canvas was sailing swiftly over a rosy sea. On the poop I found the skipper, and we were presently joined by Barnish, Martley, Duckett, and Haines, the senior surgeon.

"The top o' the morning to you," said Barnish merrily, "Begad! I like this. We are getting over the ground at last, Cautley?"

"Yes, sir; this is a great improvement on yesterday."

"Or any other for some time. What is she doing? Five knots?"

"More; six, at least."

"Capital! If this wind holds good, we shall be at Margarita—when?"

"In ten or twelve days."

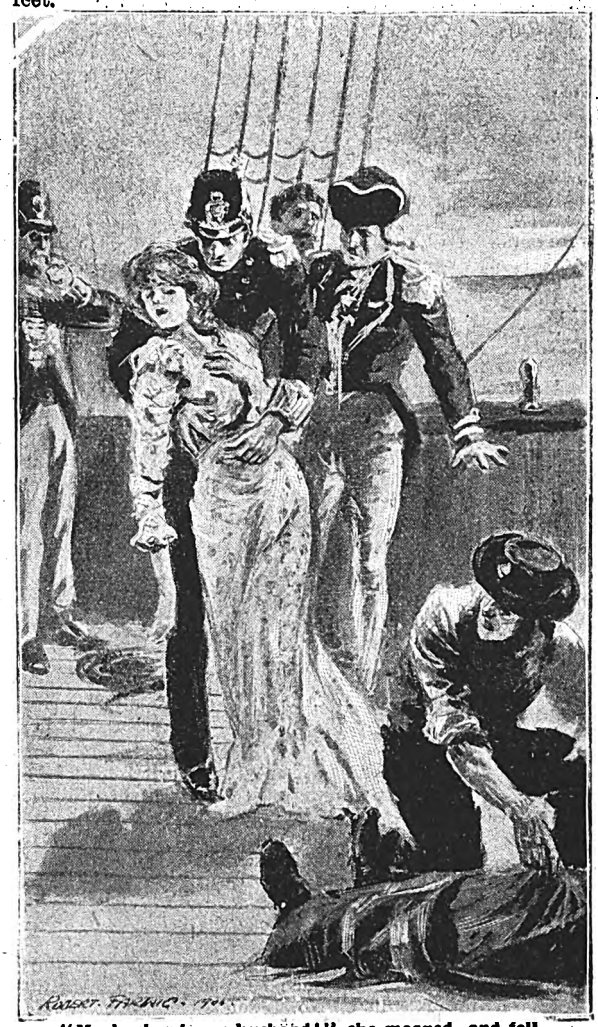
"Good! Make it ten, and I'll give you fellows a champagne breakfast. I say, skipper, get the carronades up; they may come in useful before we get to Margarita."

"It shall be done to-day, sir."

"You are not smoking, Wyvenhoe. Won't you have a whiff?" (offering me his cigar-case.)

"Thank you. I don't generally smoke before eating, but it is impossible to refuse one of your exquisite damas."

I took a cigar, lighted it from the Major's, and was in the act of returning it to him when a piercing cry rang out from aloft, "For Heaven's sake, look out," and at the same moment a great block, let fall by carelessness or mischance, descended on Barnish's head, crushing it like an eggshell, and without a groan or an exclamation he fell dead at our feet.

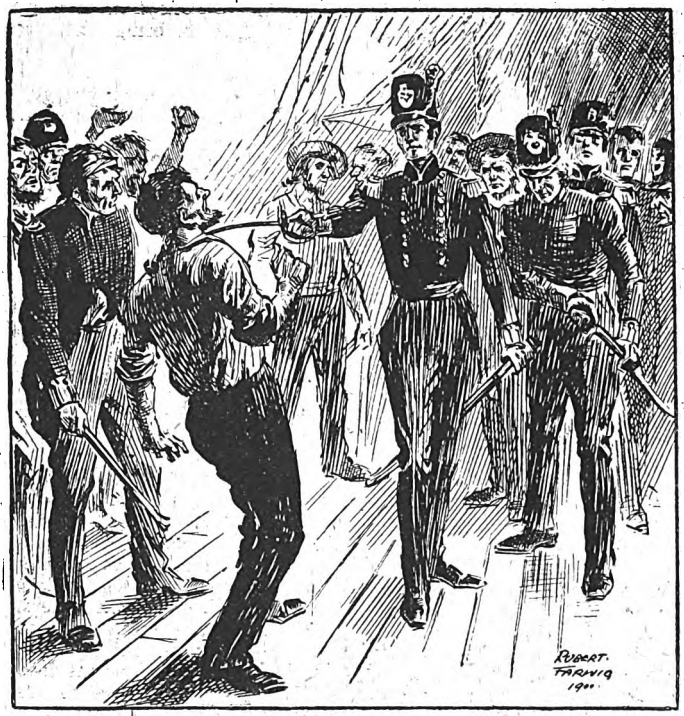


"My husband, my husband!" she moaned, and fell fainting into my arms.

For a few seconds we stood silent and motionless, blanched and paralysed by this sudden extinction of so bright a life.

Doctor Haines was the first to speak.

Digitized by Google



I whipped out my sword and let the fellow have the point in his throat.

"The head is crushed into a shapeless mass, every feature of the face obliterated," he said, stooping. "Let us cover him up and take him away."

At a sign from Cautley two of the sailors brought one of the ship's ensigns and wound it round the body.

"Poor Mrs. Barnish! Who will tell her?" asked Cautley.

Nobody volunteered. As for myself, I would rather have led a forlorn hope.

"Good Heavens! She is there—coming up the companion ladder," exclaimed Haines.

It was only too true, coming as she thought to join her husband, and there would be no possibility of breaking the news gently, or hiding the fatal truth from her until the body could be removed.

The poor woman saw, at a glance that something was wrong. Our faces would have betrayed us, even had there been no other sign.

"What is the matter? Where is Major Barnish? I thought he was with you. I am sure I heard him laughing, and then there was a strange cry——"

"For Heaven's sake don't come this way, madam," said Cautley in a voice hoarse with emotion.

"Why not? I shall. Where is Alfred? What is there under that flag? I insist on knowing," and she was springing forward to raise it when I interposed between her and what had been her husband.

"Don't, for Heaven's sake and your own peace of mind, don't," I entreated. "There has been a terrible accident."

"And Alfred is killed. No, I don't believe it. It is impossible—let me see him, let me see him."

"I dare not. You would never forgive me. His head has been crushed by a falling block, and the sight——"

"My husband, my husband! Heaven help me!" she moaned and fell fainting into my arms.

The skipper and myself carried her to the cabin and left her to the care of her maid. We would gladly have tried to console the poor lady, but knew not what to say, and in the presence of so dire a calamity mere words had been as idle wind. Moreover, it behoved us to take immediate action for the protection of her property and life and our own lives.

The Major's death was the worst thing that could have happened. It left the expedition without a chief and the troops without a commander, for my deputed authority ceased when the chief died. Cautley held his appointment only during Barnish's pleasure, though he would doubtless continue to act, and nobody competent to take his place was likely to dispute his supremacy. But that if I attempted to retain my position I should meet with opposition I had no more doubt than that if I did not retain it the ship would become a floating Hades, whether the men mutinied or not.

The skipper took me aside.

"The crisis has come," he said. "Poor Barnish's death gives the plotters and malcontents a chance they are sure not to miss. I wish to goodness we had a couple of carronades on the quarter-deck. But we must do what we can. The muskets are in the cuddy, and I will have the cutlasses brought aft, you had better treble the guard over the magazine if you can find the right sort of men."

This, with the help of John Ready and a sergeant, who had served in my old regiment, I straightway did.

Meanwhile, the portentous news had spread like wildfire. Most of the officers had gathered aft, groups of men were talking excitedly in the waist and on the forecastle, others moving about, some even making as though they would invade the quarter-deck.

"We must stop this," said Cautley. "Tell the bo'sun to pipe all hands on deck, Mr. Fritt."

Cautley was right. It was time to act, and thinking it would be a great help to have Mrs. Barnish's moral support, yet not liking to leave my post, I asked Dr. Hawkins to see her, inquire how she was, explain to her, if she were in a condition to listen, with how grave an emergency we were confronted, ask whether she would like the voyage to be continued, and the ship to remain under Captain Cautley's command and the troops to be placed under mine, or that of some other officer.

The doctor went at once, and to my surprise, in a few minutes returned with Mrs. Barnish on his arm. Though deathly pale, she stepped firmly and held her head high; only her twitching lips and burning eyes showed how deeply she was moved.

All the men who were aft uncovered.

"Gentlemen," she began, addressing the group on the quarter-deck, "I am come, and Heaven only knows how much the effort has cost me, to say that I should like the ship to proceed to Margarita, exactly as she would have done had this dreadful misfortune not happened. I desire Captain Cautley, who has done so well, to retain command of the ship, and Major Wyvenhoe, who is now the senior military officer on board, to take command of the troops, and I hope, gentlemen, you will all stand by me (here she gave a little gasp) as you would have stood by him."

"Please Heaven, we will," answered Cautley, and few were they who heard her that did not say or feel the same.

"Thank you, oh so much," she said in a broken voice, and then taking Dr. Hawkins's arm, returned to the cabin.

"Pass the word to sound the assembly. To your stations, gentlemen, I ordered."

"Sir, Captain Cautley, I protest against this proceeding," exclaimed Molyneux angrily, who had just come on deck. "I am the senior military officer on board, and by virtue of the rank I hold in the army of the Venezuelan Republic, I claim the right to command the troops."

Digitized by Google

"I don't know anything about your rank in the Venezuelan Army, Mr. Molyneux, but I know that I am the master of this ship, and that you are only a passenger," retorted the skipper, "and by Heaven, sir, if you don't stop your jaw and mind your business I will have you put in irons and locked up."

On which the general fell back; but I was sorry to see that the men were not falling in, and being openly encouraged in their disobedience by several subalterns and non-commissioned officers. The baser part of the Irish contingent were arming themselves with belaying-pins and whatever came handy, and some were flourishing pistols about—how obtained I had no idea.

Just then Ready brought my sword and pistols.

"Is the magazine safe, John?" I asked him.

"Yes, sir. Sergeant York is there with six true men, who will hold the post to the last."

"And we shall hold the ship to the last," said Cautley. "Get our men together and serve out the cutlasses and muskets, Mr. Pritt, and send somebody for my pistols and get your own."

CHAPTER IV.

THE END OF THE MUTINY.

THOUGH most of the troops were in open mutiny and greatly excited, there had been as yet no actual violence, partly, perhaps, because they possessed no more effective weapons than belaying pins, boats' stretchers, marline spikes, knives, and a few pistols. They were also aware that any attempt to seize the ship would be resisted to the last, and that as the sailors and officers on the poop, and in front of the cuddy, were armed to the teeth the attempt might fail, and they did not know, fortunately for us, that we had no ammunition, except for the pistols.

The skipper, not anticipating an immediate outbreak, and thinking that in any event we should have at least a few hours for preparation had sent all the cartridges to the magazine, down in the forehold, whence a supply could not be obtained without the knowledge of the mutineers. Moreover, the mere attempt, by enlightening the mutineers as to our true position would probably encourage them to make an immediate attack, and in a hand to hand conflict we should probably come off second best.

The skipper was very angry with himself, as I thought, needlessly. Nobody could have foreseen poor Barnish's death, and in two or three days our preparations would have been complete.

"I never made such a mistake in my life," quoth Cautley bitterly. "I might have kept a few hundred cartridges within reach, just on the off chance of something happening; however, we must make the best of it. Your plan cannot be carried out, what next? Shall we charge right into the thick of the ruffians and make an end of it one way or another? If they have the advantage of numbers, we have the advantage of weapons, though we do lack cartridges, and I fancy a good many of them would be unwilling combatants."

My plan had been to make an energetic appeal to the mutineers to return to their duty, threatening, if they refused, to fire into them, and in the event of their remaining obdurate, doing so without further warning. We were nearly fifty strong, and having an abundance of muskets, could have given them two volleys in as many minutes, quite enough, as I thought, to bring them to their senses.

But we had no ammunition.

"I shall try my plan, all the same—as far as it will go," I said in answer to Cautley. "They don't know we are without cartridges."

"But you cannot make them hear from the poop, there is too much noise; besides, they won't listen. They would not listen to Martley and the others just now."

"I shall go right amongst them. Some, at least, will listen to reason."

"Alone?"

"John Ready will go with me. He knows a good many of the Englishmen, and may be able to influence them."

"Well, it is, perhaps, the best. A bold course generally is. If you get into a difficulty, we will come to your help. If you fall, avenge you. But keep a sharp look out, or some of those wild Irishmen will be having a knife into you before you know where you are."

With this ominous warning ringing in my ears I went down the companion-ladder, followed by John Ready.

The troops were all over the deck, from the break of the poop to the bows, some haranguing each other, some brandishing belaying pins and boats' stretchers and calling on their comrades to "come on," and behaving so like lunatics that I felt sure they were drunk, while others, mostly the older men, were exchanging views without working themselves into a delirium of excitement.

Rather to my surprise I was neither molested nor insulted perhaps because, though fully aware of the perilous nature of my undertaking, I succeeded in my endeavour not to look afraid.

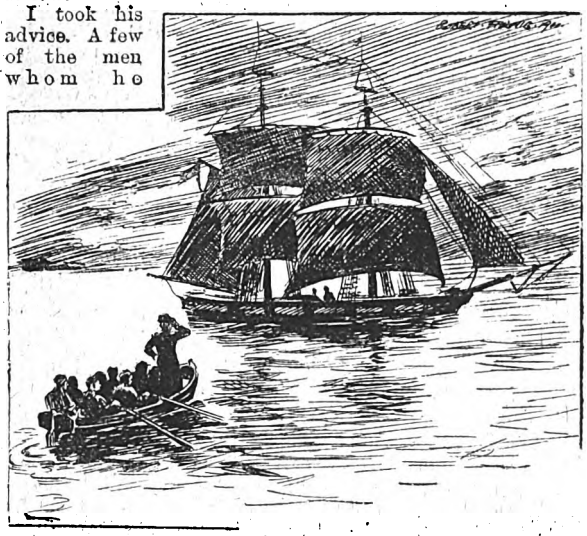
"Let us make for that group before the mainmast," said

The mutineers desperately fighting, were driven aft and there cornered.

Digitized by Google

John. "I know them all well, they are good fellows at the bottom, and if we can get them on our side the others will follow."

I took his advice. A few of the men whom he pointed out I knew personally, two had served in my regiment in the Peninsular.



"What ship is that?" demanded the officer in command of the boat.

"What is all this about? I never expected to find you taking part in a mutiny, Higgins," I said to one of them.

"No more I am, Major," answered the man. "Till we are mustered into the Venezuelan service, and take the oath, we are civilians and under no obligation to obey."

"Who says so?"

"They are all saying so, and it stands to reason. A recruit at home does not become a soldier till he has passed the doctor and been sworn in before the beak."

"That may be. But you cannot deny that when you engaged with Major Barnish and took his money, you became his man, and are bound in honour to obey his orders and the orders of those he set over you."

"But you see, sir, the Major being dead, cannot give no orders, and his death breaks the contract, doesn't it? Anyway, we have been told so. Besides, it stands to reason."

I rather thought it did, and feeling that Higgins (who had evidently been well coached) was getting the best of the argument, fell back on sentiment.

"Yes, the Major is dead, most unfortunately for us all, but Mrs. Barnish is alive, and as his representative, claims your obedience, and has undertaken to carry out the contract, and do all he promised to do. If you men refuse to fulfil your part of it, she will be ruined, and I am sure you don't want that."

"Poor lady! No, indeed! We are all very sorry for her and don't want to give her no trouble. But how about that sovereign?"

"What sovereign?"

"Well, the major gave us so much bounty and a kit before we embarked, and promised us a sovereign more when we reached port. Now, are we going to get it?"

"That's it. Are we going to get it?" broke in several of them with great eagerness.

This was news to me, and I doubted Mrs. Barnish's ability to make good this part of her late husband's engagement, for it was hardly to be expected that she would obtain an immediate settlement of her claims on the Venezuelan Government. On the other hand, it was clear that without some satisfactory assurance about "that sovereign" the men would not return to their duty.

"Are we going to get it?" repeated several of them.

"Not unless you behave better and make less noise. I know that Mrs. Barnish means to keep every promise made by her husband, but as you seem to have some doubt about it, I will take this liability on myself. That is to say, I undertake to pay every man of you who returns to his duty one sovereign, or its equivalent in Venezeulan money, within an hour of our arrival in port."

"That is very handsome of you, Major Wyvenhoe, and all we want," returned Higgins respectfully, "and I think you may take it that all the men who embarked in London will accept your offer and return to their duty. Am I right?" (turning to his comrades).

"Right you are, Higgins," answered most of them, and none dissented.

"But I speak only for ourselves," he added, "though I have no doubt a good many of the Irishmen will follow our example. At any rate the best of them will?"

"Oh, will they?" shouted a half-drunken ragamuffin at the edge of the crowd, which had greatly increased during my colloquy with Higgins. "A sovereign apiece when we can have the whole ship. Sure, if the Major is able to give us a sovereign apiece when we reach port he has got the money now, and we can have it for the taking. Hit 'um on the head, boys."

And with that the ruffian thrust himself through the press and aimed a blow at me with a boats' stretcher which, had it not been warded off by John Ready, would have taken effect. Seeing that this was part of a preconcerted movement, I whipped out my sword, and let the fellow have the point in his throat, at the same time calling on the Englishmen to stand by me and close their ranks. While we were talking the blackguard section had got between us and the poop, and on hearing that I had prevailed on some of the rebels to return to their duty, made a desperate effort to disperse my supporters and extinguish me. But the Englishmen responded nobly to my call. Those of them who had no weapons used their belts, and all went at it, hammer and tongs, in a fashion which must have been very like a faction fight at Donnybrook fair. Others, attracted by the row, rushed to the spot, some taking one side, some the other, and the action became general, though many of the combatants had not the least idea what it was all about.

It was a contest with blunt weapons at close quarters, in which weight counted for more than valour, and being the weaker in numbers we were gradually pushed towards the bows, and the mutineers were shouting: "Chuck them overboard, throw them into the water," when a diversion was effected in our favour which turned the tide of battle and eventually gave us the victory.

Cautley, Martley, and the other officers, seeing our danger, and calling on the blue-jackets to follow them, charged, and thanks to the superiority of their weapons and the vigour of their attack, succeeded in joining their strength to ours. Moreover, we were presently reinforced by nearly all the remaining Englishmen, and many of the Irishmen, who, having heard of my offer or perceiving that the game was up, had decided to return to their allegiance.

This gave us the advantage. The mutineers, desperately fighting, were driven aft and there cornered. Not beaten, however, for a summons to surrender called forth only an angry refusal and an outburst of profane swearing, and (as we had emptied our pistols) it seemed as though there was nothing for it but to finish the contest with cold steel and such other weapons as we possessed.

"Very well, we will hold you here until we can get up a lot of cartridges from the magazine, then shoot you like dogs and throw your carcases to the sharks," said Cautley in a voice that could be heard by all.

On this the mutineers began to waver.

"What terms will you give us?" asked one of them.

"The ringleaders, including the subalterns and non-commissioned officers who have been false to their trust will

Digitized by Google

be put in irons, the others confined to the lower deck pending an investigation," answered Cautley, after a word with me.

I thought this was treating them leniently, far more leniently than they deserved, but they did not seem to think so, declaring that unless we granted them a free pardon, without exceptions, they would fight to the last.

"That is impossible," I said.

"Of course it is, we might as well give them the ship," added Cautley. "Well, there is nothing for it but to shoot 'em all. I shall be sorry to do it, but until order is restored, the service of the ship cannot be carried on, and if anything were to happen, all our lives——"

"A sail on the starboard bow!" shouted a sailor from the foretop.

"Gad! I believe she is a man-of-war!" exclaimed Cautley, examining her through his glass. "Now look here, you mutinous rascals. Your attempt to take this vessel was an act of piracy, punishable with death. If that ship is not a man-of-war I never saw one, and unless you submit instantly, I'll bear up to her, have you tried by court-martial right away and hanged."

While the decks were being cleared and matters put to rights the skipper was watching the strange sail, which had been on a course almost parallel with ours, but was now edging towards us.

"A man-of-war beyond a doubt, but, I fear, not a British man-of-war," said he.

"What then?"

"May be a Spaniard, though I hope not."

"But England and Spain are at peace. She would not molest us on the high seas."

"She might board and search us."

"But would that be legal?"

"Well, we stopped and searched neutrals on the high seas in the last war, though I believe it is beginning to be regarded as a violation of international law. But the worst of it is that we are breaking international law by carrying contraband of war and soldiers for service in Venezuela, and if we are taken we shall have to take the consequences."

"One of which would be Mrs. Barnish's ruin."

"None of us would come off with flying colours. At the best, we should be shoved ashore and left to get home—or anywhere else, as we could; at the worst, lodged in some pestiferous gaol till the case was disposed of, which, for most of us, would mean yellow fever and death."

"A pleasant prospect. But cannot we escape?"

"You mean show her a clean pair of heels? I wish we could. But look," handing me his glass, "we have every stitch of canvas spread, while the Spaniard—if she be a Spaniard, as to which I have little doubt—is overhauling us under double-reefed topsails. If we escape, major, it will have to be by stratagem, not by speed. Just let me have another squint. Ah! there goes the blood-red flag of Spain, and she has altered her course a point. The next thing will be a shot across our bows as a hint to heave to. We must take that ship, my friend. There is nothing for it but being taken ourselves, which is out of the question."

This proposal was so astounding and, seemingly, so absurd, that had not Cautley been one of the most pert and clear-headed men I knew I should have deemed him either mad or drunk.

"Take that ship! What on earth are you thinking about? She must have——"

"Thirty guns, judging from the size of her."

"And we have not one, mounted."

"And if we had all our guns mounted we should not be a match for her. I have not men enough both to sail the *Campanella* and fight her. Besides, they have had no training, and yours would be of no use except for boarding."

"How the dickens do you propose to take this Spaniard, then?"

"By stratagem."

"And what will you do with her when you have got her?"

"Leave her. But listen; time presses, we have not a minute to lose."

When the skipper had explained his plan, to which I gave my cordial assent, I passed the word to sound the assembly, and in a few minutes all the troops, except the few who were unfit for duty and the mutineers, had come on deck and fallen in.

"Now, men, you have an opportunity of atoning for your misconduct, also of doing yourselves and everybody on board a good turn," I began. "That man-of-war is a Spanish ship, Captain Cautley thinks from her ways that she is going to overhaul us, and as she is faster than the *Campanella* we cannot shake her off, and having no guns we cannot fight her, even if it were desirable to do so, which for several good reasons it is not. On the other hand, if the Spanish captain makes us heave to, boards us, examines our papers and searches the ship, he will find that we are carrying contraband of war, and we shall be made prisoners, taken Heaven knows where, and put in gaol, perhaps worse.

"As soon as you are dismissed you will go below and receive your arms; the boarding-party cutlasses and pistols, the reserve muskets. For the rest, you must obey your officers' orders, to whom I shall presently give full instructions, to the letter. But there are two things I want particularly to impress on you. Until the signal is given not a man, officer or private, must come on deck without a direct order from me, and after the order is given for silence not a word must be spoken. This is of the utmost importance, for some of the Spaniards are almost sure to board us, and if they suspect that we have troops on board

General Molyneux ran an unfortunate sailor from back to breast.

Digitized by Google

all our trouble will go for nothing, and we shall either have to surrender or be blown out of the water.

"Captain Cautley will find a pretext to lay the *Campanella* alongside the Spanish ship, and the signal for boarding will be the bo'sun's whistle 'all hands,' and as the Spaniards are not likely to be either armed or prepared we shall have no difficulty in mastering them. Threaten as much as you like, but use neither your cutlasses nor pistols except strictly in self-defence. Great Britain and Spain are at peace, and we are under the British flag. All we want is to restrain the Spaniards while the bluejackets make it impossible for them to molest us. To do more would be piracy, which is a hanging matter. Now you can fall out."

After a few words with my officers I went below and entered my instructions in the order book.

Then I went on deck again.

The man-of-war was bearing up to us.

"Didn't I tell you so?" exclaimed Cautley as a shot flew across our bows. "The order to heave-to. I shall obey, of course."

The man-of-war also hove-to, and presently a boat was lowered. I had already passed the word for silence, and told the officers to enforce it by every means in their power.

"You must stand by me to interpret," said the skipper. "I know a few words of Spanish but not enough to hold a conversation."

"What ship is that?" demanded the officer in command of the boat when he came within hail.

"The *Campanella*, of London, bound for Port of Spain," I answered for Cautley, Port of Spain being our alternative destination.

"I should like to come on board."

"Come by all means. Captain Cautley will be delighted to make your acquaintance."

The quarter-ladder was lowered and the officer mounted the ship's side. Others were preparing to follow him, when Cautley intervened.

"Only one, if you please. I am not going to have a whole boat's crew on board my ship. Well, Señor, what can I have the pleasure of doing for you? But you will, perhaps, kindly tell me the name of your ship and your own."

"*Con mucho gusto.* My ship is the *Dulcinea*, of the Royal Spanish Navy, and I am Guzman Zambrun, her first-lieutenant. Now be good enough to tell me of what consists your cargo."

"Hardware and sundries."

"You are pleased to say so. But it is not enough. I must see your papers."

"What for?"

"In order that I may ascertain whether you are carrying contraband of war. I also require to inspect your cargo."

"By what right?"

"The right of search. But I am not here to bandy words. I am here by command of my captain, Señor Don Pablo Blanco, with orders from him to examine your papers and inspect your cargo."

"Will you kindly tell Señor Don Pablo Blanco that I respectfully decline to allow you to do either the one or the other."

"I shall convey your message, of course, but Don Pablo is a very resolute gentleman, and you are under our guns."

"You will fire on us at your peril. We are not in Spanish waters, and you cannot blockade the ocean."

"I have no more to say, Señor Capitan, except that if you attempt to make sail Don Pablo will most certainly fire on you."

The lieutenant made his bow, turned on his heel, and was going over the side when Cautley, as though the idea had only just occurred to him, said, or rather I said for him (the comedy having previously been rehearsed):

"One word, Señor Teniente. I don't want to give you unnecessary trouble, and if you have no objection I will lay my ship alongside yours and have a few words with Don Pablo. I cannot admit his right to search me, but I might receive him as a guest, and, as a concession to him personally, allow him and yourself to see my papers and look round the ship."

"That is all we want," exclaimed the lieutenant eagerly. "I am greatly obliged for your courtesy, and I have not the least doubt that Don Pablo will accept your proposition, in which case we shall hoist the British ensign as a token of assent."

As soon as the Spaniards were well away, I ordered fifty men to come on deck and lie close to the bulwarks.

Five minutes after the lieutenant put his foot on the *Dulcinea's* deck the Union Jack was flying over her stern, whereupon the *Campanella*, which had the weather gage, bore down on her and brought to under her counter.

The Spaniards threw ropes, and, as they were being made fast to, the boatswain, at a sign from the captain, whistled "all hands," and in almost less time than it takes to tell, three hundred men swarmed on deck, and led by Cautley, myself, and the fifty who had been hidden, sprang over the *Dulcinea's* bulwarks.

The Spaniards, unarmed, unprepared, and outnumbered, offered hardly any resistance. Some of them ran to the capstan to get cutlasses, but this having been foreseen, our fellows were there before them. Others went below, for arms, on which we battened down the hatches.

All was going on well, our men, as they had been ordered, used no more violence than was absolutely necessary, and the Spaniards were being driven aft like a flock of sheep, when General Molyneux appeared, flourishing his sword and crying "Death to the Spaniards!" and ran an unfortunate sailor from back to breast, killing him instantly.

Señor Don Pablo Blanco and his first-lieutenant were very indignant, accused us of treachery, and threatened to have us hanged for piracy.

"You will have to catch us first," I said. "If you had not meddled with us we should not have meddled with you, and we are neither going to hurt you nor rob you, only to put the *Dulcinea* in such a condition as to prevent you from making sail before sunset."

"You mean that you will disable my ship. How can you do that without hurting us?" retorted Don Pablo fiercely. "If bad weather comes on it may cost us our lives. And what do you call killing defenceless men? I call it murder."

"So do I, and we regret the occurrence exceedingly," I answered, after a word aside with Cautley. "We cannot restore the poor fellow to life, but we will leave the perpetrator of the outrage to be dealt with as you think fit."

"I do not thank you, Señor, because it is the least you can do. The ruffian shall be treated as he deserves. I only wish I had it in my power to treat you all as you deserve."

When General Molyneux found that he was going to be left behind he made a great uproar, cursing and praying in turn, and struggling desperately with the Spanish sailors who, heedless of his cries, carried him below.

"Did you ever see a man hanged?" asked Cautley.

"Never."

"Well, if you take my glass and keep an eye on the *Dulcinea*, I think you will presently see somebody you know strung up to the fore yard-arm, and he will be rightly served."

"Yes, killing that Spanish sailor was sheer murder."

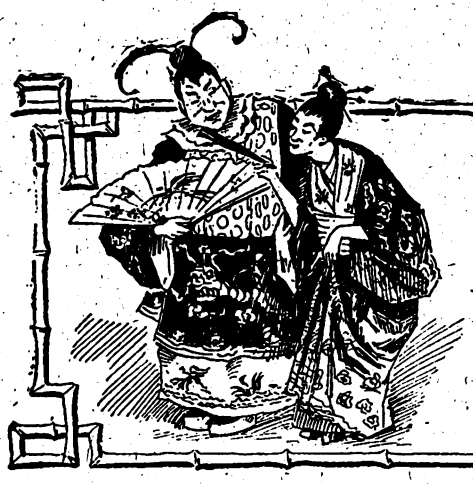
"And may get us into trouble later on. Nor is that all. Now that he is gone, and the mutineers are laid by the heels, we shall learn all about the plot, and unless I am mistaken—— But I won't move in the matter until after the funeral. The carpenter is making a coffin, and to-night we shall consign poor Barnish to his watery grave."

"Won't that be rather soon?"

"Not for these latitudes. The weather is very warm, and below it is very close, and sailors don't like having a dead body on board; they think it brings bad luck."

(To be continued.)

Digitized by Google



Mr. Bowser's Tribulations.

XV.—HE PUTS IN TWO HOURS' WORK WITH A NEIGHBOUR'S BOY.

It had been arranged that Mrs. Bowser and the lady next door should attend a sewing meeting in the evening and that the lady's four-year-old son should be the guest of Mr. Bowser and the cat for a couple of hours. The little fellow looked round in a dubious way as he was brought over, but fell asleep before the ladies got away and was tucked up on the couch.

"Don't you worry in the slightest," said Mr. Bowser to the mother. "If he happens to wake up, I'll do everything to amuse him. I always loved children, and they have always taken to me. Bless his little heart, but I wish he hadn't fallen asleep."

Five minutes later the front door closed on his mother and the boy awoke. He didn't awake with the languid gentleness of a rabbit, but all of a sudden he sat up with a howl of affright. The howls ran through all the terrace before Mr. Bowser could realise the situation, and the family cat, which had been prowling round the room, made a dive for the hall and appeared totally panic-stricken.

* * * * *

During the next ten minutes Mr. Bowser tried hard to be a mother to that boy. He drummed on the piano, knocked on the window and jumped about the room. He handed over his watch, his pocket-book, his keys and his knife. He ran to the kitchen for sugar, tea, coffee, starch and baking powder. Anything and everything was at the disposal of that boy until he ceased to howl and sob.

"Me want story," he said as he dug the tears out of his eyes with his fists.

* * * * *

Thereupon Mr. Bowser told him the following story:

"Once upon a time there was a bobtailed dog. He was spotted. He was three years old. He loved bones and meat and oysters and ice cream. He had no mother or father, but was not a dog to do wicked things. He didn't swear or smoke or drink, and he didn't tell stories. There were dogs who wanted to fight with him, but he would not fight. When they came round and said they could knock his eyebrows off and roll him in the mud, he jumped over the fence and ran away. Well, things went on this way for a long time, and then—and then——"

* * * * *

And then the boy began howling because there was no more bobtailed dog. Mr. Bowser got the cat in, but the howls continued; then he got down on hands and knees and said he was a horse, but that wouldn't work. He got out a book with pictures, sang "Rock-a-bye Baby" and whistled "Rule Britannia," and after ten minutes' work thrown away he was greeted with that same tearful remark:

"Me want story!"

* * * * *

Thereupon Mr. Bowser, who had spoilt his collar and burst the buttons off his waistcoat with his exertions, sat down and began:

"There was once a bear. He went round looking for boys who cried. (Howls of fear from the boy.) No, I mean he went round looking for girls on roller skates. This bear lived in the woods, and he was not afraid of either man or guns. Whenever he caught a boy—(Howls.) I mean, whenever he caught a girl he would carry her off to his den and eat her up at two mouthfuls. In one year that bear ate up ten thousand girls. One day when there were no girls about and he was very hungry he thought he would eat a boy. (Awful howls.) Hold on, now! I'm going to tell you how the boy killed the bear. You see——"

The boy woke with a howl of affright.

Digitized by Google

But the boy refused to see. He'd heard bear stories before, and he knew that there was something wrong somewhere.

He sat up and howled, and he lay down and howled, and the cat fled in terror, and Mr. Bowser felt chills go up his back.

There was more lively drumming on the piano, more wild gallops round the room, more singing and whistling. Exercise in gymnasium couldn't compare with it, but there were only two ways to stop that howling. The boy must be either choked to death or hear another story.

* * * * *

Mr. Bowser wasn't quite ready yet to do murder, and so he gaspingly began:

"Well, you know, there was once a boy named Willie Scott. (The howls ceased.) He had a goat. It was a black goat. You've seen a goat, of course. He has horns and climbs over fences. This goat loved the boy because he was so kind to it. Some boys would hit a goat with a crowbar if they got angry, but Willie never even struck his goat with a stick. If ever you get a goat and want him to love you, don't abuse him. A goat has feelings as well as a boy. Well, one day Willie and his goat were out on the footpath, and along came a lion. The lion was hungry and wanted to eat the boy up. The boy began to cry, but the goat said to him——Let's see. What did the goat say? I don't remember just what he said, but—but——"

He had just got him under his arm.

* * * * *

There was no finish, and there were howls and sobs and lamentations from the kid on the sofa. He wanted to know whether the goat ate up the lion or the lion ate up the boy, and Mr. Bowser had left it all a mystery.

He was picked up and danced round the room, but he added kicks to his howls. He was carried up stairs and down stairs, but he would not be quiet. There came half-formed ideas of throwing him out of a back window or chucking him into the coal bin, but he was at length returned to the sofa.

* * * * *

Then Mr. Bowser said about forty swear words to himself and began:

"You know that a boy should always mind what his father and mother tell him. (Howls cease.) If he doesn't, then he is a bad boy and something will happen to him. I once knew a boy whose name was Sammy. He was about as old as you are and about as naughty. One day he wanted to throw the clock out of the window, but his mother said: 'Sammy, don't do that. If you do, a wolf will come and eat you up.' What did that boy do? He waited until his mother went out shopping, and then he threw the clock out. He didn't believe that a wolf would come, but that same afternoon, when he was playing in the back yard, a great big wolf, with eyes as big as teacups and a tail ten feet long, jumped over the back fence and growled and growled, and the boy screamed for his mother, and the wolf showed his teeth, and—and—well, that's all."

* *

But it wasn't. That wolf either ate that boy up or he didn't, and the youngster on the sofa wanted to know.

He began howling with redoubled vigour, and Mr. Bowser determined on his death. He wouldn't kill him in the house, but he would take him to the river and throw him in.

He had just picked the howler up and got him under his arm, and the cat was looking on with great satisfaction, when the ladies returned and the murder was prevented.

* * * * *

"Woman," said Mr. Bowser after the mother of the child had departed with him in her arms, "the law will probably allow you alimony!"

"But what for?" she asked.

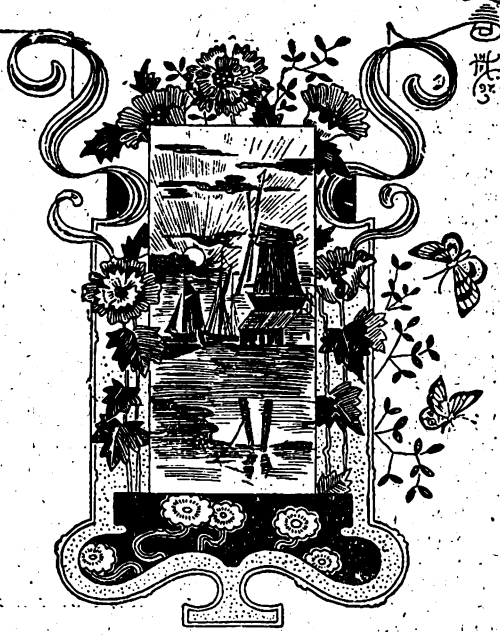
"Separation!" he hoarsely replied. "The limit has been reached. My lawyer will serve the papers on your lawyer to-morrow, and you can go home to your mother by the ten o'clock train."

M. Quad.

[Next Week: He Goes in for Private Theatricals, but Doesn't Succeed.]

Digitized by Google

A QUIET GAME.



"WHAT place is that?"

The question was asked by a man on the deck of a steamboat plying on a Canadian river. It was evident from his dress that he was a well-to-do farmer, and it was equally clear from his question that he was not at home in those parts. The inquiry was made of one of the two passengers who had come on board the boat at the landing place from which they were just departing.

"Kerry's Landing," replied the man to whom the question had been put. "An excellent place—to keep away from. Very little more than swamp about there."

Both he and his companion, who was of much lighter build and clean-shaven, wore big slouch hats which obscured the upper half of their face. There was nothing particularly striking about them, nothing to distinguish them from any other of the heterogeneous freight which such boats usually carry.

"It doesn't seem to be a very lively spot," assented the farmer with a slight shiver. "It's chilly now and I think I'll go below. I shouldn't care to settle about here—very little business to be done I should think."

"Business of a kind can be done even there," chimed in the second stranger. "But I vote we go below and have a game of cards—there's sure to be something of that kind going on."

"I'm told that a lot of gambling goes on in these boats; and not only here, but in other parts," said the farmer, as all three made their way below.

As the bigger of the two new passengers threw open the door, a cloud of tobacco smoke came full in their faces and made the farmer cough.

"Rather cloudy in there, Bill," he said to his companion with a dry laugh. "Come in, friend," he added, addressing the farmer.

"Come in, gentlemen, come in!" called a voice. "Come in! Now that you've let out some of the smoke there'll be room for you to get in."

For choice, the famer would have probably remained outside, but his curiosity was too strong, and he entered with the other two.

They found about a dozen men seated at a table, playing cards. There was money on the table, and enough excitement on the faces of the players to denote that the game was not for "love."

"We'll ask you to join us when we begin the next game, gentlemen," said the man who had invited them to enter. "I want another card," he continued, turning to the dealer.

"Right you are, captain," was the reply. And the game continued.

The three new-comers took up positions at different parts of the long table to watch the game and listen to the conversation. The players continued both in the same free and easy style, taking no notice of the new arrivals. The money on the table changed hands in a way that excited the farmer, but the other two appeared to be unmoved,

"What's the row I heard about just before we came on board?" asked the man who had been styled "Captain."

"Some fellow named Frank had killed two men, they told me. Who is this Frank?"

"I've never seen him," answered one of the players; "but I've heard a good deal about him. Seems to be a very clever player with the cards, and has got into one or two scrapes for clearing the whole table."

"Cheating?"

"He has never been caught at it. He appears to have the biggest kind of luck at it and wins a good pile every time he sits down to a game, but it seems to me all straight. Must be as cute as——"

"Just so," agreed the captain. "But what about this killing affair?"

"Steamboat Frank—that's what they call him because he made two or three good hauls on the boats in different parts—killed two of them right off without winking, and would have settled the third if he hadn't cleared out."

"Tell us the yarn," requested the captain, his request being backed by a chorus of approving murmurs.

"Frank had settled down there for about six months, and was earning a living at general dealing, with card playing to fill up the time. One or two of them didn't like him—I heard from an outsider that it was on account of his being too sharp, and getting ahead of them in the dealer business—so they tried to upset him.

Digitized by Google

"Frank is about as smart as they make 'em. He is a strong fellow and very quick-witted, and just as ready with his revolver as he is with his wits. He is as straight as a die, they tell me; and many people believe that, although they can't account for his extra good fortune when he handles the cards."

"He isn't the only one who has a run of luck at times," interrupted one of the players sagely.

"I take your money? captain," broke in a voice with a decided French accent.

And one of the players took in a goodly pile of Canadian currency.

"Whenever anyone tries to make things uncomfortable for Steamboat Frank," continued the narrator, "he raises trouble. Frank doesn't let things stand still; he gets to work at once and makes as much of a jangle as a whole peal of bells at Christmas time.

"They didn't like his luck, so two of them tried to put up a job on him. They said he hadn't been dealing fair in his regular business, and they made an attempt to get him up before the sheriff on a faked charge.

"But Frank heard of it and met those two fellows in a quiet spot, where he thrashed them both at one time until they wished they hadn't been born."

"But I thought he had killed two?" queried the captain.

"Hold on a bit; I'm coming to that. Frank, so it seems, only uses his six-shooter when the occasion demands it; and this particular occasion did demand it.

"That's were he differs from some of the fellows, who think nothing of shooting down a man unarmed. He acts square enough.

"There was a girl down there that they called Lizzie—leastways, she was about thirty. Several of the boys were after her, but only two had any chance. Oh!" concluded the story-teller, as he had to hand over his money to the winning man.

"Now, gentlemen," said the captain, looking at each of the three new passengers in turn, "your opportunity has come and you can take a hand."

Four of the men at the table had decided to drop out of the game, having arrived at the end of their resources. Jack and the farmer signified their willingness to join in the game, although the limit was rather high, but Bill quietly declined on the ground that he hadn't enough cash to embark on so risky an undertaking.

"I'm so confoundedly unlucky at that sort of thing," he said apologetically. "And it will be safer for me to look on."

"The two men who stood a chance with Lizzie, were Blazer and Frank," resumed the narrator when they had settled down again.

"Blazer was one of the two men who put up the job on Frank, and instead of bettering his chance, as I suppose he thought he would, he just spoilt it, for Lizzie was mad about it and married Frank right off.

"So Blazer and two of his friends made up their minds to get even and not to be particular about the way they did it. They waylaid Frank one night; they posted themselves a short distance from each other along a quiet part of the road, and had their guns ready. If the first missed him, the second might hit, or the third; he was certain to fall before he was clear of the three.

"The first man fired and Frank went down off his horse and lay in the road. They were joyful over their success, and came out of the hidding places to gloat over their victim, but he wasn't hit at all and had dropped because he thought it was safest.

"The nearest man got his dose of lead from Frank's revolver, and so did the second one, who couldn't get away quick enough; but the third man escaped. That was Blazer."

During this narration the game had proceeded very quickly. The stakes had been increased and bets had gone higher and higher.

One by one the players dropped out, having lost all the cash they could venture, leaving only the captain, the man with the French accent, the story-teller, and Jack still playing.

At this juncture, the man who was recounting the exploits of Steamboat Frank was forced to give up.

The farmer, having lost a goodly sum, had gone on deck to get cool, but Bill was still watching the game, although his continual change of position from one part of the table to another indicated a lack of interest.

Of the three men who continued the game, Jack betrayed the least excitement, which was probably owing to the fact that he was winning considerable sums.

"I know Blazer by sight," remarked the captain as he made a big bet in response to a challenge from Jack. "I fancy, by the look of his face, that he is the kind of man who will do his best to get even."

"I'll take your money, captain," observed Jack quietly as he turned up a card.

The captain said something impolite and pushed the money across the table.

The man with the French accent decided to double the stake for the next deal; the captain was about to follow his example, when Jack said he was quite prepared to make it four times as large, and the other two—galled by the touch of sarcasm in the tone—agreed to the larger sum.

"Blazer will get even if he can," continued the man who had been telling the story.

"I heard that he and some friends intend to do for Frank and are waiting for a good chance; they don't intend to have their little game spoilt this time by rushing the thing."

"But they will have two to reckon with, I should say; for Lizzie is just the kind of girl to help her husband in every way. People say she ought to have been a man."

"You seem to know all about it," observed one of the on-lookers. "S'pose you know them?"

"No, I don't," was the reply. "I'm telling you what was told to me, and you can take it for what it is worth. More passengers," he concluded, as the boat came to a stand. "Must be Harry's Wharf."

But little attention was paid to the stoppage, which was of brief duration; it was quite a usual thing, and in addition to that all the men were greatly interested in the game which was becoming more exciting than ever. Both the captain and the man with the French accent, nerved to desperation by their losses, had determined to stake all that was left to them on one final deal, and their countenances showed how great was the nervous tension.

"They say that Steamboat Frank has gone to another part and isn't likely to return," said the man who knew all about it. "He hasn't been seen here for the best part of two months, and I expect Blazer has got tired of looking out for him. Frank worked the boats pretty strong, and perhaps it was the healthiest thing he could do, to go away. He may not have cheated, but a man gets a bad name anyhow, if he always wins."

At this moment the captain uttered a big oath and sat back in his chair; the man with the French accent said something in French which corresponded in

Digitized by Google

strength and quality with the captain's remark, and rose from the table.

Jack drew the money to his side and stuffed it into his pockets.

"I'm willing to pay for drinks and smokes all round," he said in the same cool tone. "Fortune has been with me and I'm much obliged to her; I haven't seen much money lately. Times have been hard."

"Your hard times are all over, Steamboat Frank," said a voice from the door. "Make one movement and you're a dead man. Hold up your hands!"

There was a cry of surprise from those present. They looked in the direction of the door and saw three men with revolvers levelled at Jack.

"Steamboat Frank!" ejaculated everyone. And the captain added something more forcible.

"You've cornered me this time, Blazer," said Frank with a careless laugh, as he held up his hands. "What are you going to do?"

"I'd shoot you right away," replied Blazer emphatically, "if it wasn't for the company. As it is, I shall make you shell out that money and come on shore with us. See?"

The intention was obvious to all present, but no one interfered. Those were lawless times, and the man who interfered might have received a piece of lead instead of the gold and notes which were to come from Frank's pockets.

"Go and turn out his pockets, Jimmy," ordered Blazer.

One of the men thrust his revolver in his belt and walked towards Frank, who was still standing with up-lifted hands.

"Make haste about it," said Blazer, as Jimmy reached the victim. "We don't want to waste time."

Jimmy put forth his hand to feel in Frank's pocket, and then something happened.

There was a howl of rage and pain from the men at the door. Blazer's right hand had received a heavy blow from the butt of a revolver, which made him drop his weapon and caress the wounded member with his left hand. The other man had had his wrist seized so quickly after Blazer had been disabled that it was almost impossible to believe that the same person had done the two things. But it was Bill who had done both.

Jimmy, with one hand just entering a pocket, was seized by the throat and his revolver was taken from his belt. And almost before the spectators knew what had really happened, Blazer and his two companions were holding their hands in the direction of the sky in obedience to orders enforced by the barrels of three revolvers, two in the hands of Frank and one held by Bill, who was none other than Lizzie in disguise."

"Now, gentlemen, right about face, march!" cried Frank. "Mind the stairs! that's right, up you go!"

The men stumbled upstairs to the deck, still holding their hands upwards. They knew enough of their intended victims to understand that any attempt to do otherwise than he ordered would result in their "getting hurt."

Frank marched them to the side of the vessel and then bade them jump overboard. There was no help for it, and with muttered oaths the men complied.

They were about twenty yards from the shore, so they had every chance of reaching it.

"I want you to put us ashore at the first likely spot," said Frank to the steamboat captain. "We are in a hurry."

The captain of the boat was wise in his generation, and made no demur. A few minutes later Frank and Lizzie were on dry land and the boat was steaming away.

"The gentlemen in the cabin didn't come on deck to see us off," laughed Frank. "Very rude of them, eh?"

"Not at all," replied Lizzie. "Do you think I am a fool? I thought it best to lock the cabin door as I came out. We can't afford to have our chances spoilt by overlooking small details."

"Blazer nearly had me that time," said Frank kissing her. "Only he overlooked a detail. That was very bad management on his part, for nobody could call you a small detail."

"Not quite," she answered merrily. "My signal code worked as well as ever, but I really thought once that the Frenchman had found me out when I was telling you about his hands."

G. DAY.

Digitized by Google

Cricket in the Island of Koro.

WE are having great times in Koro, and life here is hugely exciting.

King Senka says he never was so free from liver complaint, and has lost quite twenty pounds in weight.

When you hit a ball, a piece of the ball would fly off, and in many cases hit a fielder who happened to be near.

Nothing pleases King Senka more than to find that through some cause or another he has lost weight for, as he remarked to me, just think of the grand time he will have in making up the loss.

So when King Senka found that three weeks cricket had rarified him to the extent of twenty pounds adipose tissue, he smiled extensively and said "I will now eat for a week."

This is the week during which the twenty pounds aforesaid are to be reinserted; so thus I have time to relate certain incidents connected with the installation of cricket in the island of Koro, of which Senka is the extensive ruler.

You will remember my telling you of the introduction of football into Koro, and also how a certain bicycle brightened the weary hours of the King and inspired agility into the natives.

Well, King Senka said he was growing tired of funerals, and suggested that football should be given a rest.

Then again the bicycle had lived too fast and was showing signs of it.

We could no longer make the tyres air-tight, and blowing them out with sand instead of air rather slowed the pace. However, no one would have objected to the slight decrease in speed produced by the sand, if the bicycle itself had not objected to be fed on sand, and so to speak, all might have been well.

But it was very evident that putting sand in the tyres seemed to take all the grit out of the machine.

It grew kind of sullen and refused to work; its temper also got very uncertain.

For instance, after King Senka had put himself to the trouble and expense of placarding the island with the fact that he intended to break the ten-mile record, the bicycle refused to be partner in the scheme by the simple but effective method of leaking to the extent of half a pound of sand every five yards.

So cycling got rather tame; and King Senka asked me to suggest something to relieve the monotony of the passing hour.

These were not his exact words. What he actually said was:

"I'm getting 'orrid fat and 'eavy, so do think of some game which will make me once more enjoy an 'earty meal, and I will reward you 'ansome."

I had taught King Senka English but never could get him to sound his h's.

I therefore resolved to teach the King cricket, and so much progress did I make that very night that, when I left the palace, the King was sufficiently educated in the game to remark that he would stir the stumps of half the population of Koro.

The formation of a cricket club is a comparatively easy undertaking in England; but it was horse work in Koro.

In the first place, bats had to be fashioned, stumps made, and cricket balls manufactured out of the trees growing upon the island.

But willing hands made light work; and King Senka inspired a great deal of willingness by remarking, at the outset, that he would break the head of any man who did not work hard. It was quite a week before a sufficient number of bats, balls, etc., had been manufactured, and I hardly think that these articles would have found a very ready sale in England.

King Senka kept on running, and smiled as he ran.

Digitized by Google

The balls were not absolutely round; but you could easily distinguish the handle from the blade part of the bats.

We did not go in for such luxuries as cane-splicing, and cork handles, but what the bats lacked in this respect they made up in weight and extent of surface.

Any batsman throwing his bat at a fielder who is about to catch a ball will be ruled out.

There was none of that monotonous evenness of surface which characterises the English-made bat, they appealed rather from the picturesque point of view in presenting an undulating surface suggestive of hills and dales, mountains and valleys.

Again I found, when once we had got properly started, that much more fun could be gained from the implements we played with than with those generally used.

For instance, when you hit a ball, a piece of the ball would fly off, and in many cases hit a fielder who happened to be near.

The balls also added to the fun and kept all interest from flagging.

You could never tell how much of the ball would be left after you had hit it; and very often it would take several fielders to gather it into the bowler's hands.

King Senka once made a great hit and the ball went into the state called "smithereens." Of course, Senka began to run, and continued running until the ball had been collected.

No one could cry "lost ball" since parts of the ball were soon found, and so really only a fraction of the ball was lost.

Thus King Senka kept on running and smiled as he ran.

He stopped and had ten minutes' interval for refreshments when he had run fifty; after which he once more resumed his trot.

He ran 147 runs before the ball had been brought home.

At first some of the players quite mistook the spirit of the game.

Thus when the wicket-keeper once got his eye in the way of the ball he could hardly be persuaded from fighting the bowler.

But little incidents like this kept the game well alive.

It was rather dangerous work wicket-keeping, and no umpire would give a man out unless he could fight him.

A certain amount of diversion was always displayed at first during a game.

Supposing a fielder caught a man out; the man would look upon this as a deliberate insult on the part of the fielder to himself and would take steps accordingly, their respective wives doing ditto.

But in a month's time the natives began to understand the game better; and I had added certain rules which I thought were necessary.

The rules I drew up in addition to those generally used were:

(1.) The wicket-keeper is not allowed to hit the batsman on the head when he is about to play a ball.

(2.) The umpire must not sit on the stumps during actual play.

(3.) In the case of a ball being hit into the air and going to bits, the largest bit must be caught before it touches the ground for the batsman to be given out.

(4.) Any batsman throwing his bat at a fielder who is about to catch a ball will be ruled out.

(5.) All indirect attempts at intimidation such as kneeling on the umpire and pounding him with a bat are not to be indulged in.

(6.) Any batsman using his head to stop the ball may be ruled out leg before.

(7.) If any lady whose husband has been given "out" by the umpire wishes to present that umpire with a bat, she must not steal up behind him and present it across his head, as the umpire is wanted until the game is over.

By the time the rules had been thoroughly digested and the natives had been brought to understand that cricket was not a species of sham fight, with the sham part left out, Koro could boast of several good elevens.

No one has as yet dared to bowl King Senka, so his average is rather a good one.

Last week we had our first great match. I picked an eleven to oppose one King Senka had chosen, and the whole island turned out to see the game.

Three dozen bats had been got ready and a good stock of balls. A large number of balls is always necessary for the wicket-keeper very often uses his head to stop a ball and the ball suffers.

King Senka won the toss and elected to go in first; so I set out my side and the crowd cheered in anticipation of some fun.

Very soon King Senka and another emerged from the Pavilion (save the mark!) and took their stand at the wickets.

Now I had always bowled easy lobs to Senka because I knew he liked them, and did not know how my usual style of bowling would appeal to him.

I used to bowl an exceedingly fast ball with a break from the leg, but had as yet only bowled easy underhands in Koro, with an occasional slow round-hand.

But that day I decided to try my old style. The first ball I sent sped, as we used to say, like "greased lightning," and the ground being rather hard, it rose somewhat, the King receiving it full in the ribs.

He immediately dropped his bat and ran as for dear life to a palm tree, which he quickly scaled.

Finding that the earth still kept relatively in the same place, he climbed slowly down again after a minute or two, and came up to me.

"Did you not feel the earthquake?" he said, looking at me with a terrified expression.

The wicket-keeper is not allowed to hit the batsman on the head when he is about to play a ball.

Digitized by Google

"No," said I, "I did not notice or feel anything."

"Most remarkable!" he said. "Just as you were going to bowl the whole earth seemed to shake and a thunderbolt hit me in the ribs."

If any lady whose husband has been given "out" by the umpire wishes to present that umpire with a bat, she must not steal up behind and present it across his head.

"Perhaps it was a sudden attack of indigestion," I suggested.

This set the King thinking; then suddenly looking up he smiled and said:

"You are right; one of my wives gave me some fricasseed cocoanut to-day for breakfast and I ate three or four pounds of it. I remember having a similar pain before, after partaking of what a wife of mine—she died shortly afterwards poor thing—called a *chef d'œuvre*."

He then walked slowly back to the wickets with the air of a man who had solved a difficult problem.

However, I did not try any more swift bowling on Senka, who carried his bat with the good score of eighty-five; but I was not so merciful with the other members of his team who only made twenty between them.

It was very funny to watch the antics of the batsman when I sent down a very swift ball.

Sometimes he would fall flat on his face and then gradually raise his head to see if the cannon ball had passed, and how many men it had killed; or perhaps he would spring into the air with a terrific yell and hurl his bat at the ball as it was coming towards him.

King Senka enjoyed all this immensely, and once when a ball laid out the wicket-keeper, he asked me to show him how to do it.

He also asked me to bowl a ball into the crowd to see what damage it would do; but I was afraid of what damage the crowd might do and so did not indulge in this luxury.

King Senka had a very good wicket-keeper on his side, and it was chiefly through him that my side got out for forty-six runs.

He was exceedingly clever with his feet and could pull out a stump with his toes.

Thus he would stand with one foot very near to the wickets, and when King Senka bowled a ball which happened to go close to the bails, he would aid Senka's good intention by bringing off the bail by the simple but very effective method of shaking a stump with his toes.

In this way Senka took a number of wickets, mine included; not by having a big break on the ball but by a big toe on the wicket.

With the aid of this wicket-keeper King Senka could do the hat-trick or any other feat of bowling he might wish.

However, it was a very enjoyable game all told, and I am rather looking forward to the next, which takes place a week hence.

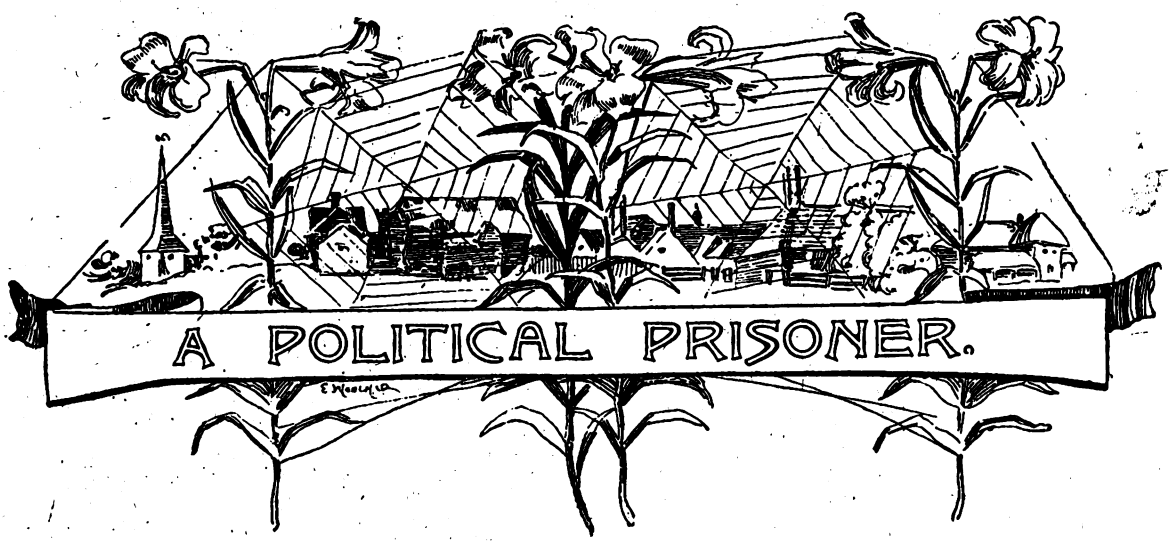
For I have been practising bowling slow balls with a big break from the off, and am wondering how they will suit the King, who said to me to-day:

"I 'ate a ball to come along too 'urriedly; but give me slow balls and I can fairly 'ammer them."

The first ball I sent sped, as we used to say, like "greased lightning," and the ground being rather hard, it rose somewhat, the King receiving it full in the ribs.

W. ST. G. DRENNAN.

Digitized by Google



THE few persons who constituted the "society" of the Siberian village, situated at such a distance from what the world termed civilisation, were surprised for the second time in three weeks—an altogether unprecedented experience.

The government officials, the warders and others in charge of the mines and the prisoners, and their families, led a quiet, perhaps monotonous, existence; it was not devoid of amusement, and there were occasions when they were really gay, but they saw little of the outer world during the period of residence at the penal settlement.

The first surprise was the arrival of Madame Louise Barette, a lovely Frenchwoman on the right side of thirty; she was travelling through the country with a view to demonstrating to the world at large that Russia, and especially Siberia, was not the miserable, mirthless place it was popularly supposed to be, and that the prisoners of the powerful ally of her native country were not cruelly treated.

She had a passport and a semi-official letter which secured for her the opportunity she desired of spending three or four weeks' stay, and she put up at the inn, as it was styled.

But she was such a charming and gifted woman that she had the *entrée* of the houses of all the officials before she had been in the place three days.

She made no attempt to disguise the object of her stay, and laughingly declared that she would truthfully state all she saw, so they had better not allow her to see anything they wished to keep secret; but she captivated them so that they spoke freely in front of her, saying that they could trust her not to repeat what had been mentioned to her in confidence. To this she smilingly assented.

And now they had received information that Gruzineff, the Governor of the province, was about to pay them a visit. What possessed the old fellow to do that? The mines were not of great importance in point of size, and although they sometimes counted a political offender of some magnitude among the prisoners, that was not the case now.

The reputation enjoyed by these mines was to the effect that the life of those sent there was a veritable inferno, but the Governor would not trouble about paying a visit on that account.

"Perhaps he is coming to see the prisoner you call Oscar Sobieski," observed Madame Barette to one of the ladies of the small party who were taking tea out of a *samovar*, in the house of the chief resident official. "He is a political offender."

"Oh, no!" chorused all present.

"He is a nobody," added the lady particularly addressed.

"But he is supposed to be a descendant of a former King of Poland," objected Madame Barette, "and you told me that his offence was an attempt to throw a bomb at the carriage of a Grand Duke—and that it was even supposed that he intended that bomb for the Emperor."

"We don't count that for much," returned Madame Skoleva, smiling condescendingly. "He may be regarded as an aristocrat by some foolish Poles, and of course it was a terrible crime to make an attempt on the Grand Duke; but he is not one of a gang or one of a band that might do a lot of mischief."

This reasoning did not appear to be very conclusive to the Frenchwoman, judging by the look in her eyes, but she signified her complete approval by a nod and a pretty remark to the effect that she feared that she was rather dull, for she ought to have understood the position. Then she fell to thinking of what she had heard concerning Oscar Sobieski.

He had been sent to this far-distant part of the Tsar's dominions, because there were but few prisoners in the settlement and its position made the chance of escape almost impossible; and because of the severity of the treatment meted out to those who were unfortunate enough to be drafted there.

Madame Skoleva had hinted that orders had been given to her husband to make the life of the prisoner as unbearable as possible, without unduly shortening his existence. And from what she had gathered during her brief stay, the Frenchwoman was convinced that this order was being carried out. She had endeavoured to gain permission to see this interesting prisoner, but in spite of her charms and feminine wiles she had not succeeded. Skoleva had remained obdurate, and his wife

Digitized by Google

had declined to comprehend the hints thrown out by the visitor.

"I suppose that there would be no chance of pardon for such a man?" asked Madame Barette a few minutes later.

"None whatever, I should say," rejoined the Russian lady emphatically. "Who would wish to have the fellow pardoned? Political exigencies bring about many a strange thing, but it is not conceivable that they could lead to the release of Sobieski."

"The power to pardon him—would it be vested in the Governor?" persisted Madame Barette.

"No, my dear madame," said the commandant himself, who had just joined the little group with three other officials and had overheard the question. "The pardon would have to come from St. Petersburg, but it would be sent to the Governor and he would forward the order to me."

"Perhaps he is coming on purpose to have the man released?" suggested the Frenchwoman, jestingly.

There was a laugh at this joke, and the commandant changed the subject by engaging Madame Barette in conversation concerning her travels. This gradually led to some complimentary remarks about herself.

"I am sure that the Governor will be delighted to make your acquaintance," Skoleva assured her. "I know that he is a great admirer of the French people and no one could fail to have the highest admiration for so charming a member of the French race."

The official grew quite enthusiastic; the woman's beauty fascinated him whenever he came in contact with her.

"I am glad to learn that he is not likely to have me driven away," returned Madame Barette.

While the commandant was lifting his hands in horror at the idea and explaining volubly that the Governor would be charmed and so forth, his wife was once more singing the praises of the Frenchwoman whose presence had transformed their lives during the past few days, and who had in some subtle manner thrown a spell over the whole community.

"She is simply a wonderful woman," she said, as though the others knew nothing about it. "She sings and plays divinely, and she knows—well, all about everything, I really believe. She is very pretty, I suppose I ought to say very beautiful. And she is as attractive as—but there, you know that as well as I do!" she added. She was at a loss for a simile, and that was the easiest way out of the difficulty.

"I quite agree with what you say," said Madame Alexovitch, the wife of another official, "but there is a certain fierceness about her beauty, and her manner is rather weird at times. You remember when she chanted that strange song last week? It made me feel rather creepy, especially as she had the lamps turned low."

"Y-e-s," assented Madame Skoleva reluctantly. It was a half contradiction, and although she admitted the truth of the observation, she did not like to have her words questioned.

"I fancy, if I may be permitted to say so," the commandant was saying to Madame Barette just at this moment, "that you are not exactly French."

Madame Barette shot a swift glance at him and her lips twitched ever so slightly; then she smiled and complimented him on his shrewdness.

"I come from Perpignan," she replied. "You know that Perpignan is almost Spain. I really belong to a Basque family. The Basques are a strange race and nobody knows much about them."

"Ah! I thought as much. I haven't forgotten that weird song of yours the other evening."

"If I were an official here," continued the Frenchwoman, "I would soon tame all you prisoners. I shall try my art on the Governor. Do you know"—this quite suddenly—"I have a presentiment that he will order the release of Sobieski."

The commandant shook his head and again turned the conversation.

Six days later, His Excellency arrived. He was attended by a limited suite and took up his residence in the commandant's house.

He was to stay three days and had come on a visit of inspection.

On the second day of his stay Madame Skoleva entertained a small party in his honour and Madame Barette was the chief guest. She had evidently been impressed by the fact that the Governor was a high state dignitary and had made up her mind to exercise all her powers in order to please him.

That she did so was proved by a remark of Gruzineff very soon after he had been introduced.

"Beautiful and clever; I can find no words that will properly qualify those adjectives."

By virtue of his rank, Gruzineff should have been the central figure of the party, but Madame Barette assumed that position, and everybody, including Gruzineff, did homage to her. Everyone came under the spell which this gifted woman exercised over her fellow creatures.

"Will you not sing something to us?" asked Gruzineff of Madame Barette. "Skoleva tells me that you sing divinely—those are his very words—and I quite believe it."

"Gruzineff is bewitched," murmured Skoleva to his deputy. "Look at him! He is quite under the spell."

In response to the Governer's appeal, backed by a murmur of approval from other guests, Madame Barette sang to them in French. When she had finished the song, she offered to repeat the strange chant to which allusion has been made. The Governor eagerly accepted the offer; the others were not so eager, for they had heard it and were a little afraid.

Candles were extinguished and the only light was that of a lamp with a red shade. The Frenchwoman seated herself so that the reddish tint fell full upon her. The guests grouped themselves in a semi-circle in front of her, with the Governor in the most prominent position. They did this under her instructions, because "it helped her imaginations and enabled her to give full expression to the words.

Although they listened intently—their eyes fixed on her, not daring to move, scarcely able to breathe, so intense were their feelings—yet they hardly knew what they were listening to.

It seemed that she was playing the part of an old woman searching the battle field for the body of her son who had been killed; that she found it and carried it to a camp fire where she wailed over the loss of her only child.

No one was more fascinated than Gruzineff; she has done her best to please him and she had succeeded. That was what Skoleva thought as he noted the dazed expression on the Governor's face when the chant was finished.

Madame Barette withdrew from the room to an adjoining chamber as she concluded, and Gruzineff followed her. The effort exhausted her and she retired to Skoleva's little den or study to rest awile, as she had

Digitized by Google

done before; the commandant assumed that Gruzineff had followed her in order to thank her.

It was quite twenty minutes later when Madame Barette returned, alone. She was much agitated and held an envelope in her hand.

"I am dreadfully worried," she cried in distressed tones, "I fear that I have quite upset the Governor with my song. He followed me in order to thank me, but he seemed to be quite ill and has gone to his room. He gave me this letter for you, Monsieur Skoleva, and said that the order was to be carried out immediately. He will explain in the morning, when he is better. Oh! I wish someone had come to us."

There was some consternation at the information that the Governor was indisposed. Skoleva took the letter and hurried off to the bedroom occupied by His Excellency. Madame Barette was so much upset that she declared she could stay no longer, and expressed grave fears that Gruzineff would visit his wrath upon her on the following day.

"I am terribly afraid of your Russian high functionaries, because they can punish you so severely if you offend them."

Madame Barette was gone when Skoleva came back with the intelligence that the Governor was in bed and comfortably asleep. He had learnt this fact from Gruzineff's valet, who said that his master appeared stupefied, but otherwise well. Skoleva also seemed disturbed and said he must go to the prison at once, as he had something important to do.

So the party broke up rather unceremoniously.

When Gruzineff descended on the following morning his first words were:

"What happened last night? I can't remember anything after that song."

"Your Excellency became indisposed," replied Skoleva deferentially. "I hope your Excellency is better this morning."

"H'm! I can remember nothing that happened after she began that chant."

"I carried out your Excellency's orders last night as soon as Madame Barette gave me the letter," said Skoleva, thinking that this would stimulate Gruzineff's memory.

"What orders? What letter?" asked the latter with eyes wide open with surprise.

"The letter, written by yourself and dated from St. Petersburg, ordering me to release Oscar Sobieski."

Skoleva was fairly startled by the outburst which followed his words.

The Governor raved that he had written no such letter and accused Skoleva of tricking him; but when the commandant showed him the letter he subsided and stared vacantly at his own handwriting.

After gazing at it for at least a couple of minutes, he looked at Skoleva and continued quietly:

"Skoleva, that woman has tricked us. I can only suppose that she hypnotised me and made me write this letter. You have released Sobieski and you will find that Madame Barette has gone also. I don't know how she did it; tell me what you know about last night."

Skoleva quickly explained.

"It won't do for this to be known, Skoleva," said the Governor, uneasily. "They have a long way to go, but I doubt whether we can recapture them. The woman has no doubt laid her plans well, and we know that the inhabitants are always ready to assist escaped prisoners. If we try to recapture them, we also lay ourselves open to—— No, I think it best to say nothing, and in two or three weeks you can contrive to forward a report that he is dead. See?"

"It is rather risky, sir," answered Skoleva. He was a man of intelligence and saw an opportunity for promotion. "I will do it, and your Excellency will not fail to remember me for early advancement."

The Governor said he would remember, and he did; for in three months Skoleva was transferred to a better place.

Before they left the village, Madame Skoleva received a note from Madame Barette; the letter, after apologising for her abrupt departure, volunteered some explanation. It ran as follows:

"When my husband was sent to Siberia, I determined to release him if I devoted years to the task. I relied on the gifts which nature has been good enough to bestow on me. I came to you and learnt all I could. I wrote to the Governor anonymously, telling falsehoods about the management of the prison. I knew the kind of man he was, and I believed that if I could get him near the prison I should succeed in my plan. I could not hope to carry it through if he remained at a distance. If he did not come, I was determined to direct my efforts towards you and your fellow official; but I did not wish to injure you, because you are only the stupid tools, whereas I had a debt to pay M. Gruzineff, and it amused me to think of releasing my husband and bringing disgrace upon that man at the same time.

"Fortune favoured me. I hypnotised Gruzineff and made him write that letter and then sent him to bed. I told him to date it from the capital, because it looked more plausible, although I am convinced that you would have suspected nothing had it been dated from your own house. I had prepared you for the order to release my husband, by pretending that I had a presentiment that M. Gruzineff would bring an order for the release of Oscar Sobieski.

"It was a fatiguing journey, but money will do much, even in Russia. We are beyond the reach of the Tsar's creatures. We shall have to work against Russian tyranny from a distance in future, but we shall not cease to work.

"It will interest you to know that I am not a Frenchwoman, even in a remote degree. I had to invent a little story to satisfy you. I am not a Basque, but a Finn; this will help you to understand why I so heartily assist my husband in his fight against Russia."

G. Knight.

Digitized by Google

SHORT STORIES ABOUT SERVANTS.

We devote, every week, two pages of *Short Stories* to pithy, humourous anecdotes similar to those which appear in these columns. A prize of £1 1s. will be sent to the reader who submits the best storyette this week, and a copy of "The Invisible Man," by H. G. Wells, to each of those whose attempts are used. The anecdotes may be either original or selected; in the latter case the source *must* be stated. The prize of One Guinea offered for the best Storyette in this competition has been won this week by Mr. Geo. Daniels, 20 Princess Street, Accrington. Attempts for this week's prize must deal with FUNNY STORIES ABOUT COWS AND BULLS, and must reach the Storyette Editor, *Short Stories* Office, Henrietta Street, Strand, London, W.C., by Monday, July 23rd. Post-cards only, please.

They Had Got Cronje.

AT the time of Cronje's surrender a gentleman sent his servant, Bridget, to the fishmonger's to buy some plaice for dinner. Bridget, who was a bit uncultivated and who knew nothing of the war and its doings, set off for the fish.

When she arrived at the shop a lady was inside buying plaice, which was the kind of fish she herself had come for.

The fishmonger, as he was serving the lady, happened to remark:

"They've got Cronje."

"Have they?" asked the lady, and nothing further was said.

Bridget misunderstood the meaning, she thinking that the fishmonger meant that the plaice had got a disease called "cronje."

When Bridget got back with the fish she went straight to her master and said:

"Oi've got the plaice, sor, but the fishmonger said they'd got Cronje." G. D.

A Bad Bargain.

A FARM servant was married last year, and, being short of the amount necessary to defray the fees, he promised the officiating clergyman that he would repay him by giving him a bag of potatoes when they were ready for digging up.

The clergyman waited a considerable time but no potatoes were forthcoming, so he called on the man to inquire as to the reason of the delay.

"Well," was the despairing reply, "to tell yer the truth, guv'nor, she ain't wuth it!" W. C.

A New Fashion.

A SERVANT girl happened to be engaged at a farm-house where the mistress was known to have a rather hasty temper.

On the first Saturday night the girl was told to clean the boots and shoes for Sunday.

Coming into the kitchen a short time afterwards, the mistress, seeing that the maid had cleaned her own boots first, was so enraged that she lifted them and threw them into a tub of water which stood near.

The servant made no sign; but when all the boots were cleaned she also lifted them and threw them into the tub of water.

"Why, whatever possessed you to do that?" gasped her mistress in a fury.

"Oh, I jist thocht it was the fashion o' the house," calmly replied the girl. A. D.

Not a Cannibal.

MRS. JONES was engaging a servant, and after describing the duties expected of her, said:

"I hope you are fond of children and animals, because——"

"Lor, mum, I ain't no bloomin' cannybil. What do you take me for?" and she left the house in disgust. S. R.

Would He Bring It With Him?

AMONG the servants of a Scotch family is one young woman of native wit who never is at a loss for an expedient.

She answered the door-bell the other day, when a stranger presented himself, and asked to see the lady of the house.

"What name shall I say?"

"Mr. Stiltzenheimer," said he.

"Beg pardon, sir," said she.

"Stiltzenheimer," repeated he.

The girl hesitated at the name, which was evidently beyond the intricacies of her speech, and then, opening the door to the parlour, said with a laugh:

"Step in, sir, if you please, and—and bring the name with you." W. P.

Another Injustice.

MISTRESS: "Woman, alive, you have cooked the fowl I got for Sunday instead of the beef."

Servant: "Shure Oi didn't know it was the mate ye wanted fur to-day."

Mistress: "You might have known I wanted the fowl on Sunday without my telling you."

Servant: "Moight I, indade? Did yez expict ter git a moind reader fur foive bob a wake?" C. E. S.

Baby's Medicine.

"BABY was taken very bad while you were out, mum," said the new servant girl.

"Oh, dear!" said the young wife. "Is he better now?"

"Oh, he's all right now, but he was bad at first; he seemed to come over quite faint, but I found his medicine in the cupboard."

"Found his medicine? Good gracious! What have you been giving the child? There's no medicine in the cupboard."

"Oh, yes, there is, mum! It's written on it," and then the girl triumphantly produced a bottle labelled "Kid Reviver." W. G.

Digitized by Google

Not Class.

KATIE, from the North, got a "place" in a West Edinburgh house. A few days after her arrival her mistress gave her a list of groceries required, and told her to go to the establishment of a big firm in Princes Street with the order.

"Eh, mem?" said Kate dubiously. "It's only the swells that gang tae that shop." T. O'B.

The Method of Exhaustion.

IN the North of Ireland the other day a servant girl was brought to a hospital suffering from the effects of an over-dose of poison.

When questioned as to her motive for taking it, she replied:

"I wasn't feeling well, and I went to missus's medicine-chest. There was a bottle marked 'three drops for an infant, six for an adult, and a teaspoonful for an emetic.' I knew I wasn't an infant, I wasn't sure about an adult—so I thought I must be the emetic, and took the spoonful." J. McD.

She Misunderstood His Meaning.

A SERVANT GIRL was sent to a certain bookmaker at Leicester to take her master's selections for a race.

The girl asked the bookmaker if she were to put a shilling on a horse, and it won, how much she would get?

"If the horse started at twenty to one," he answered, "you would get twenty-one shillings back; if at ten to one, eleven shillings; if at five to one, six shillings back."

"But supposing," asked the servant, "the horse started at one o'clock, how much should I get then?"

The bookie gave it up. J. B.

Taking Instructions Literally.

"IF anyone should call this afternoon, Mary, say that I am not well," said a mistress to her newly-engaged servant. "I'm afraid I ate a little too much of that rich pudding for lunch, and it or something else has brought on a severe headache. I am going to lie down."

A few moments later the mistress, from her room near the head of the stairs, heard Mary say to two aristocratic ladies who called for the first time:

"Yes'm, Mrs. B. is at home, but she ate so much pudding for lunch she had to go to bed."

W. J. B.

She Knew Her Business.

A YOUNG woman answered an advertisement for a servant, and the lady of the house seemed pleased with her, but before engaging her there were some questions to ask.

"Suppose," said the lady—"now only suppose, understand—that you were carrying a piece of steak from the kitchen, and by accident should let it slip from the plate to the floor, what should you do?"

The girl looked the lady straight in the eye for a moment before asking:

"Is it a private family, mum, or are there boarders?"

"Boarders," answered the lady.

"Pick it up and put it back on the plate," firmly replied the girl.

She was engaged. R. S.

Rather Warm.

A LADY had occasion the other day to administer a seidlitz powder to her Irish servant. She put the contents of the blue paper into one glass of water in the usual fashion, and the contents of the white paper into another. When she put them together and the mixture effervesced violently, she handed the tumbler to the patient, saying:

"Drink it quick."

But the girl, instead of swallowing it, sat down precipitately on the floor, and exclaimed:

"Why, ma'am, yez surely wouldn't expect me to drink it bilin' hot!" A. W.

A Doorstep Comedy.

MRS. B. is one of those unfortunate ladies who are rarely out of communication with the servants' registry office. Tradesmen and others who frequently call at her house are met at the door by a perpetually changing staff of domestics.

On one occasion, when a ring was heard, for some reason or other, Mrs. B. herself went down, and opening the door, found outside the milk boy with the afternoon's milk.

On seeing her, he leant against the doorway and gave vent to a prolonged whistle. Then imagine her feelings when he addressed her thus:

"What! another fresh 'un! You won't stay here long, I lay. She's a 'orror, she is." L. B. S.

Tableau!

THERE was a little dinner-party at No. 9.

"Mrs. Johnson," said one of the guests, "how prettily you have ornamented the crust of this game-pie."

"Yes," replied the hostess, "it is rather neat, isn't it? I'll ask Mary how it was done," and calling the maid she said:

"Mary, do you know how cook got such a novel design on the pie-crust?"

"Oh, yes, mum," replied Mary innocently. "She did it with your false teeth!" A. L. T.

A Misunderstanding.

ANCIENT PARTY (from the provinces): "I want a pair of shoes, young man."

Polite Assistant: "Certainly, madam. Something neat and tasty, I suppose. Now, there's a nice shoe that's been worn all this spring."

Ancient Party (with fervour): "Law, bless the man; I don't want nothing that's been worn all the spring. I want a new pair of shoes!" C. C.

Working to Music.

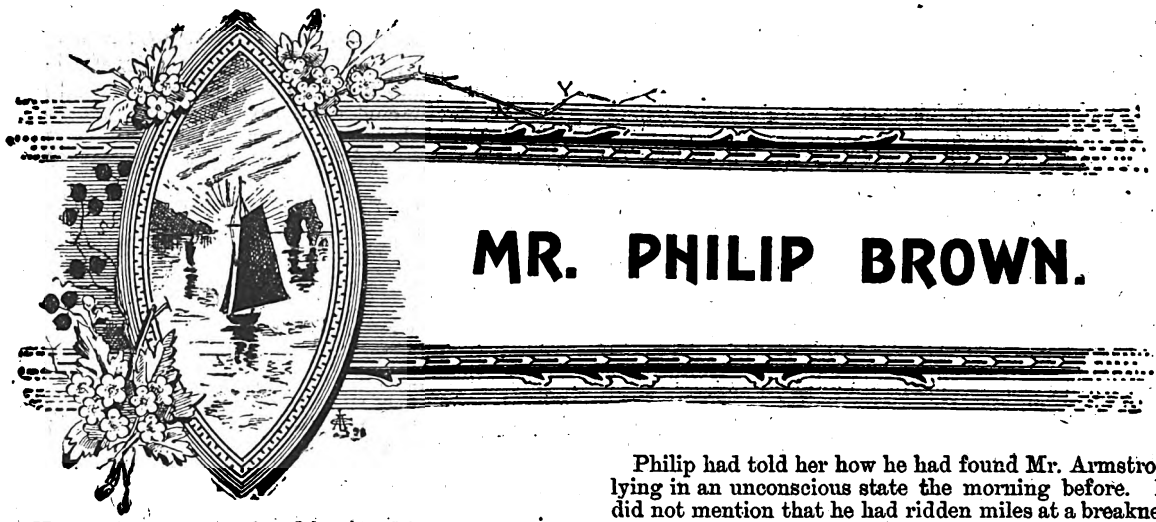
A LADY, who had a very slow servant, noticed that it took the girl almost half the day to scrub the kitchen—a piece of work that should have been accomplished in an hour. The servant always accompanied her scrubbing with a song; and one day the mistress became alarmed at the slow progress she made.

"'Mid pleasures" (scrub) "an' palaces" (scrub) "tho' we may" (scrub) "roam——"

"Jane!" called the mistress sternly, "I am tired of hearing 'Home, Sweet Home'; sing 'The Campbells are Coming.'"

Nothing loth, Jane did so, and fell into the trap so cleverly laid for her. Her scrubbing-brush flew over the boards with lightning rapidity. The poetry of motion had made swift work. E. D.

Digitized by Google



MR. PHILIP BROWN.

HELEN ARMSTRONG closed her hand-bag and gathered together the scattered belongings that had accumulated during her long journey; she drew on her gloves and rearranged her hat and veil for not the first time in the last half-hour. She knew that the train speeding on was surely, rapidly, bringing her to Eglington; in a few minutes more she would be in her father's embrace.

How she had begged to join her father; she had endeavoured to convince him how unhappy she was away from him and how much to their mutual advantage her presence at Eglington would be.

At last she wrung a promise from him that she should go to him at the end of her schooldays.

The train slackened its speed, the friendly porter came to help Helen off with her hand luggage, and in a moment she found herself on the platform in front of a miserable-looking station decorated with the sign "Eglington."

She gazed around seeking the dear familiar figure she had pictured all these last few days, but instead she saw advancing towards her a tall, brown-bearded man. He lifted his hat courteously, and said in accents which little accorded with his rough mining dress.

"Miss Armstrong, I presume; I am Philip Brown."

"Oh, are you Mr. Brown?" she asked, almost rudely. "Where is papa? I thought, of course he would be here."

Her voice trembled.

"I know it must be very disappointing, but he couldn't come; it was impossible; he is ill."

"I never knew him to be ill before," she said, half dazed.

"It is very sudden. He seemed quite well up to a day or two ago, but yesterday morning the stroke came—I mean, you know—oh, don't be alarmed, Miss Armstrong—I—we all hope for the best."

Philip broke off, feeling utterly helpless as he saw the tremulous lip and the blue eyes filling with tears. Philip silently helped her into the dog-cart that was to conduct them home, and it was only after they had left the desolate station a half-mile behind that the silence was broken.

"Mr. Brown, please tell me all about it," Helen said; her voice sounded hard and cold, even in her own ears; she felt stunned and numb, and was conscious of an unreasonable dislike for this strong, bronzed man beside her.

Philip had told her how he had found Mr. Armstrong lying in an unconscious state the morning before. He did not mention that he had ridden miles at a breakneck speed to the telegraph station in order to summon the doctor in time for the evening train, nor that all night he had sat by the bedside of his friend watching for the faintest signs of returning consciousness, until at daybreak, before he had started to meet Helen, his vigil had been rewarded by a few broken sentences from the stricken man.

"Helen—Philip—Helen—go before it's too late; bring my little girl."

When Philip paused Helen asked firmly, though her face was white:

"Is it the end?"

Philip for one moment hesitated, but as he looked down into her questioning eyes he could but answer the truth.

"I fear so, but I hope we will be in time."

At last Helen knelt by the side of her father's bed.

"Papa. Papa. Dear daddy," she cried, as she kissed her father, and the sick man smiled contentedly as he answered:

"Daughter."

Philip and the doctor left the room, and Helen laid her soft young cheek against her father's face and clasped his hand almost fiercely, as if to hold him back. He read her thoughts and answered:

"It is no use, little girl, I am going! it was only the thought of seeing you kept me here so long."

"No, no, papa; don't leave me."

"Be brave, Helen; I'll leave you in good hands, dear; the fortune-hunters won't get you."

It seemed to Helen that his mind must be wandering.

"Call Philip, Helen; I must speak to him."

She called him reluctantly.

"Did you want me, sir?"

"Yes, Philip, my boy, I want you." His voice was growing weaker with each breath. "I wish you to take care of my little girl; I am dying, and I can't leave her alone in the world; she must have someone whose right it is to guard her. You are the only man to whom I could trust her. Will you marry Helen?"

"Mr. Armstrong, dear, kind friend that you have been to me, your wishes are my laws. I will take care of your daughter always." Why didn't he say, "if she will let me." But his only thought was for the friend who lay dying.

Helen knelt down by the bed, and, throwing her arms round her father's neck, burst into tears for the first time.

Digitized by Google

"Papa, not that; don't make me marry anyone."

"It is my last wish, dear; I must know you have a protector; go, Philip, bring someone to perform the ceremony; my time is getting short."

Indeed, Helen almost regretted her remonstrance as she looked at the pallid face of her idolised father, and during Philip's brief absence she said no more, but caressed him whose life-long care had made her forget that she was motherless.

Just as the sun was setting Philip and Helen were married at the side of John Armstrong's bed. As the last words were said, a peaceful smile illumined the face of the dying man, and, grasping a hand of each, he said, "God bless you," and passed away.

The memory of that hour remained with Helen many a day; the utter strangeness of her surroundings added to her desolation. Philip saw to her physical comfort, but dare not offer a word of consolation to the girl whose sorrow seemed crushing. She appeared not to be aware of his existence and only answered in monosyllables any remark he made.

"You will return to London, I presume?" he said as they walked back from the grave after the funeral.

"Yes, immediately," Helen answered.

* * * * *

In the early spring of the following year Helen went to Burfield with the mother of her dearest school-friend, Lena Horton, with whom she had made her home since her father's death.

She found herself growing brighter and happier, the change and out of door life doing her much good.

One morning as she was bicycling over the long bridge that connects Burfield and the village of Hampton, she passed a man who looked at her very steadily for a moment. He was tall, rather dark, clean shaven and well-dressed.

"By Jove, it's Helen, as sure as I am alive," he exclaimed. "I hadn't hoped to see her so soon," he thought; "my boat has been in an hour and I have been putting off the evil moment of sending up my card; I fear she won't receive me very warmly."

Suddenly he saw her dismount and examine her machine. She looked about helplessly, and seemed to be at a loss to know what to do. Philip hurried towards her and said:

"May I be of service to you?"

"Oh, thank you, I am afraid I have punctured one of my tyres," she replied, and Philip was surprised at her beauty as she turned her face towards him. "I am not an experienced cyclist. I hardly know what to do."

"Do you carry a repair outfit? I may be able to mend it."

"Why, I don't know, there are lots of things in that little satchel, perhaps there is a repair outfit."

Philip could scarcely repress a smile at the woeful ignorance of this young woman in regard to her machine, but he looked into the little sachel and brought to light tools with which to mend the tyre.

While he was busying himself about it he thought of his peculiar position. There he saw he was gallantly assisting his own wife. He saw that she did not recognise him in his changed dress and shaven face, and he was glad that she did not, as he felt sure that she would not have smiled so brightly or talked so pleasantly had she known.

"Do you ride much? Don't you think you ought to learn what to do in case of accidents?"

"I am a beginner and I never go far from the hotel yet. I suppose I ought to learn about my machine, but I don't believe I am a mechanical genius," she laughed. "It's really much nicer to have someone to do it for me."

"I hope I may always be so fortunate as to appear at the right moment."

Helen drew herself up to her full height of five feet four and replied as coldly as she could:

"Thank you very much; it is finished, I believe."

She took the bicycle from him, and mounting rode back in the direction of the inn. As Philip stood, hat in hand, he reflected that she might be a little difficult. He fell to wondering if it were possible to hire a machine, and about decided not to make his identity known just yet.

Mrs. Horton and Helen were at dinner when Philip stepped into the dining room, and in following the waiter to his seat he passed their table. Helen inclined her head very slightly; she evidently did not consider her morning meeting a sufficient introduction.

In the afternoon he lit a cigar and strolled along the verandah. Only a sense of duty had brought him here—the promise to his friend, the best friend the world could give, had been his guiding star the last eight or nine months, and the time had come when he felt it right to see for himself how his little charge was. Now that he was here and had seen Helen he was unaccountably happy.

"A man must have someone to live for," he mused, "and even if it's a young girl, who, for all you know, doesn't care whether you live or not, it's better than a selfish life."

His thoughts were interrupted by a few words that came from the group of ladies.

"Yes, I love to ride."

"Alone?"

"Oh, I don't mind that; the country is so pretty about here that I could never be lonely."

How clear and childlike was her voice. He could not hear the words of the others, but her answer was plain.

"Not a bit of it. Why should I be afraid? Nothing ever happens—I mean, of course, that nothing is likely to happen."

"Then you are going to keep our little encounter to yourself," thought Philip. "Very well, then, my lady; you and I have a secret between us."

After some search Philip succeeded in hiring a bicycle and before he had been at Burfield twenty-four hours he started for a ride. He went slowly over the bridge hoping to find Helen, and sure enough he soon over-took her. She acknowledged his bow, and thus encouraged he rode beside her.

"Your tyre is all right, I hope?" he remarked.

"Yes, indeed; thanks to your dexterity, it's as good as new," replied Helen graciously.

And Philip found himself thinking that a girl never looks so pretty as when on a bicycle.

"It is a charming morning for a ride," said Philip,

"Yes, I am glad it's pleasant, as I am going to the training school."

"Why, so am I," said Philip, coming to a sudden conclusion on the subject, "May I ride with you?"

"Since we are bound for the same place we may as well go together," consented Helen. There was no need to be priggish, and, besides, she thought dolefully, a married woman is always safe.

"Don't your friends worry about you when you go off

Digitized by Google

alone? Now, for instance, since you punctured your tyre yesterday, won't they fear some accident?" questioned Philip artfully.

"Oh, no, you see I did not tell them about the tyre," she coloured slightly, "it was such a little thing."

"So they do not know it? Well," he continued, musingly, "perhaps that is better."

Helen looked at him inquiringly, but he rode on studying the view so intently that she could learn nothing from his face. She felt, just as he had meant her to feel, that their meeting had a clandestine element.

The morning passed quickly and pleasantly, and when they drew near the hotel Philip asked her if he might accompany her the next morning.

"Yes, if I go out," she assented coolly.

"Our acquaintance is a little unconventional, I suppose you don't even know my name, which, by the way is Brown."

"Oh, not Brown," Helen burst out impetuously.

"Yes, as common a one as that, Don't you like it?"

"It has rather unpleasant associations for me. But, of course, as you say, it is not a rare name. It would be foolish to allow it to prejudice me."

The morning ride became a habit with Philip, and he and Helen always met, sometimes by accident; sometimes they planned to do so. Each day Philip became more convinced that life without Helen would be flat, stale, and unprofitable. There were times when she became almost confidential, but she always checked herself and withdrew into the prim dignity that amused him immensely.

"You have never told me anything about yourself," said Philip once, when they were resting in a shady nook after a hard spin.

"You ought to know a great deal about me, having ridden with me every morning for the past fortnight," answered Helen. "Riding a bicycle is a great test of disposition, they say."

"I do know a great deal about your disposition, so that I am anxious to know about your life," said he looking tenderly at her. "You have never told me your name and I have evaded finding it out at the hotel in the hope that you would tell me yourself——"

"I haven't told you my name, because——" she paused, and then continued defiantly, "because I hate it, and it's the same as yours. Please don't ask me why. Please go away and leave me—I am miserable."

She turned her face away and Philip fancied she was crying. He longed to take the pathetic little figure in his arms and tell her how glad he was that their names were the same, but he only said:

"Forgive me if I have hurt you; I would rather die than cause you to suffer. Please let us be friends again."

He took her hand for a moment, and Helen turned her flushed, tear-stained face towards him, and, withdrawing her hand, said, in a brave effort to be calm and forceful:

"Mr. Brown, you must not speak in that way to me."

"But, don't you see," said Philip, taking her hand again, "that you are very dear to me?"

"I can't let you; I am not free."

Her voice trembled, and she released her hand from his grasp once more.

"Please do not make it any harder for me. I am married."

She burst into tears and Philip felt altogether guilty and despicable.

"Poor little woman, poor little woman," he said caressingly.

"I am the victim of a marriage that was forced upon me; I couldn't refuse it; I was not consulted. My dear father did what he thought was right. The man he chose for me thought nothing of me. To him I was a child—a piece of property to be taken care of—but as to my having any feelings on the subject of my own marriage—that never occurred to him. If papa had given him a pet dog he would have taken it in the same way."

Philip winced, but she, preoccupied with her wrongs, continued:

"I have not seen him since, and I never understood till now how horrible my bondage might become."

Helen blushed as she realised what her words might seem to imply, but her companion appeared not to notice them and asked:

"Has the man—your husband—fulfilled his duty to you?"

"Yes; he has been unfailing in his care for my interests. He manages my business affairs and writes me quite regularly. Mere letters of business, of course. He has never forced himself upon me; I am grateful for that."

"What will you do when he comes to you, as he certainly will do?" asked Philip, almost sternly.

"I don't know. I shut my eyes to that."

"You must open your eyes." He grasped her wrist. "Helen, look, he has come."

Helen pulled herself away, and rising to her feet, said with indescribable expression:

"Philip."

C. N.

Digitized by Google

EINAR OF THE LONG SWORD.

. . By George C. Wallis . .

Author of "The Winning of Gunhild," "The Gladiator," etc., etc.

CHAPTER XIII. *(continued).*

PALE with rage and mortification Hardrada bade some of the men bring Einar out, and they placed him, still bound, in a sitting posture against the wall. His eyes met Astrid's, and the glance that passed between them was pitiful to see, yet a prouder light came into Astrid's face because of it, and into her lover's a strange calm.

"Now say your say to each other and be done with it," said Hardrada. "It will be your last chance. As to Einar's life, though it irks me to let him go, I will grant him a whole skin for your sake. If you will wed me peaceably to-day and he will take oath never to draw weapon on me again, he shall go free to-morrow. If not, he will never see the light of to-morrow, and whether you will or no, you will become my bride."

"These are hard terms," said Einar, speaking to Astrid alone; "but our enemy the coward has all the advantage, and it might be better for us, after all, to yield. It is not for myself, love, for if I may not have you I care not for life, but for your safety. I will take any oath now, but it will go hard with me if I keep it after."

"Nay, Einar," said Astrid, kneeling beside him and kissing him so that all might see, "I will not keep my life at the price of your happiness. Let Hardskull do his worst; I have yet means to defeat him. But tell me first how it was between you and Thora, for Alfdane brought me a sorry tale."

And she told him quickly of Alfdane's message, for even in that time of despair a pang of jealousy lingered. Einar heard her with wonder, then with anger at the meanness of his foes, and when she had done told her the truth before he could be stopped. Then, as Hardskull stepped towards him, he cried derisively:

"It was a pretty lie for a coward and a troll to cheat an honest man with, most noble host. Yet you can make the last part good, if you dare. If Astrid wills, let the wedding-feast go on, but before it is done and night comes, let me fight with you and with Hrolf—aye, and with Alfdane, too, until you three, or I, be sent to Hela. I am weak from binding and scant food, as you know, but I am in desperate case, and I dare you to go on holmgang with me, one after the other."

Now he looked so worn and weary that they could scarce refuse the challenge, seeing that it could have but one end, and many of the men around cried shame on Hardrada because he hesitated. Hrolf Red-Hand was for taking up the challenge at once, but Hardrada and Alfdane talked apart before they decided, and then the former said:

"If Astrid will wed me, it shall be as you say, Einar, lest men should deem us cowards, but seeing that you have no weapon of your own we will make our fight a wrestling bout, and it shall be on the cliff by the beacon, where he who is thrown will go headlong into the sea. You are famous for throws of that kind, friend. And Hrolf, because of that, shall have first bout."

"It were better to agree even to this," said Einar to Astrid. "If you are wedded what matter? I shall make an end of them all once I get my arms free and my grip on them, and you will be mine alone by nightfall"

"Then be it so," said Astrid. "For your sake be it so, Einar, and Odin grant you victory, Thor give you strength."

So when the twilight drew on and the great fire blazed ruddily on the many faces, the tables were set for the feast. The wine was brought in in great flagons, the loving-cup set by Hardrada's right hand, and the silver shoes placed near the bridal seat. They took Einar back to the small chamber and bolted him within, leaving him to listen alone, and the women brought a bridal dress for Astrid, and lit the lamps around the hall.

Then, pale, but tearless and firm because she thought only of Einar in doing it, Astrid suffered herself to be led in. She stood before Hardrada, and he smiled as fair a smile as his evil visage would allow—which was half a frown, after all—and gave her his hand to help her up the step into the great chair. He would have pressed her slim fingers, but they were cold as ice, and chilled him, so he forebore.

And Astrid sat at his side in the bridal-seat, and Thyra the maid put the silver shoes upon her feet and the golden crown upon her head, and Hrolf poured out the offerings to the gods, and chiefly to Bragi, god of happiness.

And then the loving-cup was filled, and Hardrada and she must both drink, and they were made man and wife.

* * * * * *

Einar, from the darkened chamber, heard fragments of the talk, and knew how things were going, and that Astrid was now the wife of his enemy, and the knowledge was very bitter. His heart misgave him of Hardrada's good faith. He struggled in his bonds again with fiercer effort, and rolled on the floor, trying to wear them out upon the hard stones. This time he was successful, and at last one arm was free. Then slowly he undid the other knots and shook the coils from him, and stood unfettered.

The small chamber had but one window, yet it was large enough for a man to creep out, and, scarcely knowing his object, he climbed through and stood in the open air. His first thought was to get round to the back of the house and seize some carle's weapon so that he might not be defenceless. He had taken but one step forward when a man with winged helmet sprang from behind the corner of the gable and seized him by the throat in a violent grasp.

* * * * * *

Now the wine was mounting into the heads of the men, and Hrolf Red-Hand was singing grim songs of fight and fire, and Alfdane was telling fey stories, and Hardskull was grinning knowingly from the bride-seat. Astrid thought the time passed slowly, yet all too quickly, for no sign was made of fulfilling the promise made with regard to Einar, and in her fear was impelled to question her lord. He laughed.

"Think you I keep every promise I make?" said he. "And did I say to-night? Never fear, we shall wrestle with this old love of yours, sweet wife, but I think it will be best to leave it till daylight. We are but new wed, and it would go hard to part so soon. And, perchance, Einar will be better for a good night's sleep."

And leaning over, with wine cup spilling its red stain on the floor, he whispered to Alfdane with a chuckle:

Digitized by Google

"And in the night a sharp knife can easily find a particular muscle, troll; and that muscle short, 'tis little wrestling our champion will do. It was a good thought of yours, troll."

Alfdane smiled evilly, but said no word.

At that moment there came a clatter of sharp blows upon the door. Hardskull sat upright startled, then he called thickly:

"Come in, stranger, out of the cold. This is our wedding feast, and all are welcome!"

The door opened, and I, Sigmund the Skald, stepped in.

CHAPTER XIV.

How Einar's Battle-axe was Broken.

It will not take long to tell how I came there.

Pressing south under all sail, not daring to draw in even one stitch of canvas for the fierce storm that lashed the sea into fury and chilled us to the marrow with its icy breath, the *Long Dragon* made good speed. When we saw the *Garfreda* lying off Tvedestrof we thought at first that she was the *Eagle* we were pursuing; but to find Algar, with eighty warriors, was the next best thing. Even then we scarcely hoped to equal the number of men under Hrolf and Hardrada.

Though the storm still continued we both sped on towards Hrolf's lair, where we of Raven's-nest shrewdly suspected our quarry to be. Labouring and tossing through the angry sea, baling out the bilge water without cessation, we came in sight of Strongness Rock on the evening of the second day. We perceived it bulking dimly ahead in the last faint light of the west, and then the shroud of the night hid us.

We had much to do to keep from running ashore on the jutting crags at the base of the rock, but at last we found anchorage to the lee of it and got to land in the yolles. Algar's first intention was to take Thora with us to lull suspicion, but Othnar would not hear of it, and we left her tied fast to the mast of the *Garfreda*. We took every man from both ships and crept up the long hill to the homestead under cover of the darkness. What little noise we made was drowned by the shrieking of the gale round the promontory.

Unseen, unheard, we reached the red-lit house, from whence came snatches of songs and the clatter of daggers and dishes. All Strongness was at the feast, it seemed, and doubtless Astrid was Hardrada's wife by now, and Einar, perchance, had been sacrificed to Thor. We whispered our plan quickly, fiercely determining that if we were too late we would take a terrible vengeance. Algar, with a hundred men, went round to the back of the house; Othnar, with the others, gathered before the great door. Three men we sent to the cliff edge to make an end of the sentry by the beacon if there should be one, and to fire it, so that we might have light for our work after the first surprise.

I stood with Othnar, waiting the signal that Algar was ready, when Algar himself came along the side of the house struggling with a great, unarmed man. It was a desperate struggle while it lasted, and I know not how it would have been ended, but within a few moments of their appearance the red tongue of the beacon shot up into the black sky, and the men saw each other.

"You have a strange way of greeting a friend, Algar Erikson!" gasped Einar, letting go his hold. "It is almost as bad to fall into a friend's hands as into a foes, methinks, at night. But whom have we here, by all the gods?"

We told him quickly, and in turn he told us how the feast had gone. Then, not giving himself time to rest, so fired and strengthened was he by the thought that both Astrid and vengeance were his now, he seized a shield from one of the men, his own sword and axe and the charred axe-head of his father's from Algar, and bade me knock on the oaken door.

"If all goes well," cried he, "there will be another wedding feast before many days, and it will be mine. Thunder on the door, skald; 'tis cold waiting out here."

So I knocked, and heard Hardrada bid all strangers welcome, and went in, half-closing it behind me so that those who stood without might not be seen. The men turned in their seats and stared at me in amaze, the knives and cups falling from their hands, the jests and laughter dying away on their lips.

Astrid gave a cry of joy and half rose from the seat, but Hardrada and Alfdane, whose heads were near together, glanced at me fearfully. And while they sat and stared, each man with hand on weapon, I stepped forward.

"Surely, Hardrada Hardskull," cried I, "you have a word of welcome for me? It was ill of you not to bid me to your marriage—me, Sigmund the Skald, who has verses for any man's ear. Let me sing now."

And I sang them this song:

Light are the windows,
Ruddy the logs burn,
Full are the wine-cups
At the wedding of Astrid.
Hrolf's at the wedding—
Hrolf and Hardrada,
And Alfdane the Rat—
At the wedding of Astrid.
But lighter the windows
And redder the fire-glow,
When those not invited
Sit down at the feast board.
When Sigmund the Skald comes,
And Othnar, named Wolf'sfang,
And Einar the Wonder,
And Algar, and others!

As I shouted the last lines those I named burst into the room, and the feast became a fight that men shall remember while skalds sing.

First Einar came, with Erikson at his heels, and then Othnar Wolf'sfang, with Kolbi of Raven's-nest behind him.

"You thought not I had so many friends, Hardskull," cried Einar. "You thought not to bid me welcome in this fashion. Come down from the bride-seat, niddering, and let me send you to Hela; or, if you are timid, this will perchance give you courage. You will know where I found it."

And the blackened axe-head, with the piece of charred shaft yet in it, went whirling over the people straight to Hardrada. He saw it coming, and lowered his head to escape it as he sprang down, but it was cast with a true aim. The yet keen point struck the top of his skull with a dull ring, and, glancing off, was transfixed in the wood of the chair-back.

"You are well named Hardskull," said Einar. "That would have split most men's heads open. And now, Algar, leave him, and see to Hrolf Red-hand."

"That will I," said Algar. "As I sent his father's brother, Killing-Hakon, to Odin, so will I send him. It is ill to keep families apart. Here's a sword, Red-Hand; let us test its worth."

"If you want a sword testing, my own will do," said Hrolf, and as he spoke the two blades flashed and smote in the flickering light.

The fight was general now, and most of the house-folk had got their backs to the wall, for the men we had sent to the rear were now at the inner doors, and there was no escape. Yet our enemies were stronger in number than ourselves, and for a time held their own in the riotous confusion. The women fled out into the cold night, unheeded by any, and in the midst of a mad turmoil of overturned tables, spilt ale and wine, and a food-strewn floor, the axes rose and fell, the swords clashed and rang, the javelins and arrows hissed, and cries and oaths were as thick upon men's tongues as falling leaves in Valhambrosa.

Now Einar had cut his way through the press of the opponents with the flaming strokes of Longsword, and now he met Hardrada face to face. In the bride-seat sat Astrid,

Digitized by Google

having no way to turn, but she sat without fear through the clamour and the rain of missles, because Einar was near her, and free once more. But he looked not at her as he rushed on Hardrada. He thought only of his father and mother and the blackened ashes of the stead at North-hold, and his passion was terrible to see. He shot Longsword back into its sheath, and drove Hardrada before him with the terrific blows of his great axe until the traitor came to the fire, and could retreat no further.

"Now, craven—niddering," cried Einar, "if there be any manliness in you, look to yourself. By Heindall, the old god, who can hear the grass grow and will hear my vow even if he be asleep, I will send you to Hela to-night—I will strike you down to its uttermost depths!"

Thus taunted, the traitor made some show of fight, and for a while their axes rang and clashed without advantage to either.

Not far from them the swords of Algar and Hrolf were flashing and striking, but Algar was the better man, and before Einar had done with Hardrada had sent Hrolf's sword spinning from his hand and beaten him down to his knees. Then, with a swift, downward thrust, he gave Red-Hand his bane. But no sooner was Algar recovered from the overbalancing of the winning-blow than Swerkur the Strong attacked him, and there was a struggle worth seeing. Othnar Wolf'sfang was busy keeping the door, and on all sides men were falling, and groaning, and dying.

Now Hardrada's time was come, and Einar pressed him hard. With one swinging stroke of the battle-axe he dashed the other's weapon from his hand, with another he broke his foe's right arm, with the third he struck Hardrada full upon the crown of the head. The red-stained axe-blade crashed through the hard skull, splitting it open to the chin, and with a shrill, unfinished cry of fear, Hardrada fell forward and was no more. But as the awful crash of the breaking of the skull rang through the tumult, the steel of the axe fell apart upon the floor, shivered in twain by the mightiness of the blow, and the shaft snapped off short. And I remembered then the runes that I had read on it at Raven's-nest.

Einar had taken but one step forward when a man with a winged helmet seized him by the throat.

Einar laughed, and, seizing Longsword again, joined in the common fray. The house-folk were beaten already, but fought doggedly, selling their lives dearly, and there was work for all weapons yet. On our side fell Unod and Jon, and Thorlak Astrison and Kolbi, four very good men; and of the enemy, Thorgrimur, and Arslaw, and Sigismund Sour-face, and Eric Longbow, and Coll the Wrestler, all men of note. Othnar had a flesh wound on his sword-arm, but he kept on.

Algar and Swerkur yet strove in the midspace, and so far neither had touched the other so well were they matched. As the fight died out as our foes were ended one by one, some of us formed a ring round the two.

At last Swerkur's sword slipped from his hand. He threw his shield in Algar's face and regained the blade, but Algar was upon him as he stooped to seize it, and his end seemed near. But at that moment Alfdane the Wereman threw from behind the bride-seat, where he had hidden, a javelin that caught Algar in the left side and proved instantly his death.

I saw the Wereman half rise from his hiding-place, and called out to Othnar Wolf'sfang, who was nearest, but Einar had seen the deed also. Before the cry had well escaped me, Longsword had risen and fallen, and the Wereman had received the reward of his treachery.

Swerkur was now fighting with Othnar, who was yielding slowly because of his wounded arm. Othnar was very glad to see Longsword coming to his rescue for the second time.

"You are a brave man, and a strong one, Swerkur," cried Einar, "but you will ride with the Valkyrs to-night," and the next fierce flash of the rune-written blade sent our last foe to Valhalla.

Now the fight was fought and won, and Einar rested on his sword awhile, listening to the noise of the wind outside. Then he said:

"It has been a fight such as few have seen, Skald, and will do for you to sing of when men are in their warlike moods, but I am glad that it is done. It has cost us dear, if only for the loss of Algar Erikson, and I am weary of slaughter and feud. Let us get away as soon as may be, for the moon should be up now, and the storm seems to abate. Nay, Othnar, we will not fire the house. I have no grudge against Hrolf's women-folk, and they will find it, even as it is, but a sorry biding place till dawn. And you, Astrid, come with me. I have won you at last, and none can part us, but we will fulfill the condition that your father laid upon me, if it be possible."

So we left the house, full of the dead and the dying and the wreckage of the feast, as it was, and by moonlight and the last flickering glare of the beacon on the cliff, went slowly down the hill to the ships. The *Long Dragon* we found easily, also where the *Vulture* and *Eagle* lay, but there was no sign of the *Garfreda*, except the broken end of the grapnel chain on the rock. Einar and Astrid glanced at each other, speaking not, and it was I who said:

"The storm-god has taken vengeance on the fey one, by the Tree Igdrasil! It is well when the gods take these things out of our hands."

Still they looked silently at each other; then Einar turned and bade the men place the body of Algar on a bier of shields upon the deck of the *Vulture* and set her alight and adrift. They obeyed in wordless sorrow, and presently the ship, aflame from stem to stern, moved out upon her

Digitized by Google

last voyage. At first a waving sheet of fire, and then a glow of vivid redness, and last a leaping spark far out to sea, she sailed away.

Then we put what few were left of Borg's men on board the *Eagle*, and Einar bade them return to the Fareys as best they might, and that for the lost *Garfreda* Borg might keep the *Eagle*. After that had cleared the headland the rest of us boarded the *Long Dragon*, and sailed for Nidaros.

We found the *Destroyer* safe and taut and ready for sea, and forthwith, leaving Othnar to his own ship, we of Raven's-nest went on the swift galley and put her bow for home. Through storm and calm, with matchless speed, we held on. The ship walked the watery glades of the ocean as a living thing, and the ceaseless hissing of the spray at her prow was sweetest music in the ears of Einar and Astrid, who were ever together, and had now neither eyes nor ears beyond each other save for the swift way of the vessel. By day they watched the passing coast and counted the waves; by night they considered the stars.

The year wanted but one day to its completion since Einar had sailed away in the *Eagle* to fulfil his vow when the oars of the *Destroyer* rippled the water of the fiord, and she drove proudly up to the landing-stage, and Sweyn and Alfifa met us, and little Arvak—now grown a very sturdy youth in his own opinion—and Norri, and all the other folk who were able to walk.

There were tears and laughter, much talk and long silences, songs and feastings and great stir in the hall at Raven's-nest when Astrid came home again, and I told them how Einar had passed the fateful year, and never was known so great a wedding feast as that of Astrid and Einar Longsword. Folk came from long distances to see and hear of those who had done such deeds; and Othnar Wolf'sfang, having reached Raven's-nest in the *Long Dragon* by then, must needs invite himself to the merrymaking.

Men drank more than was good for them that day, and next morning there were many dull heads to go away through the snow. But there was talk of another feast soon, when Einar would be made Sweyn's house-man until Arvak should come of age, and as Othnar went down to his ship he was full of that.

"I shall not go on Viking cruise now," said he. "I have seen enough fighting for the season, and I will stay at home if only for another feast so glorious as this. I shall come early, have no fear, although it will not be by way of Saddle-back Ridge, as Sigmund came to Trollfell. But the wine and the merriment made me forget, Einar, what I heard at Tvedestrof where we touched coming up. They said that an old galley had been found wrecked on a rock near by, with the body of a dead woman bound to her broken mast. And the woman, they said, had been fair to look upon."

"The gods are stern," said Einar, looking at Astrid fondly. "But what is done we cannot undo; let us try to forget."

And the *Long Dragon*, amid many farewells and promises, sailed slowly up the fiord towards Trollfell, and we turned back to the warm house.

And this is the end of the saga of the wooing of Einar Longsword and Astrid the Beautiful.

The End.

Miss Emilia: "My sister fell and broke her limb."

Old Mr. Jones: "Which limb?"

Miss Emilia (blushing): "Well, if I must tell you, it was her left walker."

Jack Dashing: "She's the most uninteresting girl I ever met, though she is rich. She can't say anything but 'yes' and 'no.'"

Priscilla: "Which did she say to you?"

A six-year-old little fellow was forced to wear a shirt three sizes too large for him. After strutting about a little while, he burst out with:

"Mother, I feel awful lonely in this shirt!"

"Dear me," said the girl with black, snappy eyes; "I wish I was a football player!"

"What do you mean?" asked her mother, aghast.

"Just what I say. I wish I was a football player, and that hateful little Sallie Giggles was on the other side."

"I hear you intend naming your paper The Record, Faber?"

"I had thought of that name with favour, Pennibus."

"Don't do it, I implore you."

"Why?"

"The record is so easily broken now."

A BOOK FOR WOMEN.

THE ART OF BEAUTY.

(BY A TOILET SPECIALIST.)

Small crown 8vo. Price 1s.

Some of the twenty chapters are:

The Cure of Stoutness	Chap. I.
The Cure of Leaness	„ II.
The Figure...	„ IV.
Bad Complexions, How to Cure Them ...	„ V.
The Complexion	„ VI.
The Hair in Health...	„ VII.
The Hair in Ill-Health	„ VIII.
Moles, Warts, and Superfluous Hair ...	„ XIII.

C. ARTHUR PEARSON Limited, Henrietta Street, W.C.

An Instructive Book.

THE MISTAKES WE MAKE.

COMPILED BY

C. E. CLARK.

F'cap. 8vo, cloth, with Index, Price 1s. 6d.

SOME OF THE CHAPTERS ARE:

Chap. I.—Things that we Call by their Wrong Names.

Chap. II.—Mistakes we Make About Places and their Names.

Chap. VI.—Common Errors in Speech and Writing.

Chap. X.—Historical Mistakes.

C. ARTHUR PEARSON Limited. Henrietta Street, W.C.

Digitized by Google

CARE OF THE SKIN.

We wish to urge on all readers of this paper the extreme importance of having a healthy skin. If the pores are clogged, whether by the neglect of the ordinary rules of health, or by some skin disease, ill-health is sure to result. Apart from the unsightly appearance of an ever-present rash, the intolerable itching causes broken rest, and a variety of unpleasant symptoms.

ECZEMA.

The chief Skin Trouble to which the skin is liable is known as Eczema, which is merely a light-sounding name for a cold or catarrh affecting the skin. If Eczema is acute the part affected is red and hot, and burns and weeps. If it is a chronic variety, the surface is dry, often scaly, and there is great skin irritation.

Mr. Geo. C. Fellowes Simmons, of R.N.T. College, Devonport, writes: "The cure affected by your 'Antexema' was such that it has given me perfect faith in your remedy, and I am now taking your Blood Granules, which I only hope and believe will cure me internally as your 'Antexema' has cured the external eruption."

ECZEMA OF THE LEGS.

Simple eczema of the legs is quickly removed by means of the "Antexema" treatment. For particulars see Page 11 of our Booklet.

Mrs. E. Cufflin, of 10 Grove Street, Bedford Street, Leicester, writes: "I thank God and you for the relief I have got from your 'Antexema.' For two years I have suffered great pain in my legs. About two months ago they began to be rough and inflamed. Seeing your advt., I sent for a free sample, which I received from you the following day. By the time I had used the sample bottle of 'Antexema' my legs were healed."

INFANTILE ECZEMA.

Eczema affecting children is frequently caused by the use of strong soaps, and by wearing underclothing from which the soap or soda has been imperfectly removed. Fevers, teething, and a diet containing too much sugar are also said to be frequent causes.

Mr. Richard Bell, of 13 Spring Gardens, Hawthorne Avenue, Hull, writes: "Some seven weeks ago two of my children were attacked with infantile eczema. I was recommended to write for a sample of your 'Antexema,' which was quickly sent. I purchased a further supply, and in less than a fortnight my children were quite cured of the eczema."

ECZEMA OF THE HANDS.

With a little care it is not difficult to have nice hands. Do not wet them more than is absolutely necessary, and do not use strong acrid soaps. People who use their hands freely, as in nearly every trade, and especially those engaged in laundry work, always suffer more or less from hand troubles. "Antexema" is an excellent remedy for any form of eczema caused by the action of irritants, and it is an equally necessary household requisite to keep the skin in good condition, when red, rough, and dirty-looking.

Mrs. A. Chapman, of Riby, near Stallingboro', Lincs., writes: "'Antexema' is a wonderful specific for eczema. I had it in my hands, and after using a bottle of your 'Antexema' it disappeared."

Miss R. P. Dovey, of 234 Old Christchurch Road, Bournemouth, writes: "'Antexema' is so good that she will always keep it for toilet use. She hopes this testimony will bring you many customers."

TEST IT FREE OF CHARGE.

Should you wish to test "Antexema," all that is necessary is to write to the Antexema Co., 83 Castle Road, London, N.W., naming this paper, and enclosing one stamp to defray postage, and receive a Free Trial Sample, together with a valuable booklet on the Skin, by return of post.

USE "ANTEXEMA."

"Antexema" is sold in bottles by Chemists and Stores at 1s. 1½d. and 2s. 9d., or post free for 1s. 3d. and 2s. 9d. from the Antexema Company, 83 Castle Road, London, N.W.

Neuralgia Positively Cured!

Free Test Offered.

The annexed cut presents in the prominent white lines the nerves most liable to attacks of Neuralgia. Sufferers will know only too well the pain tracks, and will be glad to know of a Simple and Sure Remedy. The proprietors will send Free two sample ZOX Powders to any reader of *Short Stories* sending stamped envelope to ZOX CO., 11 HATTON GARDEN, LONDON, E.C.

TOO STOUT.

I was for years; by chance I came across a simple home remedy that reduced me from 17st. to 10st. 12lbs., and I will willingly send particulars **free** to any sufferer enclosing stamp. Mrs. L. E. FELL, 195 Oxford Street, London, W.

VARICOCELE.

Every man suffering from Varicocele and the allied troubles, should send for treatise, describing their Causes, Symptoms, Results, and Successful and Painless Treatment without surgical operation or the use of cumbersome trusses and electrical appliances. Will be sent sealed, post free, three stamps.

S. S. MURRAY,
7 Southampton Row, London, W.C.

WHY BE FAT?

When a lady, who has discovered a simple means of Self-Cure will be happy to send particulars of same to any sufferer from this distressing complaint. Free on receipt of stamped addressed envelope. ADDRESS:

Mrs. TREVOR WELLS,
63 *HIGH HOLBORN, LONDON, W.C.*

HAIR DESTROYED.

Send me an envelope (stamped and addressed) and I will tell you how to remove all superfluous hair **free of charge.** (Send no money.) Address, in confidence, Miss E. V. (Room 3), 195 Oxford Street, London, W.

A SUM of from 12s. to 25s. per week can be earned in spare hours or evenings by either sex everywhere.—Send addressed envelope for particulars to Box 24, Eclipse Works, 89 Aldersgate Street, E.C.

DO YOU KNOW -

THAT WITH EVERY COPY OF THIS WEEK'S

HOME NOTES

A COMPLETE NOVELETTE OF 16 Pages,

ENTITLED

"THE MYSTERY OF CLEEVE COURT,"

IS

GIVEN AWAY?

HOME NOTES is the best and daintiest of ladies' weeklies. You should order a copy at once.

ONE PENNY.

10/6 PARKER Jointless Lucky Curve FOUNTAIN PEN FREE.

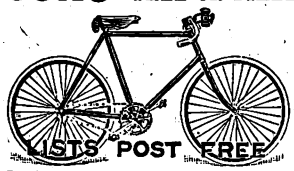
No joint to leak.
No screw to break.
No old-fashioned nozzle.
PERFECTION.

"The greatest improvement ever made in Fountain Pen Construction."

To introduce the PARKER Jointless Lucky Curve Fountain Pen we have decided to present everyone mentioning this Magazine with a GUARANTEE entitling them, on complying with same, to one of our **14-carat GOLD** Jointless Lucky Curve Fountain Pens **FREE.** Write to-day as this offer may not be repeated.

The Parker Pen Co. (Largest Manufacturers of Fountain Pens in the World), 193 & 193 OXFORD STREET, LONDON, W. The Editor "QUEEN" says: *"I write with a Parker Pen—a love of a weapon."*

JUNO CYCLES FOR LADIES AND GENTS FREE OR FIXED WHEELS.



THE VERY BEST. Carriage Paid. Discount for Cash.

	Monthly
£8 10s.	... 14/3
£10 10s.	... 17/6
£12	... 20/-
£13 12s.	... 21/-
£14 14s.	... 24/6
£15 15s.	... 26/3

Road Racer ... £10 0s. 16s. 8d. Monthly. Light Roadster, £10 10s. 17s. 6d. Monthly. Write for New Season's List of JUNO Cycles and Accessories, over 100 pages, sent post free. Scorcher Brake, 1/-; Standard Cyclometer, 10,000 miles, 1/10

LISTS POST FREE

METROPOLITAN MACHINISTS CO. Ltd.
Juno Cycle School & Works, 75, 76, Bishopsgate Without, E.C., and Piccadilly Circus, London, W.

KEATING'S POWDER

KILLS BUGS FLEAS MOTHS BEETLES

TINS 3D 6D & 1S
THE NEW BELLOWS 9D

ALL FAT PEOPLE

can safely **Reduce Weight and cure Corpulency permanently** by taking **TRILENE TABLETS** (Regd.) for a few weeks. They are small, agreeable, harmless, and never fail to IMPROVE both HEALTH and FIGURE without Change of Diet. An English Countess writes: *"Your Trilene Tablets act admirably."*

Send 2s. 6d. to **THE TRILENE CO.**, Sole Proprietors, **66 Finsbury Pavement, London.**

SAMPLES OF TESTIMONIALS.

Princess Liechtenstein writes from Landsberg, Austria: "I may send your excellent tablets directly." Mr. Canham, 87 Alexandra Road, Norwich: "Tablets cured my wife of extreme stoutness; it has never returned." Mrs. H. Cox, 28 Watnall Road, Hucknall Torkard, writes: "The Tablets reduced me 1½ stone." Mrs. S. Alexander, 102 Dixon Street, New Swindon, says: "They reduced me 23lb., and I am cured." Mrs. Darriley-Smith, of Landscove Vicarage, Ashburton, says: "Tablets have reduced me very much." Mrs. Crossley, of Rose Hill, Torver, Comston, says: "I weigh much less and can breathe so much easier; I am delighted."

Digitized by Google

The Brain Gymnasium

IN these competitions a prize of £2 will be awarded each week to the competitor whose attempt we receive giving the correct solutions of all the puzzles. If more than one is absolutely correct the prize of £2 will be given to the first correct attempt dealt with.

If no lists of absolutely correct solutions are sent in the first prize will be awarded to the competitor whose attempt is first dealt with showing the fewest mistakes.

Each week we shall award in addition to the above, either ten of our silver plated pencil-cases or ten popular six shilling novels, to be distributed amongst the competitors whose attempts are absolutely correct and have failed to win the first prize, or, if no complete lists of correct solutions are received, to those whose attempts show the fewest mistakes.

Write all your solutions on one sheet of paper, putting the number against each. Post the batch in an envelope marked "Brain Gymnasium," to reach the Editor, SHORT STORIES, 18 Henrietta Street, Covent Garden, W.C., by first post on Monday, July 30th, 1900.

Readers are invited to submit puzzles, acrostics, conundrums, word-squares, etc., for publication on this page. A gold-plated pencil-case will be given to each reader whose attempts are used. All attempts must be vouched for as original, and, of course, it is distinctly understood that the sender of a puzzle must neither compete in the competition nor divulge to anyone the solution. Any reader found infringing this rule will be severely dealt with.

No. 175.

FORM a square word from words representing the following:

A POET; A LADY'S NAME; ANCIENT; ROWS; A HERB.

No. 176.

EIGHT letters respond to the quest
Of all for enjoyment athirst;
Two articles lead to the rest,
The last of the rest is the first.

No. 177.

I AM composed of thirteen letters, and am a popular novelist of the day.

My 10, 3, 9, is a conveyance. My 12, 3, 13, 5, is to be conveyed. My 7, 5, 12, 5, is at this place. My 1, 11, 9, is an old woman. My 1, 5, 11, 4, is an important part of a man. My 6, 8, 2, 5, is precious. My 7, 11, 2, 13, is difficult to penetrate.

No. 178.

To CHOOSE my FIRST, a solemn rite;
Perennial joy, anxiety;
To ladies all a dear delight,
Ne'er followed by satiety.

To NEXT, a mystery it seems,
Such weight to FIRST attaches;
And, in his sleep, his troubled dreams
Take form of bills in batches.

Devoted to the arts of peace,
My WHOLE a learned doctor;
Or one who dreads, as thieves, police,
The unrelenting Proctor.

No. 179.

I AM spelt in four letters, a very small word,
In which only three letters of them seem to be heard;
I dwell on the tree, on the bush, on the flower,
On the top of the cedar, the midst of the bower.
I am gold, I am silver, I am black, I'm white,
I am tinged with all colours you see 'neath the light;
I am thick, I am thin, I am narrow or broad,
I am met on the river, the meadow, the road.

No. 180.

AN Asiatic country.
A Spanish river.
An Italian river.
A Russian province.
An American territory.
A Chinese city.

Initials and finals, read downwards, give the names of two cities of Europe.

IT appears that the reply to Puzzle No. 126 was printed wrong. It should have been £4,270 instead of £490. Further awards have been made, and another £2 has been awarded this time to W. G. Hampson, 6 Norfolk Street, Hyde, Cheshire.

RESULT OF BRAIN GYMNASIUM.

Nos. 148 to 155.

THE prize of £2 has been awarded this week to Mr. E. England, of Tenby, whose solution was the first correct one dealt with.

A copy of "Fortune's Footballs," by G. B. Burgin, has been sent to:

Miss A. Munro, Liverpool.
C. Dare, Birmingham.
W. A. Whitehead, Preston.
Miss B. Fry, Ryde, Isle of Wight.
G. Holyoake, South Kensington.
A. E. Thomas, Bristol.
E. C. Johnston, S. Wimbledon.
W. Anderson, Leytonstone.
W. H. Barrett, Birmingham.
H. G. Philpot, Sutton, Surrey.

SOLUTIONS TO PUZZLES.

Nos. 156 to 162.

No. 156. Poverty and incapacity are no sins.
No. 157. Being millionaires.
No. 158. Try to overcome evil inclinations.
No. 159. Nothing before honesty.
No. 160. Matrimony and Tennessee.
No. 161. Foreign coins.
No. 162. Some money over to use.

SHORT STORIES ADVERTISEMENT RATES.

Single column, per inch, per insertion	£0 10 0
Double " " "	1 0 0
Full page inside, facing page of matter, either white paper or 2nd or 3rd page of cover, or back page, per insertion	10 0 0
Half-page " " "	5 0 0
Quarter-page " "	2 10 0
Eighth-page " "	1 5 0
Front page, whole " "	12 10 0
" half	6 5 0

All spaces above one-eighth of a page are charged at per page rate.

Series discount: 5 per cent. for 13, 10 per cent. for 26, 15 per cent. for 52 insertions.

Black blocks are charged 25 per cent. extra. All advertisements are subject to approval. All copy must be sent in by Noon on Tuesday, July **24th**, if intended for the issue on sale August **7th**, and dated August **11th**. The Proprietors reserve the right to hold over or suspend the insertion of any advertisement without prejudice to other insertions on order. All communications should be addressed to the Advertisement Manager, "Pearson's Weekly" Offices, Henrietta Street, London, W.C.

Printed and Published by C. ARTHUR PEARSON LTD., at Pearson's Weekly Buildings, Henrietta Street, London, W.C.

Digitized by Google

SEND FOR
DR. EVANS'S (U.S.A.)
Pamphlet on Nervous Diseases of All Kinds. THIS PAMPHLET describes all the symptoms which arise from Diseases of the NERVOUS SYSTEM. It is up-to-date, having been compiled after years of labour and experience in the Treatment of these Maladies. It is complete, practical, and can be readily understood and acted upon. It gives pure and simple advice to Sufferers. Send stamped addressed envelope to GEORGE WRIGHT, Esq., Colne House, REMBRANDT ROAD, LEE, LONDON, S.E. (*Name this Paper.*)

Indispensable with Fruit, and Delicious, Nourishing!!
DEVONSHIRE CREAM
(Really Genuine.) In Patent Air-tight Tins.
½-lb., 1/4; 1-lb., 2/4; 2-lb., 4/-, including Tin and Postage.
Mrs. Conyers,
MORCHARD BISHOP, DEVON.

VIE D'OR FOR THE HAIR.
THE AMERICAN TREATMENT.
Vie d'Or puts 10 years on the life of the hair.
SOLE AGENT:
GUSTAV ROSSELLI, 4 New Park Street, Park Lane, LEEDS.
Price 2/9 post free.

DRUNKENNESS
CURED. This can be done with or without patient's knowledge. Send no money.) Address, in confidence, Mrs. C. H. (Room 8), 195 Oxford Street, London, W.

NOSE MACHINES. LEES RAY. S. S. Dept., South Castle St, Liverpool, is a specialist on Ugly and Red Noses. Send stamp for particulars of his patent scientific Nose Improvers. Red Nose Cure, medically approved, 3/9. Outstanding Ear Machines 11/6.

STRENGTH, VITALITY, MANHOOD.
A valuable treatise on Nervous Exhaustion, Lost Vigour, Exhausted Vitality; their cause, and means of cure by concentrated Herbal Remedies. It is written so that any person of ordinary intelligence can understand it, and so clearly defines the nature of each disease that it is impossible to make the fatal mistake which is so often made of treating the symptoms instead of the cause. This brief work is the only one that contains any sensible advice to the inexperienced, and to all young and middle-aged men will not only prove instructive, but a valuable safeguard. Sent sealed on receipt of 4 penny stamps to any address, by CHARLES GORDON, 283 Great Horton Road, Bradford, Yorks.—Advt. Copyright.—Mention this paper.

A MAGNIFICENT COMPLEXION GUARANTEED
By the free use of LILLIE POWDER. It nourishes, heals, soothes, and brings Health and Beauty.
Prepared from the original recipe invented by Mrs. Langtry, under the strict supervision of Her Majesty's Perruquier, Mr. W. Clarkson.
Order it of your Chemist and refuse all substitutes, as they may be injurious.
Three Tints: Blanche Naturelle, and Rachel. Of all Chemists, Hairdressers, Stores, &c.
THE LILLIE SYNDICATE,
3 Henrietta Street, London, W.C.

HOLLOWAY'S PILLS & OINTMENT.
PRE-EMINENT FOR 60 YEARS.

KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR
KAPUTINE
SAFE REMEDY CURES
HEADACHE and NEURALGIA
IMMEDIATELY,
And is sold by all leading Chemists in Packets of 18 Doses, 1s.
To ANYONE HAVING THE LEAST DIFFICULTY, it will be sent post free for 12 Stamps by "KAPUTINE Ltd.," Huddersfield; or, on receipt of a stamped addressed envelope, A. M. Kaputine, Huddersfield, you will receive a free sample.
The fact that "KAPUTINE" is recommended by many leading Medical Men, and is used in National Hospitals and Infirmaries proves that it is THE, THE recognised SAFE REMEDY FOR HEADACHES.
Refuse Substitutes and demand "KAPUTINE," the Safe Remedy. There is no substitute "LIKE IT"; nothing "AS GOOD"; nothing "SIMILAR."
KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR

Digitized by Google

BEECHAM'S TOOTH PASTE

RECOMMENDS ITSELF. Efficacious. Economical. Cleanses the Teeth. Perfumes the Breath.

IN COLLAPSIBLE TUBES, 1/- EACH.

Digitized by Google

ARE YOU READING OUR NEW SERIAL?

SHORT STORIES

A WEEKLY MAGAZINE FOR HOME AND TRAIN

No. 604. FOR WEEK ENDING JULY 28TH, 1900. [ONE PENNY.

TAKE CARE

when drinking Cocoa to have the pure article only, as many so-called "Pure" Cocoas contain added matter that is not only unnecessary, but often positively harmful.

CADBURY'S

COCOA

IS ABSOLUTELY PURE

And untampered with, and can be taken with the greatest benefit in Childhood, in Youth, or in Old Age.

***THE BRITISH MEDICAL JOURNAL*—Article on "Drugged Foods," June 4th, 1898—says:**

"There is a general concensus of opinion that the addition of active drugs, belonging to the classes of nervine stimulants to beverages and articles of dietary in ordinary domestic use is not for the benefit of the community, and is likely in time to produce a deterioration of the public health. . . At the present moment we are beset by another danger arising from the addition of kola to certain articles of food. . . Kola has been found on analysis to contain 2·13 per cent. of caffeine. Caffeine is undoubtedly a useful drug when employed in suitable cases and in appropriate doses, but if taken habitually in large quantities it is capable of inducing an undesirable condition of over-stimulation of the nerve centres."

When asking for Cocoa, insist on having CADBURY'S—Sold only in Packets and Tins—as other Cocoas are sometimes substituted for the sake of extra profit.

Digitized by Google

"WORTH A GUINEA A BOX."

BEECHAM'S PILLS

FOR ALL

BILIOUS & NERVOUS DISORDERS,
Sick Headache, Constipation, Wind and Pains in Stomach, Impaired Digestion, Disordered Liver, and Female Ailments.

SALE OVER SIX MILLION BOXES YEARLY.

In Boxes, 1s. 1½d. and 2s. 9d. each, with full directions,

Prepared only by the Proprietor,

THOMAS BEECHAM, St. Helens, Lancashire.

Sold by all Druggists and Patent Medicine Dealers everywhere.

JOHN NOBLE
Costumes by Parcel Post

Also supplied in White Pique for 10/6

Sent without delay direct from the Largest Firm of Costume Makers in the World, and guaranteed to be exceptionally high value in cut, material, and finish, and very far superior in make to ordinary shop-bought costumes. Satisfaction given to all customers, and orders promptly executed or money refunded.

PATTERNS SENT POST FREE
(Together with the New Summer Fashion Catalogue)

of the very durable Fabrics in which these Costumes are made—**The John Noble Cheviot Serge** and **The John Noble Costume Coating.**

A Full Dress Length of either Cloth (6 yards 52 inches wide) for **7/6**; carr. 8d.

Sizes in Stock of Ladies' Costumes are: 34, 36, and 38 in. round bust (under arms); Waists 24, 26, and 28 in.; Skirts being 38, 40, and 42 in. long in front. Any other size made to measure, **1/6** extra.

Colours: Black, Navy, Brown, Myrtle, Fawn, Grey, Royal Blue, and Khaki.

MODEL 200

Tailor designed Eton Coat, smartly finished and stitched. Full Skirt in new design. Price complete, **10/6**, carriage 6d. The Skirt alone for 5/6; carriage, 5d. Also supplied in the fashionable strong Khaki Drill for 13/6, carriage 6d.

GOOD STRAW HAT, as sketch, 2/11½; carriage, 6d.

SUMMER DRESS FABRICS.
A large Box of Patterns lent to select from and sent carriage paid.

Please name *Short Stories* when writing.

JOHN NOBLE Ltd.,
BROOK STREET MILLS, **MANCHESTER.**

TO THE QUEEN PURVEYORS

CROSSE & BLACKWELL'S

GREEN PEA. GRAVY. JULIENNE. MULLIGATAWNY. TOMATO. HOUSEHOLD. CRESSY. &c.

SOUP TABLETS

OF ALL GROCERS ETC. THROUGHOUT THE WORLD

DRUNKENNESS

CURED. This can be done with or without patient's knowledge. Send me a stamp and I will tell you how. (Send no money.) Address, in confidence, Mrs. C. H. (Room 8), 195 Oxford Street, London, W.

SULPHOLINE LOTION,

For clearing the skin from Spots, Blemishes, Redness, Roughness, giving a Beautiful Complexion and pleasing appearance.

SHILLING BOTTLES.

A SUM of from 12s. to 25s. per week can be earned in spare hours or evenings by either sex everywhere.—Send addressed envelope for particulars to Box 24, Eclipse Works, 89 Aldersgate Street, E.C.

VARICOCELE.

Every man suffering from Varicocele and the allied troubles, should send for treatise, describing their Causes, Symptoms, Results, and Successful and Painless Treatment without surgical operation or the use of cumbersome trusses and electrical appliances. Will be sent sealed, post free, three stamps.

S. S. MURRAY,
7 Southampton Row, London, W.C.

HAIR DESTROYED.

Send me an envelope (stamped and addressed) and I will tell you how to remove all superfluous hair **free of charge.** (Send no money.) Address, in confidence, Miss E. V. (Room 3), 195 Oxford Street, London, W.

ESTABLISHED 1851.

BIRKBECK BANK

Southampton Buildings, Chancery Lane, London.

2% on CURRENT ACCOUNTS, on the minimum monthly balances when not drawn below £100.

The BIRKBECK ALMANACK, with full particulars, post free. FRANCIS RAVENSCROFT, *Manager.*

Advertisements should be sent to "Short Stories" Advertisement Department, Henrietta Street, London, W.C.

Digitized by Google

SHORT STORIES

Price One Penny.

No. 604.

Week Ending
July 28th, 1900.

A RIVER STORY.

Two young men in flannels stood on the landing-stage of Messrs. Daws' boat house, which is situated under the bridge at Great Marlow. They were of the ordinary type of young Englishmen who spend five and a half days in the City and the remainder on the river.

"We want a canoe," said Adam to Daws, who was asking their requirements.

Daws was sorry but there was not one.

Adam's eye drifted among the punts and boats tied up to the stage, and rested inquiringly on a white canoe, with green silk cushions, that rocked daintily at the end of her white line.

Heathcote, of the red hair, went over and rested his shoe on the little white boat.

"Can't we have this?"

No, that was a private one.

Heathcote moved it and saw the name, *My Queen*, in gold letters. It was a very small Canadian canoe and evidently new.

"Smart one that; whose is it?" he asked.

All rights reserved.]

Digitized by Google

"Don't know, sir, I'm sure. Came down from Wilders', of Maidenhead, last night with no name; just an order that the owners were coming to-day. Belongs to two ladies, I think one of the men said," replied Daws.

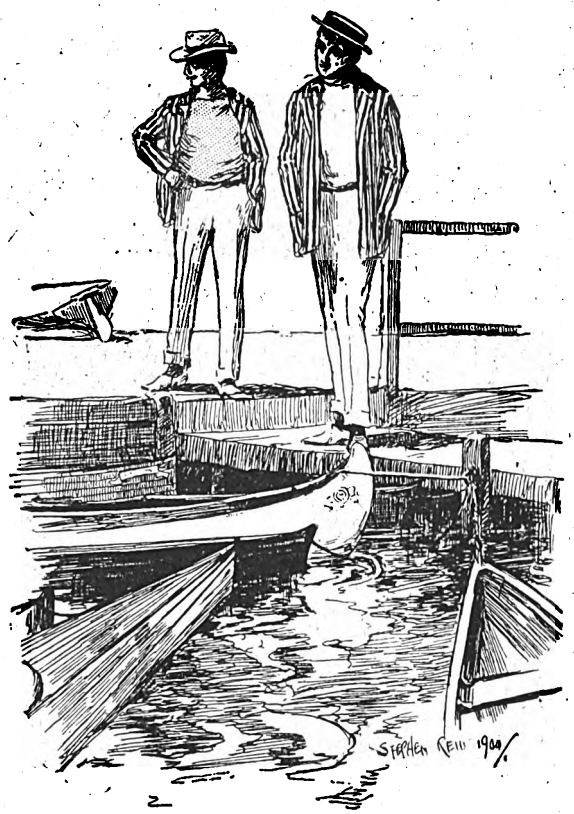
Adam fancied himself with one lady in the canoe, but said nothing. Adam very often did fancy himself. He was dark and slim, with grey expressive eyes and gifted with more than the ordinary amount of self-complacency that is usual amongst young men. But then he was his uncle's heir and that made a difference.

So he took a skiff and sculled away across the river with Heathcote engaged, behind a big cigar, in the ardous task of steering. It was a magnificent Sunday with an Italian sky overhead and scarcely any stream at all. Heathcote's eyes closed and he let the lines fall slack.

Adam looked at him with amusement. His head had fallen back on the turkey red cushion and his cigar had gone out. Then he slipped the sculls and settled himself down to lazily enjoy the perfect afternoon. The boat drifted a little, unnoticed by its occupants, then a little more, and then got caught in a few weeds and roots and swung round.

Suddenly both young men felt a violent shock that nearly capsized them and found themselves being rudely shaken back again.

Heathcote sat up, his face as red as his hair and a strong expression came from Adam's end of the boat. Their assailant was a tall young man in grey flannels who was sculling alone, and at a good rate, and quite close to the bank, too.



"Smart one that; whose is it?"

"What the dickens do you mean, sir?" cried Heathcote angrily, "Can't you look where you are going?"

"Sorry," was all the offender vouchsafed as he laid vigorously to his oars with the apparent intention of making up for lost time.

"Sorry be hanged!" retorted Adam, "If you don't know the way to row, get someone to teach you!" which was a somewhat unnecessary remark, as the stranger was a good oarsman. But Adam was nettled. The sudden collision had startled him.

"If you don't know the right side of the river, tie your boat up and walk!" came the reply of the fast disappearing man in grey, and a punt full of girls, which was passing, laughed.

Heathcote looked round him suddenly. They were on the wrong side!

They were both silent. Both wanted to blame the other because there is nothing so humiliating as being made a fool of on the river. Both were experienced boatmen and then to be caught over such a simple matter as the wrong side of the water!

Adam put the oars out and pulled savagely across to the other side.

Heathcote did nothing—one of the girls in the punt, which had just passed, knew him, and he felt sure that the little incident would get repeated and that he would not shine as the hero.

"I hate a boat!" said Adam suddenly. "With a fool in it like you that can't steer, it's no pleasure."

Heathcote opened his eyes wide, "By jove! I like that," he said. "Go back and get a punt, old chap."

And Adam did.

Daws shook his head.

"Just too late, sir, 'ad a nice one five minutes ago, that gentleman just gone out with two ladies in it," and he indicated a party in the distance.

Adam looked. Two sunshades in front of several cushions and a tall man in grey who stood behind and punted with long graceful strokes.

"Well, I'm hanged!" was all he said as he recognised the figure. "I wonder who that fellow is?"

"Let's go into the George and Dragon and find out," remarked Heathcote as he put on his coat and lit a cigarette.

"Yes, I owe him one. I'll find out all about him."

But somehow they didn't.

Nobody seemed to recognise the description or know anything about him; which was curious, as the George and Dragon was held to be the great authority on those matters in the whole of Marlow.

"Some bounder down from Saturday to Monday, I suppose," said Adam, to ease his own feelings, and then they both went home to tea.

In the evening they went on the water again.

The little white canoe was up under cover then and her cushions were put carefully away. Her owners had not come.

On Monday morning the London train was ready to start, the guard's whistle was in his mouth, and comfortably ensconced in the corner seats of a first class smoking carriage, sat our friends of the day before.

Then there was the scatter of porters and the babel of excited voices.

Then the door of their carriage was flung violently open and a man jumped in.

Both occupants looked up.

The new comer was tall and slight and dressed in grey.

Adam looked across at Heathcote. Neither wore a

Digitized by Google

very pleased expression, but the latter turned away and looked out of the window.

As they passed the end of the station he saw a dog cart, in which were seated two girls. Heathcote had as keen an eye of feminine beauty as any man and he started up with a short exclamation.

"By Jove, Adam! Look at those!" They were both young and yet evidently not sisters although somewhat alike in figure. One, who was driving was dressed in a rather severely cut light green dress while the other who was fair was in pink.

That they were both exceedingly pretty was all that the two men could see, as the train was gathering speed.

"I wonder who they are?" said Heathcote, who prided himself that he knew everyone.

"That's three to find out," replied his friend with a side look at the third occupant of the carriage.

"I wonder if Deacon is in this train; I hope not," said Adam presently.

"Wouldn't be a bit surprised; he is staying down here with his wife somewhere, he told me so."

Deacon, be it known, was the head of the large stock-broking firm of which the two young men were junior members.

"I wonder what sort of wife he has got this time; some old one I suppose who has caught him for his money," said Adam.

The stranger rustled the leaves of the paper he was reading.

"Not he! I hear she is quite young and pretty too — plays the guitar, and sings or does something. Deacon knows what he's after. Mrs. D——, number one, was enough of the old kind to satisfy him. This one is young enough to be his daughter, they say."

"Good gracions, girls will marry anything," said Adam.

"Yes, my boy, with £14,000 a year, they will!"

The leaves of the paper rustled again.

Adam looked across the carriage. The stranger was frowning as if the news were unpleasant.

Adam wrote on the margin of the *Telegraph*:

"The Johnnie does not like our conversation; perhaps he knows her."

Heathcote read it and wrote underneath:

"Good job—he's one that got left perhaps."

And they both laughed.

The same evening they were in Hurley lock The gates were open although there were several boats already inside. Adam was leaning back in the punt and watching three fat Germans who were trying to get a hold with the boat hook, and he did not notice Heathcote (who was standing up) become suddenly very intent on the open lock gates.

A canoe with two occupants shot through the gates.

Suddenly he heard him say in a low, rather intense voice:

"Adam, look what's coming in!"

The young man turned to see a canoe with two occupants shoot through the gates, propelled by one swift stroke, and ride coquettishly alongside their punt.

All eyes were directed to the little craft. It was white, with gold letters and green silk cushions.

Gracefully reposing at one end was a girl with fair hair and a pink dress, while paddling, was another in green.

Adam gave a gasp, and having his hand over the side,

Digitized by Google

My Queen passed and crushed it between the two boats.

"Sorry," said the girl in green, giving him a look out of her large brown eyes, and Adam straightway felt as if he were honoured in having the skin taken off his knuckles.

He bowed gracefully.

"Pray, don't mention it," he said gallantly, hiding his hand so as not to let her see the blood.

The fair girl turned at the sound of his voice and regarded him with a slow inquiring glance.

The young man was unable to decide whether the girl in green with the magnificent eyes and the hair done *à la Merode* was prettier than the more fragile beauty of the girl in pink with the fluffy golden hair and the white sun-bonnet, or *vice versa*.

He was most anxious to prolong the conversation but could find no way to do so.

"Got any change, Adam?" demanded Heathcote, whose eyes had been fixed on the fair paddler ever since the canoe came into the lock.

Adam put his hand into his pocket and the girl in pink saw it was covered in blood.

"Oh, Cecile!" she said in a pained voice. "Look at his hand, you did that with the canoe. How horrid of you."

Cecile looked at the hand—rather indifferently. "I'm sorry, but you should not keep your hands outside the boat. They are apt to get hurt," she said.

Adam was delighted.

He acknowleged he was wrong but pronounced his intention to err again if he thought they would again honour him in a like manner.

The girl in the sun-bonnet pursed up her little red mouth, and Cecile did not reply at all.

The lock gates were opening and there being no launches to go first, the white canoe shot forward ahead of all the other craft and was soon out in the open river.

"Poor young man, you did hurt him, Cecile," said the girl in pink.

"Do him good. He was so much taken up looking at you, that he wouldn't have minded if I had cut his hand off!"

"Ditto, Mr. Redhead with you," was the reply.

Cecile shuddered.

"Can't stand red hair, my dear," she answered.

"No, you seem to prefer them rather bald!" replied her companion.

"Less hair—more intellect,' said Cecile.

Her companion suddenly sat up and the canoe rocked perilously.

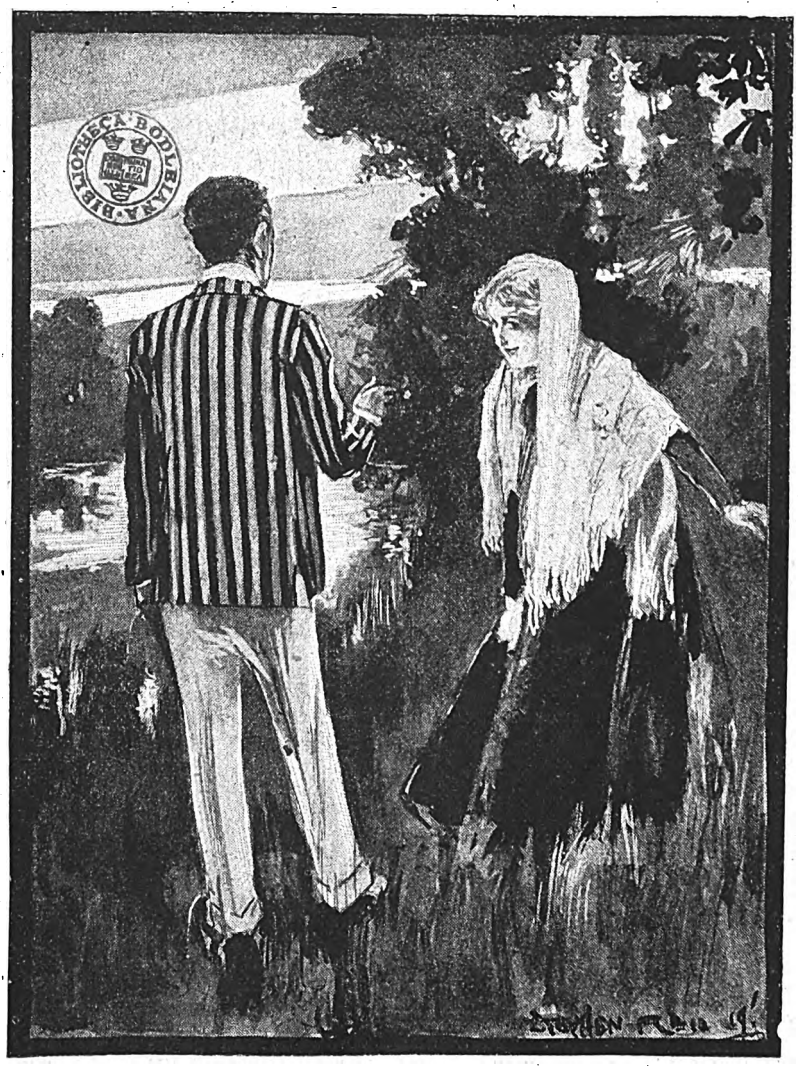
"I say, Cecile," she said, her blue eyes dancing with fun. "Shall we ask them if they would care to change places with us for a little while? Red hair can come in with you, and I will go in the punt with the injured hand."

Cecile rested the paddle and stared at her.

"You must be quite mad! I shall take you home if this is how you intend to behave!" she said severely.

"On the contrary, it is I who will take you home now, you have been working long enough. Get up against that tank and we will change places."

Half an hour later, Adam and Heathcote who had now got ahead passed the canoe, going at a smart rate, the figure in pink being now at the end. Adam raised his hat, to which the canoeist responded by a saucy little nod, but Cecile's eyes were shut and she made no movement, which cast down the heart of Heathcote.



"That's a good thing. Cecile doesn't like boys."

Digitized by Google

"Going to the wedding?" inquired the landlord of the Chequers, as Heathcote strolled in that night.

"What wedding? I haven't heard about any wedding!" he retorted rather testily.

The landlord raised his eyebrows. "Thought you knew everything!" he said with a chuckle. "Well, I'll tell you. Lord and Lady Martin's daughter, the Hon Miss Blair is to be married here on Friday. They've taken the big house up by Hurley, and the wedding is to take place in the church on the river. It's to be a grand wedding, I'm told."

"Oh, indeed. I've heard of her, she's pretty, isn't she?"

"I don't rightly know that. she doesn't come into the town here much, so nobody knows her. They are very select people, and keep themselves very much to themselves."

"Who is she going to marry?"

"Gentleman in the Guards, sir—Fitzhoward, I think his name is, you should go to the wedding, sir, it will be a grand affair."

"I daresay Deacon's going. I'll get him to get me an invitation."

"They might be there," said Heathcote in an undertone to Adam.

The landlord caught the name.

"Deacon—yes, Mr. Deacon came in here and told me all about it," he said.

Adam was dubious. It was one thing to be employed in a rich stockbroking firm, but it was quite another to ask the head of it for invitations to select weddings.

But Heathcote determined that he would ask, whether his request was granted or not.

They had met the two girls in the white canoe several times but could never get a chance to speak to them.

Adam, it is true, raised his hat to them, and the girl in pink always smiled, but further than that they could not get.

However, one night, when Adam was strolling alone by the riverside smoking a cigar before turning in, he met the girl in pink as they called her dressed in some clinging black material, and with a fleecy white shawl over her head.

She started when she saw his solitary figure and seemed half inclined to go back. However she changed her mind and ran on calling "puss, puss!"

Here was Adam's opportunity.

"Allow me to help you look for your cat," he said. raising his cap, inwardly thankful that Heathcote wasn't there.

She recognised his voice directly.

"Oh it's you!" she said with a little laugh. "How glad I am! I thought you were a tramp! Yes, do help me find the cat. It is a grey Persian and one of the presents, so I dare not lose it," she said.

Adam passed over the humiliating fact of having been taken for a tramp and hunted diligently.

"Was it a birthday present?" he asked.

"Oh, no—one of the wedding presents. The wedding on Friday, you know, so it mustn't be lost. Besides it is very valuable," was the reply.

The wedding? Adam's mental vision brightened considerably. He would get in ahead of Heathcote yet!

"I want to go to the wedding, awfully," he said. "I've heard that it is to be very pretty."

"I can get you a card, if you like," she said readily.

"Oh, it is too kind of you. I should like it so much—and—will you be there?" he asked.

The two young men read the name.

There was silence for a minute. Then she said:

"Yes, I shall be there."

"Then I shall enjoy it much more—shall I see you?"

"Oh, I dare say you will if you look," she said archly.

Adam replied fervently that he would look.

"There!" she said suddenly, "I think I saw its tail disappear in those bushes!"

"Mind, they are at the water's edge and you might fall in. What should I do then?" asked the young man.

"It wouldn't matter if I did fall in. You are here to save me!" she said with a side glance from her laughing eyes.

Adam felt his heart begin to beat rather fast.

The girl continued:

"It is a good thing Cecile isn't here, she would be shocked."

"Would she?" looking with admiration at her dainty little figure.

"Yes, she's very severe, you know."

"She looks it—I don't like severe women"

Digitized by Google

"That's a good thing. Cecile doesn't like boys!"

Adam said nothing. He was twenty-three years old and felt the word "boy" to be a thing of the past.

Just then he felt a soft rubbing against his leg and looked down to see a small grey kitten beside him. He handed it to the girl.

"Oh, thank you so much. I am so glad you found it Good-night, I must run in now. Tell me where I am to send the invitation to?" she said.

He took out his card and gave it to her.

Another moment and he was alone.

Thursday came, and Thursday drew towards a close, and Heathcote had got no further with his intention of asking Mrs. Deacon for the invitation.

Adam, the silent, hugged the square of pasteboard in his pocket book and got leave for the day.

He had put up with the boastfulness of Heathcote long enough he said, and besides hadn't the prettiest girl in Marlow sent it to him herself?

It was a stifling day in town and both young men gave a sigh of thankfulness as they got into the train for Marlow.

Heathcote wore a very long face. He confided to Adam that Deacon had looked him up and down and told him he was very sorry he could not get him the invitation.

"You see," he said, "the Martin's are so very particular, and do all their own inviting—I am only one of the guests."

The train was now full of people and three other men got into their carriage, one of them by a strange coincidence, being their old enemy the man in the grey suit.

It seemed as if the presence of this man was the crowning blow to Heathcote. He acted upon him like a red rag to a bull. To start with, he was over six feet and was dark, whereas Heathcote was only medium height, with fiery red hair, one of the banes of his existence.

He grumbled at the heat, the dust, the stuffiness of the carriage, the tobacco somebody was smoking and the dearth of news in the papers, all the way down.

Adam smiled on.

"It makes me mad about that wedding. Those girls are sure to be there, and I'm out of it," Heathcote cried.

"Did you ask Deacon to invite me as well?" put in his friend.

Heathcote raised his sandy eyebrows.

"Hardly," he said. "If a man can't do that for himself he can stay away!"

"Oh, it didn't matter in the least—because I'm going!" replied Adam easily.

Heathcote's mouth opened. "Who invited you?" he asked in amazement.

"She did," answered Adam, with unmistakable emphasis on the pronoun.

The tall man in grey was looking at him, his brows slightly contracted.

"By jove!" ejaculated Heathcote his face getting redder than usual. "Didn't you ask her to invite me?"

"Hardly!" responded Adam.

"If a man can't do that for himself, he can stay away!"

"Well, I'm hanged!" was all the answer.

As they slowly drew into the station, who should they see but two familiar figures, one in green, and one in pink, standing on the platform.

Heathcote jumped up excitedly.

"There they are! I'd give a bob to know who those two girls are," he cried.

"I think I can help you, and it will save your money," said the cool voice of the tall man in grey, as he reached up for his hat.

"The lady in green is my sister—Mrs. Deacon, and the lady in pink is the Hon. Miss Blair. Allow me to give you my card!" and he stepped out.

And the two young men read the name: "Captain Laurence Fitzhoward—Royal Horse Guards—"

Erroll Stanhope.

Digitized by Google

ELSIE EVANS' STEPMOTHER.

The Story of an Elopement and a Misunderstanding.

ELSIE EVANS and Herbert Drew were riding along a country lane one bright July morning. This was an almost daily occurrence with them, but to-day, instead of cantering gaily along, the ponies, Bangs and Dixie, were allowed to make their own pace.

They trotted along slowly, coming down at last to a walk in which they edged closer together and finally stopped altogether under the shade of a large oak-tree. This seemed to suit their riders, so Bangs moved up to where he got the benefit of Dixie's tail-swishings and flapped his own little brush impotently on the other side. Both waited for orders.

"Is there nothing that will alter your decision, Bert?" the girl was saying.

"No, my dear, nothing," he answered. "You see, father is so opposed to the newspaper business. He believes all that cheap talk about prying reporters and he thinks I can't be a gentleman in that life. If he would speak a word for me I might get a good job in Southampton, but he won't, and, in fact, I think he kept me out of the last thing I tried for.

"Well, Jack Leonard has found this berth for me on a Glasgow paper and I have accepted and shall go. It will be a bit of a drudgery, for the pay is small, but I shall succeed at that and at nothing else. I'm a good reporter and the training I shall get on a newspaper I can get nowhere else. I shall write a book sometime, but it will be after I have lived long enough, so that it's all reporting—all about real people and things."

Elsie only sighed at his enthusiasm.

"Herbert," she went on, "I simply can't let you go. Life is so uninteresting since father married again. They are not actually unkind, but they don't care where I go or what I do. I'm number three at home. It's tiresome, Bert, and I do love you so. Oh, take me with you if you must go!"

"My darling, I wish I could, and I shall come back for you just as soon as I can. But I shall have to sell Bangs to get money to buy my ticket."

Bangs' ears went up at the sound of his name, and Bert leant over and scratched the delicate ears.

"Heard me, did you, old fellow? It's a crying shame to sell him at an auction, as I must do. I don't suppose I'll get half what he's worth. He's all I've got that's my very own except my watch, and I can't very well get on without that."

"When do you go?" asked Elsie.

There was a weary tone in her voice. She had given up arguing with him and was trying to learn the first page of a woman's lesson, that decisions were not her part. She must stand by and wait.

"I suppose I shall go to-morrow night. To-morrow morning I must arrange about Bangs, get him sold, if possible. This evening I must have a final interview with father. I'm not going to run away, and I don't mean to quarrel with him. To-morrow will be more than full with packing and the last little things that must be done. I'm afraid this must be 'good-bye' for us, dearest. Don't grieve, little girl. I'm going to succeed and come back for you."

"I'll do my best, Bert, but, oh dear, so many things can happen and I've nothing to do but wait."

They rode in silence back along the lane and then took the road leading to Elsie's home. In a quiet spot they stopped and said "good-bye."

Elsie was too proud to make a scene, and she waved quite bravely to Bert as he rode away; but as soon as he was out of sight her head went down on the pony's neck and she sobbed till Dixie became restless and, taking the law into her own hands, walked out into the road.

As her young mistress straightened up and arranged her habit Dixie ventured to walk quickly for a few yards, and as Elsie further recovered and Dixie felt a firm knee against her shoulder, she trotted along easily till they reached home.

The next morning Bangs was surprised to find his head turned towards Southampton instead of towards the pleasant country roads. He resented this change of programme heartily, and in a moment of abstraction Herbert found himself going in the opposite direction to that which he intended.

"You want one more canter through the lanes, old fellow?" he said. "Well, all right, only you must not get too heated or you won't look well when I get you in town." So they ambled slowly along till they came once more to the tree where they had stopped the day before. There they stopped and Bert dismounted and began to caress the pony and examine his points critically.

"There isn't a pimple on him," he said at length; "it's a shame to let him go for less than fifty."

Bangs took the petting Bert lavished on him absently. His bright eyes were fixed on the road ahead and at last he gave a little snort of delight.

Elsie had started out to take her usual morning exercise with a heavy heart, and hardly noticed where Dixie was taking her till they clattered over the bridge at the end of the favourite lane.

"Oh, Dixie," she cried, "not there to-day."

And she reined her in sharply and turned her round. But Dixie had a mind of her own and she wheeled again and started off down the lane.

Digitized by Google

Elsie did not check her again, and she soon saw Bert under the tree and blessed the little mare for her instinct.

The ponies and their riders greeted each other warmly.

"I never supposed you would be here to-day," said Elsie, with rising colour, "but as we have met by accident you must tell me how you have got along so far."

"Well, I told father last night and he simply said: 'I'm disappointed in you, my son, but as you are so headstrong I must let you go your own way. You must not expect me to help you.' Then I told him of our engagement and he sneered right out and said: 'Why don't you elope with her and take her along, since your hopes are so high?'"

Herbert stood looking down dejectedly. Finally Elsie said shyly:

"Why don't you, Bert?"

He came close to her and read her eyes in silence, and the temptation became too strong and he yielded.

"I believe you mean it, and if you do I'm going to take you with me, though I won't elope. I won't steal you away as though we were ashamed. How can I, though, unless Bangs brings more than I think he will?"

"Dixie is my own, too," Elsie ventured timidly, "why not sell her? And as for stealing away with me, no one cares where I go, or would bother to come and see us married except my chum, Nellie Grant. I'll arrange it all right at home. I know it isn't the right or usual thing for me to urge you to take me, but I have only you, Bert."

She hung her pretty head and cried a little, so Bert agreed to take both horses to town, make all arrangements, and meet Elsie and Nellie at five o'clock.

Then they rode back to Elsie's home and she told the groom who came out to meet her that Mr. Drew was going to take Dixie over to Nellie Grant's for her to ride in the afternoon. "Miss Grant's horse is lame," she finished glibly.

Bert looked at her in some astonishment. He could have told the necessary lie, but the unnecessary embellishment was beyond him. He did not know women very well.

Elsie ran upstairs with a careless "good-bye" and Bert rode away leading Dixie.

Elsie changed her riding habit for a tailor-made gown, filled a small hand-bag with small necessities, and rang for a maid.

"I don't want to go down to luncheon. Bring me up something light, and ask Porter if father or his wife say anything about my absence at the table."

When the girl came up for the dishes she brought the report that master had said, "Is Elsie out to lunch?" and mistress had said, "I suppose she is at Nellie's."

"Much they care where I am," muttered the girl. "Marie, bring me my writing-case," she said aloud. Then she penned the following bitter little note:

DEAR FATHER,—I was not at Nellie's at lunch time, but as you seem to care so little where I lunch, I think I will lunch to-morrow in Glasgow. In fact I am going to be married to-night to Herbert Drew. I am not eloping with him, as his father knows we are to be married. We have sold our ponies and Herbert has a good position in Glasgow, so you need not trouble yourself even to provide an allowance for me hereafter. I know it will be a relief to you to have me out of the way and provided for.

ELSIE.

Having written this cold little note, Elsie cried bitterly and would very likely have torn it up had not the sound of wheels drawn her attention to the window.

There was her handsome father gallantly handing his young wife into the carriage. He even kissed her hand as he sat down beside her, and a loving look passed between them. That settled it, and she placed the note in a conspicuous place on her desk.

Then a new thought struck her. "Why should she go without her clothes?" So she drew out a small steamer trunk and hastily packed it with clothing. Then she summoned John the gardener and said she had a trunk of clothes she wanted to send off, and would he take it down to the station for her, and she would go later and attend to it.

John was stupid and willing, so she had no trouble, and she soon followed him out of the house and made her way to her friend, Nellie Grant.

Nellie was younger and more indiscreet than Elsie, and she entered very readily into her plans, and the two accordingly met Bert at the appointed time and place.

Bert was radiantly happy; he had obtained an advance of fifty pounds on the two ponies, he had his license, and already felt sure that success and happiness were all the future had for them.

They were married at a registry office, and the two young people started away with hearts free from care, sure that love and pluck were to make them the happiest of young couples.

"We may get more money for the ponies, dear; you see I had to leave them as there is no auction till to-morrow, but Mr. Buckley is an old friend of father's and he gave me the advance willingly. He looked a little sharply at Dixie, but I could not tell whether he recognised her or not. Well, here we are together for all time, and free to go where we like and make our own life."

A week later when they were comfortably settled in a modest but home-like boarding house in Glasgow, two letters came for Elsie over which she cried her first tears since she became Mrs. Drew. But the tears washed away all the bitterness of her heart and left her quite happy. These were the letters.

MY DEAR DAUGHTER,—You have quite misunderstood my wife and myself in regard to our feelings towards you. We thought you resented our marriage and that the best course to pursue was to let you entirely alone. We now see our mistake, and that we appeared to you entirely selfish. We hope the new life will bring you great happiness and that you will write and tell us how you are getting on. I will do as you wish about not sending your allowance, but will place it in the bank to your account, and if it should ever be that you need it you can draw on it. I attended Buckley's auction last Wednesday and bought two ponies that answer to the names of Bangs and Dixie. Mrs. Evans has convinced me that I am not too old to ride, and we propose to use them till their former owners come south again. They are rubbing noses now down in the small meadow, and no doubt wondering where you and Bert are. Tell your husband, my dear, to write and ask me to forgive him for stealing you. I will do it, though I would rather have made it a gift.

YOUR LOVING FATHER.

DEAR ELSIE,—I have cried over your note many times. Oh, dear little girl, if you only knew how much I wished you would love me and be like a sister to me. I never expected to be your mother; why, there is only three years' difference in our ages. But you south-country people are so cold—I never could seem to get near you, and your father always laughed when I told him and said: "Well, Elsie is odd, but she will come round." And you never told me of your engagement! I should have liked to plan your wedding, and if it had had to be in a hurry because of that cross old dad of Bert's you could have had my veil and things. But never mind that. Sometimes marriages like yours turn out the happiest. I hope yours will, and that you will soon come home to visit us.

Your loving friend,

AMELIE EVANS.

M.A.C.

Digitized by Google

Mr. Bowser's Tribulations.

XVI.—HE GOES IN FOR PRIVATE THEATRICALS BUT DOESN'T SUCCEED.

THERE was a furtive smile of triumph on Mr. Bowser's face as he sat down to his cigar the other evening and at the same time took a dozen pages of typewritten matter from his pocket and began to look them over.

It was two or three minutes before Mrs. Bowser's womanly curiosity forced her to ask:

"Is that an article you have written for the newspapers?"

"Not exactly," he replied as his smile deepened.

"Perhaps it's a poem?"

"Hardly."

"Is it a contract?"

"My dear woman," said Mr. Bowser in his most fatherly way as he turned to her, "I have got a little surprise for you. I hadn't meant to tell you for several days yet, but as your curiosity has been aroused and as I may need your assistance, I'll give the thing away now. You know, of course, that I belong to the Booth Dramatic and Literary Club?"

"Yes."

"Well, we are to put on a play in about two weeks, and the proceeds are to go to the war fund."

"You don't say so!"

"Why don't I say so?" he demanded, as the smile chased itself round to the back of his neck all of a sudden. "Is there anything strange in the Booth Dramatic and Literary Club giving a play by amateurs?"

"But none of you are dramatic or literary," she protested. "You simply play billiards and poker and drink whiskies and sodas."

"You'd look nice being dandled!"

Mr. Bowser rose up and looked down upon her with a look meant to squeeze the life out of her body under a pressure of four hundred pounds to the square inch. He fully intended to annihilate her then and there, but he suddenly remembered that he wanted her assistance, and so he contented himself with saying:

"Perhaps you are not to blame for your ignorance, but please don't be malicious. We are to put on a play. The title is: *Why Mr. Dobbins Didn't Get Married.* It may please you or displease you to know that I have been chosen for the part of Dobbins."

"Is it really so?" queried Mrs. Bowser with a puzzled look on her face.

"It is really so. Here is my part.

Digitized by Google

I just got it this afternoon. I also have the part of the Widow Winkle, and I want you to read it and give me the cues. We shall have a rehearsal in four or five days. I haven't the slightest egotism about me, as you well know, but I am ready to declare that I expect to make a great hit as Dobbins. I have been told over and over again that I should have chosen the stage for a profession."

"But you never said anything to me about it."

"No? Well, several things have happened which I never said anything to you about, and this is one of them. Will you read the part of the widow?"

"Why, Mr. Bowser!" she exclaimed, after glancing over his part, "how can you ever play this character of Dobbins? Dobbins is supposed to be a little stumpy man weighing about ninety pounds. That is to set off against the widow, who is a large woman and weighs about half a ton."

"But I'm going to make up for the part, ain't I?" he queried with a note of alarm in his voice.

"Can you chop your legs off to play this part? And, you see, Mr. Dobbins makes his entrance through a dumb waiter. Just imagine your trying to squeeze yourself into a dumb waiter. And after he makes his entrance the widow picks him up and dandles him on her knee. You'd look nice being dandled!"

Mr. Bowser grew as white as a bleached snow-drift, and there was a glint of pounded glass in his eyes, but he held on to himself and simply said:

"Go on, woman—go on."

"Well, in the first act the widow demands that you sing a song. She stands you up on a table and you sing. Mr. Bowser, even if you could turn yourself into a bandy-legged little man, what about the singing? The house would either be convulsed with laughter or rise up and bombard you off the stage."

"I understand. Anything else?"

"Let me see. In the second act you are brought on to the stage in a bandbox. You might possibly get one foot into a bandbox, but what about the rest of your body? The widow discovers you and you are put into a cradle and rocked to sleep to the tune of 'Mary's Little Lamb.' I want to be there. I want to see you in that cradle."

"Have you finished with your insults?" hoarsely inquired Mr. Bowser as every individual hair above his ears stood on end.

"Let me look. There seems to be another woman in the play and she wants to marry you. While you are seated at the table in a high chair and the Widow Winkle has gone out to get you some bread and butter and sugar on it, the villainess comes in through the window and steals you and carries you off under her arm. Oh, Mr. Bowser, it would be too funny—too ——"

For three minutes Mrs. Bowser laughed and cried by turns, but Mr. Bowser never made a gesture or opened his lips. He simply stared at her with a large and varied assortment of cold-blooded murder in his eye. When she could control herself she took up the parts again and said:

"Haven't you noticed that after you have been stolen away the woman dresses you up as a girl to escape detection? You are supposed to be a dear, sweet little miss of twelve, who kneels down by her bed every night and says: 'Now I lay me down to sleep.' I can see you in your night-dress, with your hands clasped and an innocent look on your face! You'll make a great hit, Mr. Bowser, and you'll have hundreds of offers to play the part of 'Little Eva' afterwards. Well, let's get to work. I'll help you all I can."

"Woman!" gasped Mr. Bowser, after several efforts, during which his knees knocked together.

"Yes," gently replied Mrs. Bowser.

He wanted to go on, but he couldn't. There was a bone in his throat and sparks danced before his eyes. Apoplexy might have come in another minute but for Mrs. Bowser's action. She rose up and took him by the arm and led him to the sofa and helped him to stretch out. Then she put the camphor bottle to his nose and gently rubbed his forehead.

In about ten minutes the threatened attack passed away, and he sat up with the intention of asserting his dignity and self respect and humbling her to the dust.

"You have ridiculed me—you have insulted me!" he thickly exclaimed, but she seized the arm with which he was gesturing and pressed it down, patted him on the head in a wifely way, and as he sank back on the sofa and closed his eyes and groaned in despair, she said:

"You have ridiculed me—you have insulted me!"

"Poor Mr. Bowser! There is no doubt he was born for an actor, but the part of little Dobbins is not for him—not for him! Some other time, but not this time!"

M. Quad.

[Next Week: "He Believes in Transmigration and Sets Out to Prove it."]

Digitized by Google

A TRANSVAAL CINDERELLA.

BOER women have very often fought alongside their husbands and fathers and brothers in the wars of the republics of South Africa. Some of them are capital markswomen and nearly all have the fanatical courage which is noticeable in religious enthusiasts of all climes.

The women, who in the present war fought in the trenches against the British, were doing no new thing.

Their mothers and grandmothers assisted in the defence of many a laager against the rush of Zulu impis.

Far from detracting from their womanly fascinations, the young men of the Transvaal look upon such masculine prowess as greatly enhancing them. Rifle skill and Amazonian dash in time of war on the part of the maids compel the admiration of the young men, as witness the recent case of Marie Dutoit.

Marie was a little Cinderella of the veld. Not all the glamour of fairydom could, however, have persuaded a prince that little Marie was pretty. She was indeed, quite homely. The child was an orphan and lived with the Van Pelts, her uncle and aunt, and her elder cousins, Hendrick, a young man, and Greta and Anna, who may be said to have taken the place of Cinderella's ill-conditioned sisters.

These latter were belles of Boerland, and well-portioned, but Marie had been left, a skinny babe, without a penny. This, with her homeliness, lessened her chance of ever being ni ely married, for the shrewd Boer has a careful eye on a girl's dowry. An old maid, or a bachelor, is a by-word and a thing of abhorrence in the Transvaal. So Marie's lot was sad.

Oom Kris van Pelt was not a bad man by any means. He was a typical farmer and hunter of the Transvaal—a tall, broad, bearded, grave, religious patriot.

When Marie's parents died, he gave the child a home, more from duty than affection or pity, and after that paid little heed to her.

Tante Anne, his wife, was another matter. She would never have turned away the little Marie, partly from a sense that such conduct would scarcely have been Scriptural, but chiefly from a fear of what her neighbours would say; but she did not conceal her opinion that the Dutoits had sinned greatly in dying without leaving a provision for their child.

In the hard years when the mealie crop was burnt by the sun and the oxen perished from lack of water, Tante Anne made things unpleasant for little Marie, for she was a feverish, complaining woman.

"Another such year," she would cry, "and we will be ruined! Providence knows best, but there are so many mouths to feed, so many mouths!"

Such outcries were absurd, for the Van Pelts were better off than many burghers. Her neighbours knew this and smiled at the worrying old woman; but Marie took it all very seriously and redoubled her labours.

From babyhood she worked, until her hands were hard as a boy's, and her face was darkly tanned. A hard, hard childhood was that of Marie Dutoit, whose older cousins were in no wise distressed to see how she slaved.

There is only one career open to the average Boer girl, and that is marriage. Marie was plain, Marie was poor.

Greta and Anna complacently and leisurely looked forward to taking their choice of suitors, but Marie could only sigh and be resigned and secretly dream of some impossible day when the prince would ride over the veld and sound his bugle horn.

She always roused herself sharply from such extremely foolish dreams and dashed, more reluctantly than ever, at all the drudgery of the farm.

Yet one great delight was hers, and that was when Hendrick, her big silent cousin, took her out on the broad plain when he was shooting at the targets and taught her to handle a rifle.

Sometimes he even took her on a hunt, and so keen were her eyes, and so firm her grip, and so steady her open-air-trained nerves, that Marie Dutoit, when sixteen years old, was nigh as good a shot as Hendrick himself.

When she was sixteen the troubled days began, and the Transvaal declared war against Great Britain.

Veld-Cornet Hausmann brought the news, but it was not altogether news. All night the beacon fires had been burning on the higher kops. All night Kaffir runners had been scouring the country with messages from the commandants to the burghers.

All night in many farm houses the women had been at work preparing the rations of biltong, and cleaning the arms of the patriots. All night, throughout the length and breadth of the land prayers had gone up and the veld had echoed the deep-voiced songs of David.

The cornet was a close friend of Hendrick van Pelt. A rich man was he, and influential in so much that he was even in the councils of Paul Kruger himself.

Very popular also was Rick Hausmann, and so good-looking that, even without his wealth, the maidens would have been gracious to him. It may be imagined that, in some of the little Marie's day dreams, the Prince who galloped so cavalierly over the veld was not altogether unlike the young cornet.

"It's war," he said gravely, as he sat down in the farm-house. "I have come for Oom Kris and Hendrick. If they are ready we will join the commando together. Yes, thank you, Greta, thank you, Anna, I will take coffee."

Marie had made the coffee, but her cousins served the cornet. Tante Anne and they hovered about him and chorused denunciations of the rooineks and eulogies of the Boer patriots.

Then first Rick Hausmann smiled on Greta, and again he was cordial to Anna. When Greta smiled, Anna frowned, and when Anna beamed, Greta tossed her handsome head and sniffed. But Marie made coffee, and hid her homely face and looked not at all at the prince of the veld.

When the Van Pelts were ready the women hung about their horses, delaying them to make sure that

Digitized by Google

nothing was forgotten, the biltong, the coffee, the sugar, the home-grown tobacco.

Tante Anne, in tears, caressed her spouse and son, but the daughters were more solicitous about the rich and handsome veld-cornet. They were quite cheery. They had no doubts of the outcome of the war.

"Slay them as the Philistines were slain," they cried to Rick. "Drive the Uitlanders into the sea! Oh! how I wish I were a man to go and fight them!"

"Oh! yes, to be a man!" cried Greta, "to be brave and strong——"

"To be such a horseman!" cried Anna, cutting out Greta.

"To be such a sharpshooter!" cried Greta, rudely interrupting Anna.

"We will make much of you when you come back victorious," they cried together.

"And reward me, I hope," said the handsome cornet; but he looked at both and smiled at both, so that the girls, when they had smiled back at him, frowned on each other.

"Good-bye, Marie," said Hendrick.

"Good-bye, cousin," said Marie; "I wish I were going with you."

Then they rode off to join the commando, and Rick only waved his hand to Marie, and all the veld for her grew chill and grey.

The prince was galloping over the veld, but no glad bugle horn had sounded its call for her. Tante was more peevish than ever. The girls were sulky.

"Marie, you've let the coffee get cold!" Tante Anne screeched.

Marie was at the open door, staring after the horsemen, and did not hear nor answer.

"Come in and attend to your work," her aunt cried. "What are you about? Do you think the cornet will kiss his hand to you?"

The sisters laughed shrilly, but Marie hung her head.

"No," she thought, "he will never wave his hand to me, I am ugly, and too poor, but—I should like to take a rifle and be beside him and fight the Englishmen, and—and watch over him."

* * * * *

The fight had begun in a series of skirmishes, but when morning came, the Boers and British were in pitched battle. The speaking of the great guns could be heard at the farm. Sometimes even the rattle of the rifle fire reached across the plain.

The women-folk were terribly excited. War was now very close to their doors, and it was not so easy a thing to sneer at the courage of the rooineks.

Tante Anne rocked in her great chair; the girls were white and unnerved; Marie was restless, with great bright eyes.

All night long spider carts and waggons and litters had been jolting across the veld with burdens of dead and crippled men who were being carried by native servants and friends to homes at hand, for burial or for nursing.

Suddenly, before the glaring sun had yet reached its noontide height, a ragged Kaffir came running and leaping from the distant kopjes, where the battle raged and roared. His eyes were protruding with fright, and his dark face was now grey.

"It is M'Pangwe!" Marie cried, as he came, and they all went out to meet Oom Kris' servant, who had followed his master to the war, as, in olden times, the henchmen followed the knights and squires.

The Kaffir ran up weary and exhausted. A dirty rag bound his arm where a bullet had pierced the flesh.

"Why have you left your baas?" the women cried, and Tante Anne shook her fist at the trembling boy. "You coward dog, if you have run away, I will use the sjambok on you myself!"

"Ni," cried the servant. "No run, Baas Hendrick, him dead in trench. Big baas, him fight and shoot, shoot, Big baas—him say to M'Pangwe—get cart take baas Hendrick to Tante Anne. Me come, run all way."

There was a wailing then in the farmhouse, and terrible cries for vengeance, but the Van Pelts were too sorrowstricken to obey the poor stern father's will.

On Marie fell the task, as on Marie usually fell the harder tasks. She had loved Hendrick, but she was dry-eyed.

Her face was still and stern.

"Is Oom Kris hurt?" she asked the boy, and he told her the old man was safe as yet, as they harnessed the horse.

Her back was turned to him.

"Did you see the Veld-Cornet Hausmann?" she asked.

"He shoot, shoot, shoot with Big baas," said the boy.

When the cart was ready, Marie went inside and filled a great canteen with coffee.

She took some biltong and bread also. Then she got Hendrick's old rifle, which she had often used, and went into the house for a belt of ammunition.

"Tante Anne," she said, "I am going to the trenches with M'Pangwe. He says the battle is hard. The commandant must need every good shot he can find, and I am a good shot. Besides, they have killed Hendrick—and I loved him."

Tante Anne screeched again.

"I need you here!" she screamed. "What can my girls and I do, broken down as we are? Who will help in the house?"

"Greta and Anna must do that unless they will come with me."

At that the girls cried out.

"The trenches are no place for girls," they said.

"Oh!" said Marie Dutoit hotly. "There are women there already helping the men. A woman also has a right to defend the fatherland. My mother fought the Zulus with my father in laager, and Tante Anne herself, when she was younger, could hit a deer."

She drove off with the Kaffir, sorrowing much for Hendrick, her childhood's friend, but hot with bitter anger and vengeful wrath against the British. Also there was a dread in her heart that, arriving, she should find yet another lying dead in the trenches on the hillside.

No doubt this would seem unmaidenly conduct in the eyes of school girls, but, you see, Marie had never been to school. She could only with difficulty spell out her Bible, was quite uncultured, and a very simple and natural product of the veld, possessed with all the primitive passions of love and hate and jealousy and revenge.

The trenches were reached from the rear of the army, with only the rocky difficulties of the kopje to overcome. When, however, they came near to them, the Kaffir shook with fear as the great shells came shrieking from the British guns to plunge into the earthen breastworks or burst close by, scattering horror.

He cowered in the cart, but Marie sat erect, although her face was white, and her lips drawn in.

They halted some distance away in the shelter of a

Digitized by Google

great rock, and Oom Kris himself carried his dead boy to the cart. Poor old patriot—he was weeping, but he could not leave his place to accompany Hendrick's remains, anxious though he was that they should be buried at home near the old farm, and not in the dreadful trenches, perhaps by British hands.

He dispatched the Kaffir's cart, and expressed no surprise when Marie followed him, on hands and knees, creeping to Hendrick's place.

"It is right, little Marie," he said simply. "He loved you, my Hendrick. Say a prayer and aim carefully."

On the Boer girl's other side lay the veld-cornet. He nodded to Marie and smiled approval.

"Who shall conquer us?" he said, "when our girls are ready to die to defend the land? Why did not Greta and Anna come? They are fair shots, and Hendrick was their brother."

Marie said nothing, but colour came back to her cheek for it was the first time the prince of the veld had spoken to her so cordially.

She grew warm with the fierce excitement of the thing, but her aim was steady and her bullets sped truly. Rick was earnest in his encouragement.

"I did not know," he said, enthusiastically, "that you were such a brave girl, and capital shot. You were always so quiet."

Then Marie, even in the middle of horrors, was almost happy.

All the afternoon the shells came shrieking. All the afternoon cries and groans and hoarse commands filled her ears, with the ceaseless crash of the rifles, and the thunder of the big guns.

Then, along the line of the trench the deep voices would rise to heaven—now in the heart-stirring melody of a volkslied, now chanting the solemn measures of a psalm.

At last, when the day was far spent, the enemy tried new tactics, since their artillery could not disperse the Boers in the trenches. From far in front a body of kilted Highlanders moved forward with a great cheer, and the shells came plunging down in a more furious storm than ever.

One of these burst near Marie. A piece tore past her face, and hit old Oom Kris. The fine old man's rifle fell from his hands. He gave one short, sharp cry, and fell back. He had followed his dear son.

So hot was the fight, so urgent it was that now if ever the Boers should not slacken their fire, that little Marie could only murmur a prayer, but dared not cease firing. Rick Hausmann found time to touch her hand and whisper in sympathy.

"It was for God and country," said he. "It is well with him."

Tears were in Marie's eyes as she looked at him gratefully.

"For God and country," she repeated, and turned steadily to the approaching rush of Highlanders.

They were coming on with tremendous dash, not cheering now, for every breath was needed as they faced the steep hill. With fixed bayonets they came on and on and on.

The fire of the Boers was furious, a continual roar of volleying rifles. The Scotsmen suffered cruelly. Here, there, like twigs in the wind, men wavered and dropped, but the rest came on and on and on.

At sight of the cold steel, glancing in the sun, Marie began to quake. Not she alone; the Boers all round were paling.

"Cornet Hausmann," Marie cried, quivering, "I must go—I must fly. I cannot stand and face those—things!"

Hausmann looked up to speak and then another shell burst and he fell with a broken leg. At the same instant many Boers, unaccustomed to face such a weapon, began to fall back, leave the trench, and retreat.

Hausmann saw them, and, in spite of his agony, ordered and implored them to stay.

"Stand firm!" he cried; "they are exhausted. Stand firm—continue firing and we'll drive them back yet. Oh, cowards, will you fly! Marie, show them an example. You are no coward. Steady, Marie! Keep on firing! You won't desert me, will you?"

Marie's strength was renewed. Even her awful dread vanished at the prince's entreaty.

She stood beside him as he reached up to her hand.

"No," she said, "I forgot for one moment. No, I will not desert you."

Now the Scots were within a hundred yards. They came on, but they were staggering and gasping.

"Firm! Stand firm!" cried the wounded Boer chief to the Boers who had not fled.

"Rush them, lads!" roared a tall British officer.

They came. Marie covered that officer steadily. He fell, as she fired, but his men came on and on.

Their bayonets were within fifty yards, and the Boers without any such weapon to meet them, broke at last and scattered.

Marie looked down at the cornet. He had fainted from pain. With a great effort she lifted him up, for she was strong with much outdoor work, and staggered with him from the lost trenches to the shelter of the great rock, which had previously hid the cart.

Behind the rock Marie gave the cornet water and eased his agony as best she could, while waiting for the surgeon and ambulance.

Hausmann's eyes were always on her face.

"Marie," he said at last, "these fellows would have killed me if you had not stayed by me. You saved my life when you did not desert me like the others. Marie, little Marie, Oom Kris has gone and Hendrick has gone and you are alone. I, too, am alone. Stay with me then—never desert me!"

And she never did.

P. Y. BLACK.

Digitized by Google

In the Orchard.

FEDORA, in her long white apron and big sun hat, colour-box and palette in hand, sauntered out into the orchard and sat down under the shade of an apple tree.

A light breeze stirred the boughs on which the sunlight gleamed in great gold patches and countless songbirds darted from limb to limb, making the air vocal with their music.

One plump red-breasted fellow perched himself directly in front of Fedora, and with head on one side regarded her intently.

The girl returned his gaze, first with amusement, then with interest, and finally with sudden inspiration.

She selected a crayon from her box and dexterously jotted down a few outlines. Then she consulted the bright bits of colour she had placed on her palette, and with a sweep here and there of her long paint brush transferred the nucleus of her small feathered observer to a sketch card.

She held it up to the light and looked at it critically for a moment, then laid it on the long grass beside her and leant back against the trunk of the tree, her hands crossed loosely behind her head, her eyes resting in dreamy contemplation on the gleaming fields beyond. Above her the faint rustling of the wind in the leaves drowned the silence.

Presently a shadow cut across the glimmering sunlight. Fedora glanced up and a faint colour tinged her cheeks. It was the professor.

"If you are too busy—" he began, looking down at her a little dubiously.

"Oh, no," she broke in quickly, smiling up at him as she spoke, "I am never busy."

Fedora prided herself upon that accomplishment.

"Do sit down," she went on, with a bright look, pointing to the grassy plot opposite her.

The professor hesitated for a moment, then suddenly complied with the request.

"A nice day," he remarked, carelessly, as he sat down.

"Charming," returned Fedora, surveying him with a smile.

It had suddenly dawned upon her that the professor was a singularly good-looking man to be so old—almost forty. And in spite of his two-score years she found herself looking with approval—almost admiration into his deep, clear eyes, above which the thick masses of brown hair waved back from an intellectual forehead. (All professors have intellectual foreheads.)

"I don't like to interrupt you," he said, with a doubtful glance at the incipient sketch and Fedora's small paint-stained fingers, "but there is something I wanted to say," he went on, tugging at his watch chain.

"Really!"

She gave a little cough and turned her eyes expectantly upon him.

"It's—it's important," faltered the professor, awkwardly, meeting her gaze.

Fedora broke into a little soft laugh and two dimples came into her face.

"What's the matter?" he said looking at her in astonishment, a suspicion arising in his mind that he was being treated with unnecessary levity.

"You looked so—serious," she replied, with such a charming little grimace and a look so profoundly innocent that the professor immediately dismissed this suspicion as unworthy.

"If you don't mind, though," he pursued, a little uneasily, his eyes on her face, "I would rather you would not—that you would be a little serious."

"Yes, certainly," assented Fedora with alacrity, pulling a straight face, but with a glimmer of a smile showing about her mouth.

He looked at her searchingly for a moment, then cleared his throat and went on with slight hesitation:

"I have a proposition."

He stopped short and looked at her in a helpless sort of way.

"Ah, I see," she exclaimed, with a merry laugh, "and you want the—hypothesis."

"Precisely so," returned the professor, his face brightening. He thought that his task would not be a difficult one, with such an appreciative young woman.

"And now to the point——" he continued, giving her a serious look.

"A point indicates mere position, and has no magnitude," interposed Fedora, flippantly.

"I suppose not," replied the professor, with slight sternness. "But it is not a problem in geometry—this time," he concluded, the glint of a smile hovering about his lips, his voice calm and meaning.

"Oh!" exclaimed the girl with wide eyes, as she folded both hands in her lap and fixed upon him a look of grave attention.

He shifted his position a little, pulled at a tuft of grass, then looked across at her with sudden resolution and spoke:

"Suppose—that a—man——"

The professor stopped short and cleared his throat again in a disconcerted sort of way. Fedora met his gaze with a mischievous smile, and chewed the end of her long paint brush.

Digitized by Google

"Well?" she said dropping her chin into one small hand.

"That a man is——"

"Yes?"

"Well—in love, you know," he blurted out in desperation, blushing to the brim of his scholarly hat.

Fedora's face was suffused with sudden colour and she gave an inarticulate little murmur, quite beyond interpretation.

There was an interval, during which neither spoke, for several minutes. The professor was the first to break the pause:

"Madly, terribly, foolishly—in love," he said, emphasizing the last adverb, as though it included the sum total of human imbecility.

Fedora shot at him a glance of bewilderment.

"To think," she said, making a mental observation, "that he could be so violent."

There was another pause. She dug one dainty hand into the soft turf and looked at him shyly out of the corner of her eye. The professor spoke again.

"What do you think of it?" he asked abruptly, his gaze resting upon her face with suppressed eagerness.

"I—don't—know." She said it slowly and blushed as she spoke.

A mingled expression of doubt and perplexity became visible on the professor's face, as he waited for her to go on.

But Fedora remained silent, her eyes resting dreamily upon a little white cloud, drifting across the horizon.

The situation was growing awkward. The professor felt that his grasp was slipping away from him, and went on a little anxiously:

"You know about such things—girls generally do. Tell me—what shall I do?"

He toyed nervously with a dead twig as he spoke, and searched her face narrowly for encouragement.

Fedora reflected for a moment, then nodded with decision.

"It depends," she said dryly, fixing her eyes upon his with a serious look.

"Yes?"

The professor turned to her with a quick smile.

Fedora pondered again, then dropped her eyes half-timidly and twisted the corner of her handkerchief.

"On—the other one, you know—the girl," she went on with a soft blush.

The professor gazed at her in silence, his kind eyes full of perplexity.

"Does she—care for you?" asked Fedora in a low voice, looking away.

"That's precisely the point," said he, pushing back his hat. "I want to find out."

"Is she pretty?"

"Beautiful," replied the professor, with sudden enthusiasm. "She has the most magnificent brown eyes in the world, and hair—how do they say in novels?—like spun gold, that's it," he concluded, impulsively, his eyes aglow.

Fedora's cerulean orbs were suddenly misty and her dusky brown head averted.

There was silence for a few moments. After a little she leant forward to pick a flower, her heart throbbing violently and the colour faded from her face.

The professor drew a long breath and sighed.

"She doesn't give me any encouragement," he ventured, regarding her with a questioning, half-wistful look.

"Perhaps," said Fedora, faintly, as if to herself, "she cares for someone else."

The professor stared at her in consternation.

"I never—thought—of that," he said slowly, dismay stealing into his tones, as his eyes sought hers with an intense look, as though searching her inmost soul.

The pause that followed was unbroken for some moments.

Finally he spoke.

"I hope you have not made a mistake," he said, rising to go, "because it means so much to me—everything."

He was looking down upon her and there was something in his eyes she had never seen there before.

"There is only one way—to find out," she said, speaking heroically, but with a dreary little smile.

The professor's face brightened.

"Well?" said he, almost holding his breath.

The girl did not immediately reply, something seemed to clutch at her throat.

Presently she lifted her eyes—suspiciously bright—to his and said slowly, her voice half tremulous:

"Just tell her—in a straightforward, manly way, that you—love—her, and want a—serious answer."

She dropped her eyes suddenly, as she encountered his look—not easy to evade.

There was an inaudible stillness. Fedora was looking away like one in a dream, her hands lying cold and passive in her lap.

The sunshine circled about her red-brown hair in a shimmering rainbow.

The professor looked across at her, his eyes full of unexpected admiration, his hands knitted close together.

After a while he leant suddenly towards her and with a quick movement seized both her hands in his own.

"Fedora, I love you! Will you marry me?"

The girl gave him a swift, startled glance, and the colour flamed to her cheeks, while the tears and smiles struggled for mastery.

"But—but my hair is not gold." she exclaimed with a puzzled little laugh, looking shyly at him, "and my eyes are—blue."

"And mine," said he, taking her in his arms, "are colour-blind."

SAN. FEW.

Digitized by Google

NEW SERIAL STORY.

A ROMANCE OF LAND AND SEA.

By WILLIAM WESTALL.

Author of "With the Red Eagle," "The Phantom City," "Nigel Fortescue," etc., etc.

SUMMARY.

Major Wyvenhoe leaves England on the *Campanella* with a detachment of troops, raised by Major Barnish, to help the Venezuelans in their struggle for liberty. Major Barnish is accompanied on the vessel by his wife. At Cork a detachment of Irishmen is taken on board together with General Molyneux, who is connected with the Venezuelan Army, his secretary and chaplain. When the vessel has been out a few days Major Barnish meets with a fatal accident, and on that same day a mutiny breaks out among the troops, but it is speedily quelled. On the day of Barnish's death a sail is sighted, and the vessel proves to be the *Dulcinea*, a Spanish warship. The *Campanella* is ordered to stop so that her cargo may be examined. The captain (Cautley) objects, and while negotiations are going on, the *Dulcinea* is boarded by a party from the *Campanella*, when the guns are spiked and the vessel put out of working order. General Molyneux, who had come with the party unasked, kills a Spanish sailor, and is left with the Spaniards as a prisoner.

CHAPTER V.

THE VENEZUELAN COAST IS REACHED.

I KEPT an eye on the *Dulcinea*, as Cautley had suggested, not from any morbid desire to see Molyneux hanged, simply to ascertain whether he was hanged. But my curiosity had to remain unsatisfied, for though I watched until the man-of-war became a mere speck I saw nothing.

"I thought they would run him up to the yard-arm right away," said the skipper, "but they are perhaps too busy putting the ship to rights, or Molyneux may be trying to save his life by making revelations, bogus and otherwise."

"What revelations could he make?"

"Well, he knows all about the formation of a British legion, when the expedition will sail, of how many ships it will be composed, and for what port they are destined."

"And the Spaniards may send a squadron to intercept them. Would it not have been better to bring Molyneux with us?"

"In one respect, perhaps, though, as the Spanish Government has spies in London, I doubt whether he can tell Don Pablo much that he does not already know, and it was not only the right thing to do but the only way of purging ourselves of complicity in the crime."

"But we are not responsible for Molyneux, he was neither under your orders nor mine."

"I am afraid we are though, if only because we did not bundle him back the moment he appeared on the *Dulcinea's* deck. I don't think our boarding her, under the circumstances, was an act of piracy, but it was undoubtedly illegal, and when people engage in an unlawful enterprise, and one of them commits a crime—murder, for instance—they all participate technically in his guilt. And you heard what Don Pablo said about making it an international question. That means a garbled and exaggerated report to our Government. Anyhow, I shall be chary of returning to England, or landing in any British colony, until the matter has blown over; and one thing is sure, if we fall into the hands of the Spaniards they will make short work of us."

"They will do that in any case, if it be true that they give no quarter. That would be the fortune of war—all in the day's work—but I should decidedly object to being indicted for piracy and murder."

"Well, perhaps my apprehensions are rather far fetched, and I don't think our people will give much heed to Spanish complaints, their sympathies are all with the Venezuelans. Besides, things are soon forgotten, and we have a deal to go through before we see England again."

And so we had—a great deal more than we knew.

"Would you mind seeing Mrs. Barnish, and telling her?" said the skipper presently.

"Very well; but suppose she objects?"

"Say it is a rule of the sea—anything you like; only it must be to-night."

So I went to Mrs. Barnish's cabin, and found her lying on a couch, her face pale and troubled, her eyes red with weeping; but on seeing me she roused herself and inquired what all the commotion had been about. On which I told her how great had been our peril, and how Captain Cautley had saved the ship.

"But for his boldness and address," I added, "we should have lost everything."

"For which I thank him with all my heart," she said earnestly. "You also, Major Wyvenhoe, for, though you say nothing about yourself, I am sure you were as bold as he. I thank you for your kindness and devotion, which I shall never forget."

Then briefly, and I fear too bluntly, I delivered my message.

"So soon! So soon! Only this morning; Heavens! what shall I do?" she cried wildly, sobbing as though her heart would break.

As soon as the poor lady had composed herself, which she did by a great effort, she said that, feeling sure we would

Digitized by Google

act for the best, she left it to Captain Cautley and myself, then added:

"As it must be it had perhaps better be soon."

We buried our late commander an hour after sunset by light of moon, with military honours and all the pomp and ceremony meet for the occasion. The troops and the ship's company were paraded on deck, with arms reversed, the officers in full uniform with crape on their swords. Cautley read the service for those buried at sea, and then the body, inclosed in a heavily-weighted coffin, was committed to the deep "in the sure and certain hope of resurrection."

It was the first funeral at sea in which I had taken part, and it impressed me, and I think most of us, both deeply and painfully. For Barnish, who had been much beloved, would be greatly missed, his death was a veritable calamity, and augured ill for the happy termination of a voyage so auspiciously begun.

But, whatever befalls, work must be done and duties performed, and on the following day an informal court of inquiry was appointed to investigate the causes and origin of the mutiny and apportion the guilt. More we could not do, having neither legal right to try the prisoners nor the means of enforcing any sentence we might pass on them, except a term of imprisonment that would end with the voyage, or death, which we had no right to inflict.

But the mutineers did not know this, they were afraid of being hanged, and several of the ringleaders were clamorous to save their lives by betraying their friends. Of those whom we called as witnesses, some denied everything, others lied first and prevaricated afterwards; very few, I imagine, told the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. The only absolutely contumacious witness was the one who knew the most—Conroy, the private secretary. When asked a question, he looked as stupid as though he had been deaf and dumb, and said never a word.

Cautley, however, was not to be baulked, and found a way of loosening the fellow's tongue, which reminded me, with a difference, of the *peine forte et dure* which not very long ago used to be inflicted on accused persons in England who refused to plead. A rope being fastened round Conroy's body, he was cast into the sea and dragged at the ship's stern.

"As soon as you have made up your mind to speak, you have only to raise your hand or sing out 'yes,'" said Cautley; "and if the sharks make a meal of you, you will have nobody to blame but yourself."

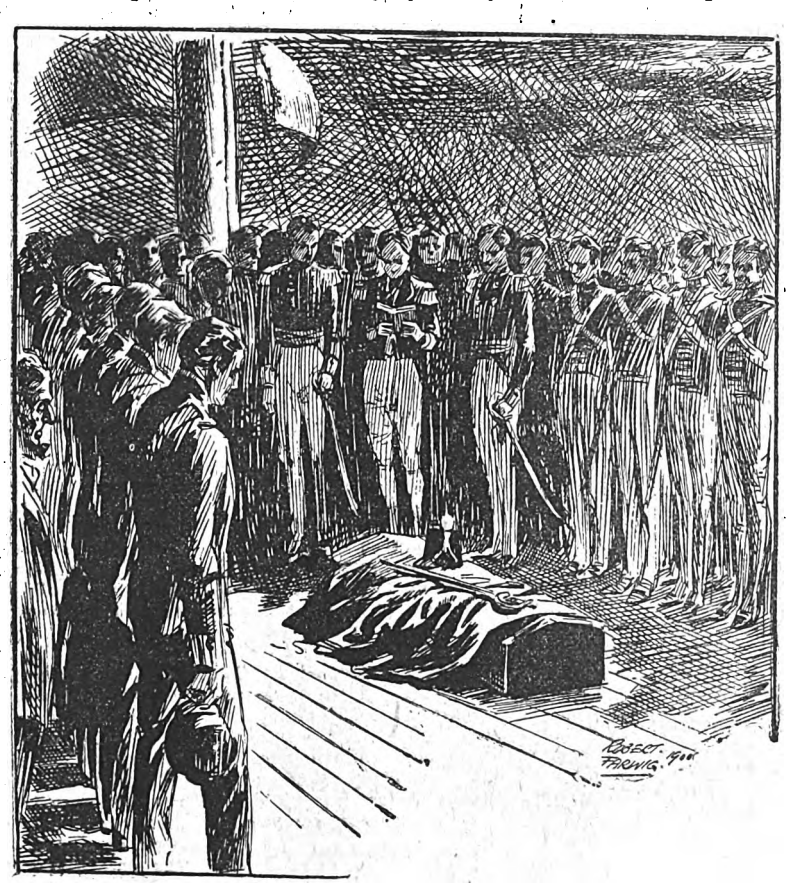
Conroy was very obdurate, and before he was thrown overboard showed no sign of yielding, but five minutes in and under the water, mostly under, with the prospect of serving as bait for a shark, brought him to reason. He gave token of submission, and was hauled on board, more dead than alive, and so exhausted withal as to be physically unable to speak until he had swallowed a stiff glass of grog.

Had I not been assured that Conroy was an arrant rascal I should have interfered in his favor, but as Cautley observed afterwards it was probably the only punishment he would get, and far less than he deserved.

Nevertheless, we were unable to extort a full confession from him, he would only answer questions, but his admissions, together with the evidence of the other plotters, disclosed all the essential facts.

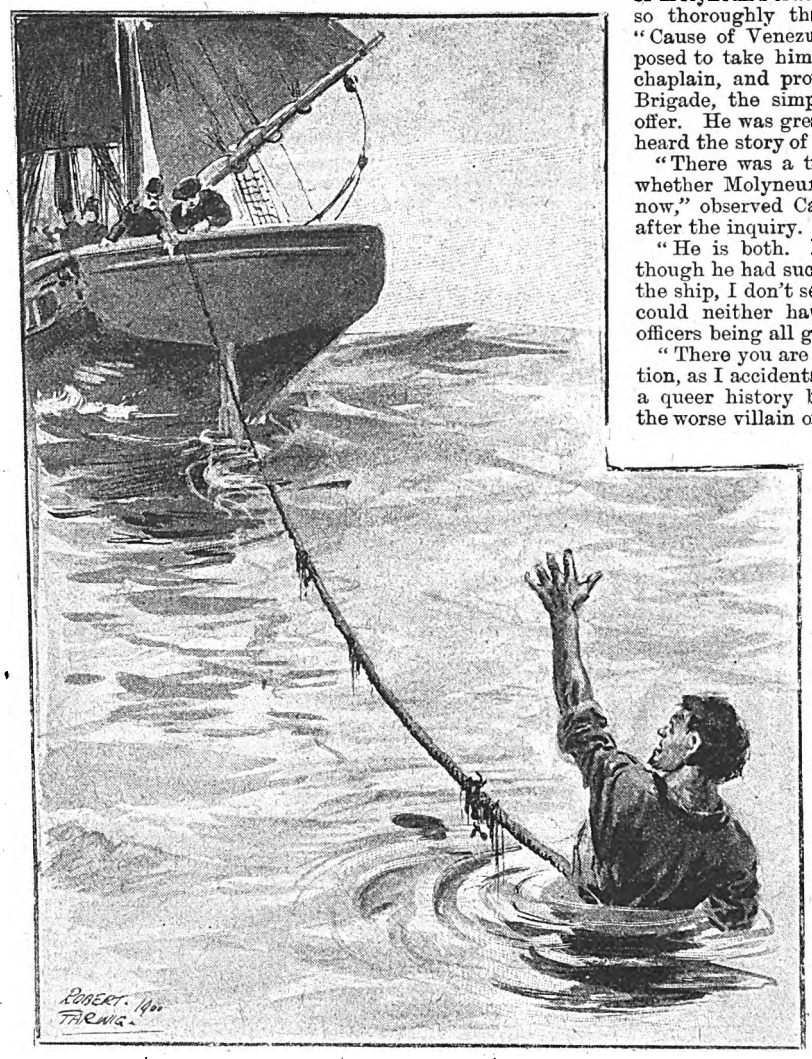
As John Ready had surmised, Molyneux was at the bottom of it all. Most of his eccentricities were put on in order to give us a mean idea of his capacity, whether for mischief or aught else. The two subalterns and several of the non-commissioned officers and men who had joined at Cork were his creatures, Conroy his factotum and *alter ego*. Their purpose, after gaining over as many of the men as they could, was to destroy the officers and all who took their part, sail to Pampatar, sell the ship and her cargo to the Venezuelans and share the proceeds. This, in addition to a large sum in silver and gold, which, as Conroy asserted, Major Barnish had with him, his wife's jewellery and whatever cash and valuables the mutineers might find on the persons of the officers or among their effects, amounting to several thousand pounds. The ordering of everything, including the command of the troops was to be taken by Molyneux, who would pretend that they were the first contingent of an Irish brigade which he was raising for service in Venezuela and claim the bounties and cost of their equipment. He proposed, in fact, to step into the Barnishs' shoes, which necessarily implied the previous removal both of the major and his wife.

The details of this scheme were imparted only to the initiated, but some of them oozed out in a more or less incomplete shape and reached me through Ready, and Cautley through the boatswain. Sedition was sown among those not in the mutiny by Conroy and the other conspirators,



We buried our late commander an hour after sunset.

Digitized by Google



He gave token of submission.

chiefly by Conroy. It was he who had told them they were under no obligation to obey their officers, and suggested that the men were by no means sure of receiving the remainder of their bounties. Moreover, it was rumoured, and by many of the more ignorant believed, that the ship's true destination was not Pampatar, but St. Jago de Cuba, where Major Barnish meant to sell them all to the Spaniards to work in chains on sugar plantations.

All was ripe for a rising, and but for the removal of the arms and the Major's death, it might have succeeded. The latter event both precipitated a crisis and led to dissensions among the conspirators. Some of them, thinking that all authority had disappeared with the chief, wanted to mutiny at once, others wanted to wait a while longer, the unruly section got out of hand, a good many of them got drunk, with the result that instead of a massacre by night, as had been planned, there was an outbreak by day, which was suppressed as we have seen.

Father Bartrum, who had been sea sick in his cabin the greater part of the voyage knew nothing either of the plot or Molyneux's true character. He believed in the scoundrel so thoroughly that he had given him money for the "Cause of Venezuelan Liberty," and when Molyneux proposed to take him out to the Spanish Main as his private chaplain, and promised him the chaplaincy of the Irish Brigade, the simple-minded priest eagerly embraced the offer. He was greatly distressed, poor gentleman, when he heard the story of his patron's villainy.

"There was a time when we were unable to determine whether Molyneux was more fool than knave. We know now," observed Cautley, as we were talking matters over after the inquiry.

"He is both. Knaves generally are," I said. "Even though he had succeeded in cutting our throats and taking the ship, I don't see how it could have profited him. He could neither have controlled the men, nor, the ship's officers being all gone, could he have navigated the ship."

"There you are mistaken. Conroy understands navigation, as I accidentally discovered some time since. He has a queer history behind him, and is, in my opinion, quite the worse villain of the two."

"I wonder whether the Spaniards hanged Molyneux? If they did not do it quickly, he would stand a good chance of saving his neck. The rogue can talk the thatch off a hay-stack, and is quite capable of representing himself as a lord or a British general, so that Don Pablo, believing he has caught a big fish, may think it more to his advantage to keep him than string him up. It will be queer if he turns up again. If he does, I know somebody who will have a little account to settle with him."

"So do I; but we shall never have the chance. Even if the Spaniards do not hang him, they will take good care not to let him go."

We were now in the Caribbean Archipelago, enjoying perfect weather and feasting our eyes on the finest scenery I had ever beheld or imagined could exist. It was like an enchanted sea. We were seldom out of sight of land, isle succeeded isle, each more picturesque than the other, some mere rocks rising sheer from the waves, yet richly coloured and garlanded with flowers, palms, and foliage of every hue. Many were much larger, but all equally beautiful. I shall never forget my first sight of St. Kitts. The morning had been misty, but presently the sun, growing more powerful, dispersed the haze which had hidden the island, and revealed a mountain with a broad base and a tapering peak, sparkling with verdure, a glorious emerald set in an amethystine sea.

And Martinique, and Dominica, and Guadeloupe, and many more. To attempt to describe them were almost a desecration, even though I possessed a poet's pen, for no subtleties of language or combination of words could give an adequate idea of their splendour and their beauty.

Our misgivings and forebodings were for a while forgotten, we dwelt only in the present, and Mrs. Barnish, leaving the seclusion of her cabin, spent the greater part of her time on deck, under an awning, which Cautley had put up for her special benefit.

Though the reverse of sentimental, and in manner reserved, the skipper showed the poor lady much sympathy, and treated her with almost courtly deference, and we both, as well as the other officers, did our best to make the remainder of the voyage as pleasant for her as might be.

The skipper, however, surpassed us all, and before long

Digitized by Google

I began to suspect that his intentions had a deeper source than loyalty to his owner and pity for beauty in distress. But Cautley was too manly and energetic, too conscientious as a man and too thorough as a seaman to let duty wait on dalliance. He displayed even greater activity and vigilance than before, and rightly so, for as we neared the Main his responsibilities increased, and only by good luck and incessant watchfulness could he hope to win through the dangers that still confronted us. One of these was falling in with another Spanish cruiser, possibly a second time with the *Dulcinea*, since, as Molyneux had almost certainly told the captain whither we were bound, he would probably try to intercept us, in which event, his ship being the better sailer, he might succeed, luck favouring him.

It was to avoid this peril that Cautley, instead of taking the more direct course by the Monas passage, between Costa Rica and St. Domingo, went by way of the Windward Islands, none of which belong to Spain. But in avoiding Scylla we were like to fall into Charybdis. By prolonging our voyage we gave the *Dulcinea* a chance of reaching the neighbourhood of Margarita in advance of the *Campanella*, and there lying in wait for us, perhaps with a consort.

Nor was this all. At the time we left England the latest news from Venezuela was two months old, and was now nearly four months old, an interval during which many things might have happened. We had no assurance that Margarita was still held by the patriots. Being only some twenty miles from the continent, and having a good harbour it was a highly valuable possession, much coveted by the Spaniards by whom, for aught we could tell, it had been recovered. In any event it were suicidal to go to Pampatar without making sure that it was occupied by friends—or anywhere else, for the same doubts applied to every port on the Venezuelan coast. One or two of them were in the hands of the enemy when we last heard, and the remainder, one or all, might be in a like predicament.

The alternative was to call at a neutral port, St. Thomas, Curacoa, or one of the Windward Islands, where the latest intelligence touching the fortunes of the war would be obtainable. But to this there was the serious objection that the *Campanella* might be attacked at the instance of some Spanish consul or fussy local official, and proceeded against in the courts on a charge of violating the neutrality laws, which, whatever were the result, would ruin Mrs. Barnish in costs and prevent her from fulfilling her husband's contract with the Venezuelan government.

"There is only one thing for it, we must act the man-of-war and stop any merchant ship or hooker hailing from the Main that we meet, and demand information," said Cautley, in the course of a conversation on the subject. "Then make for whatever port is in Venezuelan hands, or if Pampatar is blockaded without being occupied, get in either by stealth or force."

"And if we were attacked meanwhile?"

"Hoist the Venezuelan flag and fight. I won't court an encounter, but if I am fired on I shall fire back, strictly in self defence. It won't be quite regular, perhaps, yet no less so than our capture of the *Dulcinea*. In for a penny in for a pound, you know, and poor Mrs. Barnish and her interests must be our first consideration."

They were undoubtedly Cautley's first consideration, but as I rather liked the idea of a brush with a Spanish cruiser, I offered no objection, and preparations for the eventuality in question were straightway made.

By the removal of her poop the *Campanella* was reconverted into a flush-decked ship, the carronades were got up and mounted on their carriages, and the crew not being strong enough both to work the ship and fight her, a hundred picked men from among the troops were exercised every day on the quarter-deck.

Mrs. Barnish observed these proceedings with concern, yet without apprehension, warmly applauding the skipper's resolve to fight rather than fail.

"I am vastly beholden to you, Captain Cautley, I thank Heaven for providing me with so brave a protector, and as long as I live I shall be grateful for your kindness and devotion," she said, in her most winning manner.

"Don't mention it, madam, pray don't mention it," returned the skipper, hurriedly. "It is all in the way of duty, and I don't think there is a man on board, except perhaps those rascally mutineers, who would not lay down his life for you with the greatest pleasure."

Which made me smile. A man who can contemplate the possibility of being riddled with bullets or having his head knocked off by a cannon ball with pleasure, must be far gone indeed. But I was not the least jealous, since, though I admired Mrs. Barnish as much as I pitied her, it was in no sense the pity which is akin to love. A little flirtation I did not mind, but to the tender passion *au serieux* I was absolutely impervious.

Owing to light winds and occasional calms we were making rather a long voyage of it, but we kept moving more or less slowly, and the time arrived when it became necessary for the skipper to make up his mind as to our destination, to which end he one day bore up to a felucca which was sailing nor'-east by east, hoisted the Union Jack, and fired a shot across her bows as a hint to her to pass within hail, which she did, and hove-to; whereupon Cautley took up his speaking trumpet and put the usual questions, but, being answered in Spanish, he gave me the trumpet and told me what to say.

"Whence are you and whither bound?"

"From Carupano to St. Thomas."

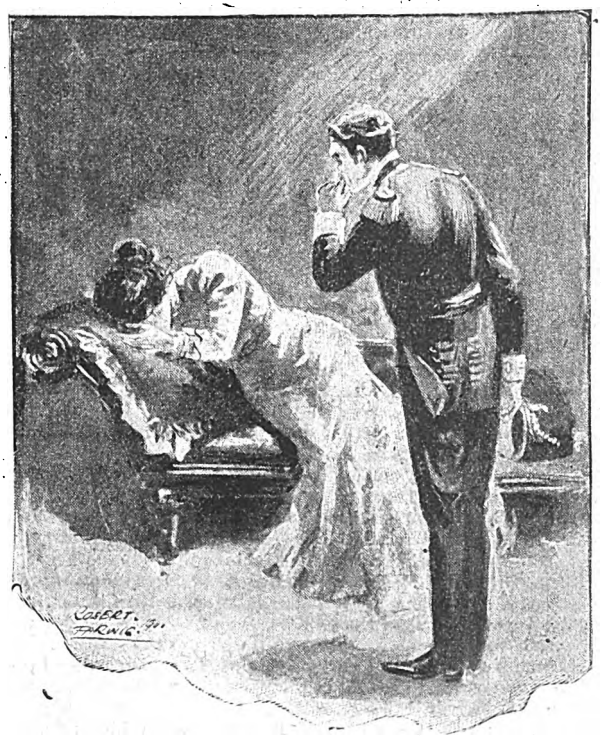
"Who are in possession of Carupano—patriots or royalists?"

"Patriots; but, being a small unfortified place with no harbour, it is not of much account."

"And Cumana?"

"Cumana is held in force by the Spaniards, also Barcelona."

"And Margarita?"



"Don't mention it, madam; pray, don't mention it."

Digitized by Google

"Cannot say for certain, the last news was that General Arismendez was still at Pampatar, but it was rumoured that General Morillo was preparing another expedition."

"To attack Pampatar?"

"Yes, and two Spanish sloops of war are continually cruising along the coast between Cumana and Pampatar."

"You are on the patriot side yourselves?"

"*Si*, Señor, very much so."

"So are we. Proof of which is that we are taking British troops to Margarita to serve against the Spaniards, and if you can give us any information likely to be useful we shall be greatly obliged."

"Well, look out for the sloops, they are large, as large as your ship, and heavily armed, carrying twenty-four guns apiece. You can tell them by their rig, they have jib-shaped foresails, short, standing bowsprits, and no topsails. If you see either of them at anchor off Pampatar, you will know that the Spaniards are back again, though, as the harbour is defended by a strong fort, and General Arismendez is in command, I do not think that is likely."

"Thank you. Have you anybody on board who could pilot us into Pampatar? He would be well paid."

"Only myself, señor, and being the master with a crew of but two men and a boy, who know nothing of navigation, I cannot be spared, otherwise, I should put myself at your worship's disposal."

Whereupon, after an exchange of compliments, the felucca went her way and we went ours.

"I beg pardon, Captain Cautley, for intruding on you at such a moment, but with your kind permission I should like to ask a question and make a suggestion," put in Father Bartrum, who had lately come on deck. He had suffered much from sea sickness and looked like the ghost of his former self. His high colour was gone, his cheeks had fallen in, his paunch collapsed, but he had abated little or nothing of his old pomposity of language and manner.

"By all means, father," answered the skipper pleasantly.

"By all means, father," answered the skipper pleasantly. "What is the question?"

"Well, sir, unless I have misunderstood the conversation which has just taken place between yourself and the captain of the small sailing boat which has just left us, as interpreted by Major Wyvenhoe, you have some apprehension of coming in hostile contact with one or other of these heavily-armed sloops?"

"Or both?"

"Or both. I stand corrected, sir. In which event there may be fighting, slaughter, and—danger?"

"Well, when ships of war come into hostile contact, as you call it, there generally is something of the sort, I think," quoth Cautley, with an amused smile.

"Not that I am afraid—not in the least, and if a hostile contact occurs, I shall do my duty. I shall descend into the cockpit, and offer the consolations of religion to such of the wounded as are willing to receive my ministrations."

"And quite right, too; the cockpit is the place for you. And now about the suggestion?"

"Well, sir, it struck me while listening to the conversation to which I have just alluded, that a mariner or navigator, conversant with the coast we are approaching and the islands thereto adjacent would be very useful at this juncture."

"Rather. I only wish we had one here."

"So you have, my dear sir, so you have."

"The dickens we have. Who is he?"

"His name is Daniel Conroy, and he is now below in irons."

"Ah! I guessed he was an old salt, but it did not occur to me that he might know these seas."

"He does indeed, sir. It was for that, and for his knowledge of Spanish, that the scoundrel who so grossly deceived me engaged Conroy, nominally as his secretary, really to navigate the *Campanella* after we others had been relegated to another sphere."

"We others! Surely Molyneux would not have hurt you?"

"I fear he would. He owes me money, and was aware that I had provided myself with a few British sovereigns, for use in the event of my appointment as chaplain to the Irish brigade being accidentally delayed. Unless I am very much mistaken, it was in order to get rid of me that I was invited to accompany him."

"He is bad enough for anything, there is no doubt of that. So think you Conroy could pilot us to Pampatar?"

"Yes, sir, or any other port in these seas."

"Have you any idea how he acquired his knowledge; in what capacity I mean?"

"As to that my lips are sealed."

"I understand, a secret of the confessional. Well, his past is no affair of mine. On what terms do you suppose I can secure his services?"

"You had better ask him. But I think he will want to be relieved of his fetters, and a promise that you will set him free, and make no charge against him on the termination of the voyage."

"There is nothing like time present. I will go and see the rascal now. Greatly obliged for your suggestion, father; it may prove very useful."

An hour later Cautley came into my cabin. "It is all settled," he said, "conditions as suggested by the pater, with the addition of a sum of money."

"A sum of money?"

"Yes, he would not treat on any other terms. Only a

Digitized by Google

hundred dollars, though. And he may be of immense use to us, knows every nook and rock and islet in the Caribbean Sea and the Gulf of Mexico. I have not the least doubt he has been in the black trade, and I told him plainly that if he played any tricks I would run him up to the yard-arm, and he saw that I meant it. But, as he said, it would not be worth his while, and it is as much in his interest as ours to get the ship safely to Pampatar."

"How are you going to do it? Have you a plan?"

"Yes, and a very promising one. Conroy thinks, and I am disposed to agree with him, that these sloops are looking out for us. The *Dulcinea* may easily have called at Cumana and given notice of our coming."

"In that case why does she not try to intercept us herself?"

"She may be on special service, or bound for some port further west, and two sloops are more likely to stop and capture us than one frigate. We shall, of course, try to obtain more precise information; but in the meantime I assume two things—that Margarita is still in Venezuelan hands, and that the sloops are on the watch for us."

And then Cautley described his plan, which, divested of technicalities and omitting minor details, was as follows:

Pampatar is at the south-east corner of Margarita, and the skipper had intended, after running past the island, to approach it from the south-west. But, as Conroy pointed out, this would bring him dangerously near Cumana, and was exactly the course which the sloops would expect him to take, and suggested that a better way would be to 'bout ship and make a long fetch, then turn again, steer for the north-east corner of the island, and let go in a cove, doubtless an old pirate haunt, known to Conroy, where the brig could not be seen, even from a ship passing close by. Here we should be able to ascertain the state of things at Pampatar, and unless we heard that the patriots had been ousted might slip out by night and gain our point unperceived by the sloops.

"Anyhow, as only one is likely to be in shore we shall not have to deal with both at once," observed the skipper. "That is all I care about, and being in Venezuelan waters I shall not wait to be attacked; if I get a chance I shall strike first and hard."

"Very well, only I don't like having to put so much trust in Conroy."

"Neither do I, but needs must when the devil drives. I shall change our course at once."

(To be continued.)

FREE "WANT" ADVERTISEMENTS.

IF YOU ARE OUT OF A SITUATION,

IF YOU WANT A CHANGE,

IF YOU WANT A CLERK OR A SERVANT,

GET THE

"Illustrated Weekly News"

this week and read about the offer to insert advertisements *free of charge.* Scores of people have been helped in this way. Why not you?

An Instructive Book.

THE MISTAKES WE MAKE.

COMPILED BY

C. E. CLARK.

F'cap. 8vo, cloth, with Index, Price 1s. 1d. post free.

SOME OF THE CHAPTERS ARE:

CHAP. I.—Things that we Call by their Wrong Names.
CHAP. II.—Mistakes we Make About Places and their Names.
CHAP. VI.—Common Errors in Speech and Writing.
CHAP. X.—Historical Mistakes.

C. ARTHUR PEARSON Limited, Henrietta Street, W.C.

Digitized by Google

SHORT STORIES ABOUT NEGROES.

We devote, every week, two pages of *Short Stories* to pithy, humourous anecdotes similar to those which appear in these columns. A prize of £1 1s. will be sent to the reader who submits the best storyette this week, and a copy of "The Master Key," by Florence Warden, to each of those whose attempts are used. The anecdotes may be either original or selected; in the latter case the source *must* be stated. The prize of One Guinea offered for the best Storyette in this competition has been won this week by Mr. Alfred Hindley, 60 Everton Road, Liverpool. Attempts for this week's prize must deal with FUNNY STORIES ABOUT VENTRILOQUISM, and must reach the Storyette Editor, *Short Stories* Office, Henrietta Street, Strand, London, W.C., by Monday, July 30th. Post-cards only, please.

Not Quite the Style.

AN Englishman visited an American friend who had an estate in the South and employed a large number of negroes, who were treated with great kindness, but could not keep their hands from picking and stealing.

The visitor attended their Sunday service, after which the negro preacher asked him how he liked the sermon.

The reply was complimentary, and Sambo grinned. Then came the remark:

"I should think you should preach to your people on the sinfulness of theft—stealing fowls and eggs."

Sambo's face became gloomy, and he rejoined:

"Well, sah, I hab tried dat style, but somehow or oder, it allus seemed to trow a kind ob coolness ober de meeting." A. H.

Negro Logic.

A GENTLEMAN riding through Virginia was overtaken by a violent thunderstorm.

He took shelter in a negro's cabin, and found the water streaming through many crevices in the roof.

"Why don't you mend your roof, Cuff?" he asked.

"Oh, um rain so, massa, can't," said the negro.

"But why don't you mend it when it doesn't rain?" asked the gentleman.

"Yah, massa," said the negro with a grin, "den um dohn want mendin'." F. J.

In Court.

"WHAT!" exclaimed the justice to a coloured culprit, "have you the audacity to say you do not recognise this pocket-book?"

"Yes, sah."

"But it was found in your possession."

"In my what did yer say, jedge?"

"In your possession. This pocket-book was found in your pocket, sir."

"Jedge, you has tole two stories about dat 'ar. Fust you said hit was foun' in my persession, and den yer 'lowed hit was foun' in my pocket. Bofe dem yarns can't be true. Ef de jedges can't tell the troof, hits no wonder dat a poor niggah like me got led astray."

The justice drew a long breath, and once more producing the pocket-book said:

"You denied just now that you had ever seen this book. I now ask you again, did you ever see this pocket-book before?"

"Why, of course. Hit am de same one yer showed me a minit ago. Yer must be losing yer mind, jedge."

Remanded to gaol without bail. F. W.

Only a Dream.

THE squire, hearing a noise in the night, came downstairs and found Black Pete in his fowl-house.

"Pete, you rascal, what are you doing here?" he exclaimed.

"It's all right, sah," replied Pete; "it's owing to a dream that I'm here, sah."

"A dream, you black thief! What do you mean?"

"Well, sah, I dreamt I was goin' to have chicken tomorrow; but I'm 'fraid 'taint true, sah!" E. C.

Would it Stand the Strain?

OUT in the West a dusky negro knight of the lather and brush was performing the operation of shaving a customer with a very dull razor.

"Stop!" said the customer; "that won't do."

"What's de matter, boss?"

"The razor pulls."

"Well, no matter for dat, sah. If de handle ob de razor don't break, the beard's bound to come off."

J. E.

Where He Was.

"IF you are innocent," said the lawyer to his client, an old negro, who was charged with stealing a ham, "we ought to be able to prove an alibi."

"I don't 'specs we kin," the darkie replied doubtfully.

"At what time was the ham stolen?"

"'Bout lebben o'clock, dey say."

"Well, where were you between that and midnight. In bed?"

"No, sah, I wah hidin' de ham."

L. J.

"Sufficient!"

A SCOTSMAN and a negro had a dispute, and to find out which was the best man they agreed to fight it out with their fists, and the one who had enough first was to shout out the word "sufficient."

Both men went at each other as hard as they could. The negro got one eye shut up, his lip swollen, and his nose twisted, but still, would not give in. Finally, when nearly exhausted, he managed to land his opponent between the eyes which fairly floored him.

"Sufficient!" shouted the Scot.

"Is that so?" said the negro gasping for breath. "Sho—I've bin tryin' to tink ob dat word fer dis twenty minutes!" T. P. O.

Digitized by Google

Beyond a Doubt.

"Once upon a time," said the storyteller to a group of interested listeners, "a little nigger sat at a table pounding his thumbnail with a hammer," and the story-teller screwed his face into grimaces expressive of recurring pain, while his hands went through the motions suggested by the story.

"Presently a man asked the darkie what he was doing that for.

"'Cause,' he whined, 'it feel so good when I stop.'"

C. W.

Where the Tablecloth was Kept.

When travelling in America, an Englishman was compelled by necessity to put up at a very inferior hotel, if it might be dignified with the name.

One night he went to bed rather early, but, to his surprise, long before daylight he heard a loud knocking at his door.

"You must get up, massa," said the darkey. "You must get up, Massa Russell."

"I don't want to get up," was the reply.

"But you must," continued the nigger; "some gentlemen are going away."

"Let them go away."

"But they want their breakfast."

"Let them have it."

"But they can't till you get up."

"Why?"

"Because you are sleeping on the tablecloth, and we want it," was the final and unanswerable reply.

Mr. Russell rose and gave the sheet he had been sleeping on to spread over the breakfast table.

O. S. S.

A Rolling Stone.

A negro working upon a plantation in Southern Virginia gave his master notice to leave. As he had been in his master's employ many years the master reasoned with him as to the advisability of making a change, winding up by saying:

"You know, Sambo, a rolling stone gathers no moss."

The negro replied:

"No, massa, that's quite true; he gathers no moss, but 'im gathers a heap of polish."

L. M. W.

Too Light-Toed.

The Kaffirs of South Africa have a bad reputation for being light-fingered, and a careful watch must be kept on them when they are near a camp, for they are very adroit in their thefts. While sitting down, apparently intent on idleness, they will purloin even the smallest article. In the following anecdote the Kaffir was not light-fingered, but light-toed—to his sorrow.

A gentleman travelling near the Modder River once stopped to have something repaired in his cart, and during the work the blacksmith threw a red-hot bolt on the ground to cool.

A Kaffir dexterously seized it between his toes in passing, intending to make off with it.

It may be imagined how he screamed with pain when he discovered his mistake. The iron had become wedged so tightly between his toes that he could not release it with the aid of his fingers, and awful was the plight in which the thief rushed bellowing into a neighbouring pool of water.

How Sam Was Caught.

A Chicago lady was called away by a neighbour whilst making jam.

As she left the room she said to her negro servant:

"Sam, you old rascal, don't you eat my jam when I'm away."

Sam protested he would die first, but the whites of his eyes rolled hungrily towards the bubbling crimson.

"See here, Sam," the lady said, "I'll chalk your lips, and on my return I'll know if you have eaten any."

So saying she passed her forefinger over the darkey's thick lips, holding the chalk in the palm of her hand at the time, and not letting it touch him

When she came back she did not need to ask any questions, for Sam's lips were chalked a quarter of an inch thick.

J. C.

Doubling the Dose.

One day, in the streets of Port-au-Prince, an old negro who was vainly endeavouring to drag a lazy mule by his halter, suddenly stepped up to a doctor who stood outside his surgery, and offered him a silver piastre if he could put a little life into his contrary beast.

The doctor went into his office, and returned with his medicine case. He selected a small syringe, filled it with morphia, and inserted the needle into the animal's side.

The astonished creature reared upon his hind-legs, and then, with a tremendous bray, started down the road at a breakneck speed.

The old darkey looked first at the doctor, and then at the disappearing mule.

"Say, sah," he suddenly exclaimed, "how much was dat stuff wuf you jist put in dat mule?"

"Oh, about ten cents," laughingly answered the doctor.

"Well, sah, yo' jist fire twenty cents' wuf right into me. Heah am de cash. I'se got to ketch dat ar mule."

He Kissed the Judge.

In one of the New Orleans courts a negro was called as a witness. The judge, noted for austerity, held out the book and the witness was sworn, and, of course, expected to kiss the book. But the witness was unused to criminal proceedings.

"Why don't you kiss?" demanded the magistrate.

"Sar!"

"Ain't you going to kiss?" was the question again put.

"Sar!" repeated the astonished darkey.

"Kiss. I tell you!" thundered the judge.

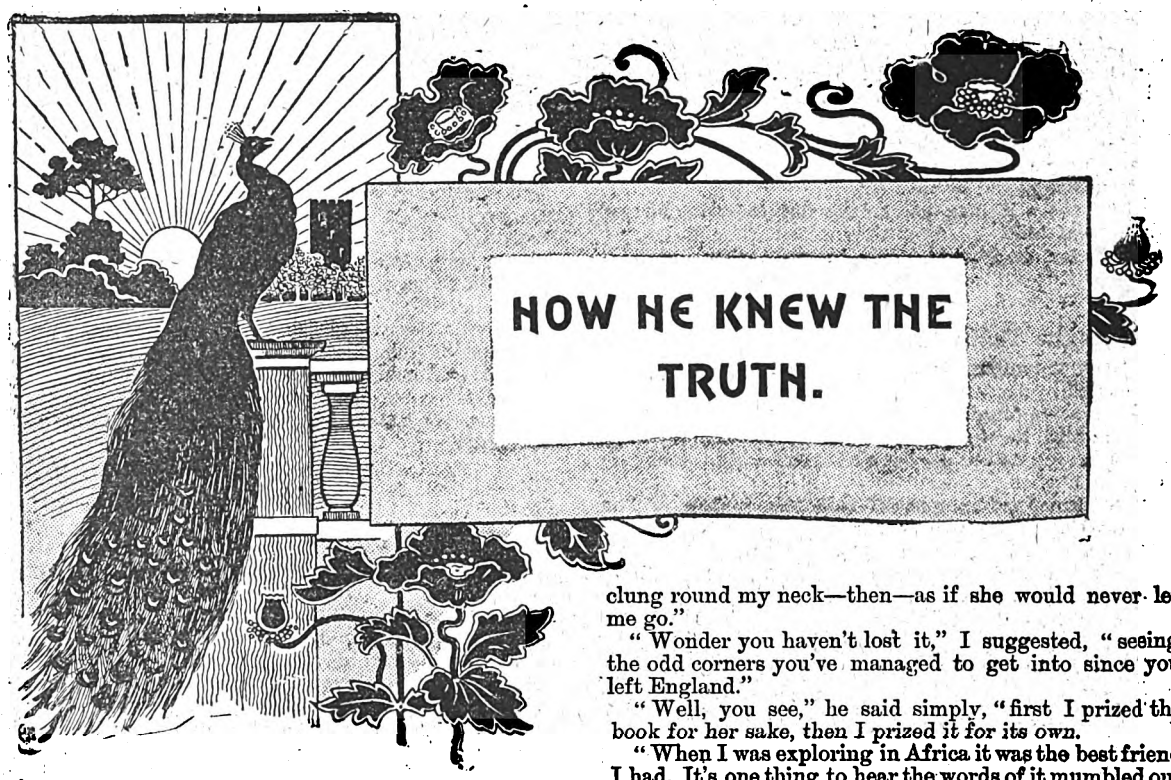
"Yes, sir! yes, sar!" exclaimed the frightened and trembling darkey.

The long arms of the son of Ham were thrown round the judicial neck, and before he could be prevented a stentorian smack resounded through the court-room.

"Take him off—take him off!" cried the court, while the loud shouts of the spectators testified their appreciation of the fun. At last the half-strangled judge was rescued from the clasp of the very literal witness.

G. N.

Digitized by Google



HOW HE KNEW THE TRUTH.

"I SHALL clear out of this."

"You won't."

"I will."

"Then I think you will do a very foolish thing. You haven't even put your chances to the test."

"Chances," he repeated with a bitter laugh. "Look here, old fellow, I've led a forlorn hope before to-day, and I've had enough of that sort of thing."

It was high noon in Thirlsby.

The summer lay like a mantle above the face of the cliffs and the meadows. The sea in the distance seemed asleep; nearer, its waters moved lazily in towards the shore, and sparkled as they broke on the land.

Gerald Graham and I sat on the edge of the bluff, and kicked down pebbles and tussocks of grass on to the beach below.

Despite the beauty of the day and the scene, my companion's brows were like midnight.

"No," he went on, "the sooner I accept the inevitable and make myself scarce the better."

"How is she to know your feelings if you don't tell her?" I remonstrated.

Again he gave the same exasperated laugh.

"Do you suppose you must spell out everything to a woman, or set it down in black and white before she understands? Why, man, every look of mine is a proposal, and she knows it."

He unbuttoned his Norfolk jacket, and took out a worn and frayed little Prayer Book from his inner pocket.

"Isabel Alston, Xmas, 1895," was written on the title page.

"She gave me this when I went away five years ago, and I've carried it about with me ever since. She was only a child," he said with a sigh, "not fifteen, and she clung round my neck—then—as if she would never let me go."

"Wonder you haven't lost it," I suggested, "seeing the odd corners you've managed to get into since you left England."

"Well, you see," he said simply, "first I prized the book for her sake, then I prized it for its own.

"When I was exploring in Africa it was the best friend I had. It's one thing to hear the words of it mumbled out by a curate in a hurry to get home to his dinner, and another to read them by yourself in the loneliness of an African forest, with no one but natives about you."

He paused for a minute, looking thoughtfully out to sea.

"You will hardly believe it," he resumed, "but when I was hit in the chest at Nicholson's Nek my first concern was not for myself, but for Isabel's Prayer Book.

"However, it's no use talking. She has no real regard for me, or else she is a heartless coquette. In either case I'm in a bad way."

He sat and mused a little longer, then suddenly leapt to his feet, his dark handsome face glowing with resolution.

"I'll go back if they will have me. My shoulder will be all right by the time we get to the Cape. Come on, Harry."

Reluctantly I rose to accompany him, and we made our way past the villas with lordly names, which garnished the edge of the cliff, to the quaint old post-office which stood in the centre of the village.

The postmistress took the telegram conveying the offer of Graham's services to his old chief, and read it.

"You're never thinking of going out again, Master Gerald," she cried, with the familiarity of an old friend, "and you so badly hurt and all."

"They want all the men they can get just now," he replied, as he opened his purse and counted out £2 15s., the cost of the cable. 'England expects that every man —' you know the rest, Mrs. Yallop."

"Where shall we go now, Harry?"

I suggested a favourite haunt of our boyhood, so we sculled across the river to a ruined abbey, which was

Digitized by Google

huddled on the heights of a neighbouring hill. Here as lads we had often mused upon the dead and gone monks, and had peopled the ruins with lean ascetics, starving themselves into spiritual ecstacies, or with jovial personages like Friar Tuck of the Robin Hood romances.

A jackdaw flying overhead reminded me of a ledge of earth and masonry, twenty feet from the ground, to which we had been accustomed to climb in pursuit of the callow birds.

I looked up and shook my head.

"Rather too steep for a man with a game arm."

For answer, Gerald began to climb with his old agility, and soon we two were lying stretched at full length on the small plateau at the top.

As neither of us seemed disposed to carry on a conversation, I surrendered myself to the drowsy influences of the afternoon, and fell asleep, like another Eutyches, to the preaching of the daws.

Suddenly I was aroused by a fierce grip on my arm.

"Listen," whispered Graham.

A sound of voices rose from beneath us, and I became very wide awake indeed when I recognised the tones of Isabel Alston and her friend, Miss Lacon.

"Here, let's get out of this," he went on, still in a whisper.

"Certainly not," was my reply. "You lie low like Brer Rabbit."

Just then a gust of merriment came to our ears, followed by a laughing protestation from Isabel Alston.

"I couldn't, really. I am not in the right frame of mind for it."

Miss Lacon's voice replied:

"But I insist. This is just the place for it. Many a heart has unburdened itself here in days gone by. Come now, make a clean breast of it. I know you have something on your mind."

"I don't know where to begin."

"Then I must put some leading questions to you. You have been behaving very badly to the young men of this neighbourhood, and I must ask if your intentions towards any of them are strictly honourable. Now, first of all, what about Major Weatherby?"

"Much too fat. I must have a lover who can play Romeo, not Falstaff."

"Percival Graves?"

"Too good. I couldn't live up to him. He thinks dancing wicked, and can only talk about what he calls the 'present distress in the Church.'"

Graham chuckled so loudly that he nearly disclosed our presence. Graves was his pet abhorrence.

"Then what about the hero of Nicholson's Nek? What about Gerald? Now, be very careful in your reply."

"Too colonial. Besides he is eight years older than I am, and has large feet."

"Isabel," said her friend, seriously, "he loves you very dearly—everybody knows that. Do you think you are treating him well?"

There was a long pause, then Miss Alston said tearfully, "I suppose I am very wicked. I know he cares for me, and yet I feel as if I can do nothing but play with him. It is very horrid of me."

"Would you mind if he went away?" continued her gentle inquisitor. "I heard this morning that he is likely to go to the front again."

"Go to the front," repeated Isabel in a tone of surprise and indignation. "Oh, he mustn't do that. I never thought of that."

I glanced at Graham. His face was white with suppressed excitement. His whole body trembled.

"Steady, old chap," I urged.

"I believe you really care for him after all," were the next words to come to our ears.

"Do you see this little silver ring?" Isabel answered. "I have worn it ever since he made it and gave it to me when I was a girl at school. I used to wear it on my finger, but when he went away I hung it round my neck."

"Why," she added, "I have always looked upon Gerald as mine. Dear, stupid fellow, I love him with all my heart."

"Now's your time," I ejaculated, "go in and win."

And Graham went in, with such impetuosity that through haste or excitement he missed his footing when half way down and literally fell at Isabel's feet.

"You mean creature to listen—oh, have you hurt yourself, Gerald?"

"Twisted my shoulder a little—that's all."

After a judicious interval, I ventured to peep over the edge.

Maud Lacon had withdrawn to a discreet distance, whilst Isabel's waist seemed to be supporting my old schoolfellow's disabled arm.

The sound of a kiss rose on the quiet air, and I became aware that Gerald Graham had distinctly wasted the cost of a cablegram.

DAVID GARTH.

Digitized by Google

EUGENE ST. MEDARD.

MANY years ago, I arrived in Paris a perfect stranger, and took my lodgings at Meurice's famous English hotel. Having been shown to my apartments and made some change in my toilet, I went out for a short stroll in that great and magnificent city—the heart, as it were, of the world.

I had some letters of introduction, but, as I had not yet presented them, I believed myself wholly unknown to a living soul in that metropolis, except to the clerks of the hotel, who had seen me register my name, and that either should have fixed that name in their recollection was something that my modesty had not yet permitted me to take into consideration.

Judge of my surprise therefore, when I had gone but a few steps from Meurice's, 42 Rue de Rivoli, towards the beautiful palace gardens nearly opposite, to hear myself addressed as follows:

"Will Monsieur Henry Neville have the kindness to answer me a few important questions?"

I turned to the speaker, and saw at a glance he was a total stranger to me—that I had never, to my knowledge, looked upon his face before.

He was a middle-aged man, of rather prepossessing appearance, with grey hair, eyebrows and moustache, and was dressed as a plain, substantial citizen.

"I will do myself the pleasure to oblige you," I replied, in a polite and courteous tone. "Permit me first to remark, however, that you have a little the advantage of me, in that you already know my name."

"Monsieur will please know me as Eugene St. Medard."

"Did we ever meet before?"

"It is Monsieur that has now become the questioner," rejoined the Frenchman, with a peculiar smile and a kind of formal bow, half dignified, half polite, as if he would have said the questions were only to come from his side.

Somehow I felt a trifle vexed and nettled at the look and tone, and remarked a little coldly:

"I take it for granted one has the same right to interrogate as the other."

The features of the stranger grew grave, as one who feels a little annoyed, and his reply was impressive, without being exactly stern.

"If Monsieur will be kind enough to waive his right in this instance," he said, "it may save us both some time and trouble."

I scarcely knew why—perhaps something in the look, tone and manner—but the idea now suddenly occurred to me that I was speaking to a man in authority; and I said, respectfully:

"Proceed, Monsieur St. Medard."

"Thank you, Monsieur. You are an Englishman?"

"I am."

"You are distantly related to the Earl of Malvern?"

"So distantly that his lordship could never get near enough to know our family," I replied pleasantly, not a little surprised that a French stranger should know so much about me, and wondering all the while to what result his questions might be tending.

"You were an only child?"

"Yes."

"Your parents are dead?"

"Yes."

"You were left a small inheritance, which you have lately converted into money and brought with you, thinking it not unlikely you might take a fancy to settle on the Continent?"

"All true, Monsieur; but your knowledge of me and my private affairs astonishes me."

"Let that pass. The family of his lordship, the Earl of Malvern, has been unfortunate; no near of kin remain to him."

"Two profligate sons of a deceased sister are the nearest, I believe."

"They are both dead, Monsieur."

"Dead!" exclaimed I, with a start, for this was news to me.

"One died of heart-disease in Germany, the other was stabbed to death in Rome."

"Are you sure?"

"Certainly, Monsieur."

"Both of them! This astonishes me still more! I had not heard of this!"

"I know it."

"It seems to me you know everything!" said I, with a stare of wonder.

Monsieur St. Medard smiled, and continued:

"You are now the heir presumptive, Monsieur?"

"If what you tell me is true, I am," exclaimed I, almost startled at the thought of being so near to an earldom—for the then lord was old and feeble, and might drop off at any minute.

"Do you know who is next of kin after yourself, Monsieur?" inquired my strange interrogator.

"I think I have read it is one William Byerly."

"Right. Do you know him?"

"Only by report."

Digitized by Google

"Personally?"

"No."

"Did report speak favourably of him?"

"I am sorry to say it did not."

"From what you heard, do you consider him an honest man?"

"I do not."

"As you alone now stand between him and an earldom after the death of the present lord, would you consider your life safe in his hands?"

"Before I answer this question, will you permit me to ask some two or three?" said I.

"Proceed, Monsieur."

"Are you William Byerly?"

"No."

"Are you related to him?"

"No."

"Are you a friend of his?"

"No."

"Do you intend to use my reply in a legal way?"

"No."

"Is your object in these questions friendly to me?"

"Yes."

"Then I will venture to say that I should not like under present circumstances, to trust my life in the hands of William Byerly, provided there were a single chance of his escaping detection in case of wilful murder."

"Very well. May I now proceed?"

"Yes, Monsieur."

"You will please answer each statement of mine as if a question were directly put. On your way to Dover a fellow-traveller made your acquaintance?"

"Yes."

"You first saw him at Tunbridge?"

"Yes."

"You first noticed him while you were taking some refreshments at a restaurant?"

"Yes."

"He came up alongside of you, having a carpet-bag in his hand, and made some commonplace remark about the weather?"

"Yes," I continued to answer, getting more and more astonished every minute.

What could it all mean? Had every action of my life been noted, and for what purpose? My strange interrogator proceeded:

"This stranger was dressed in a black coat, with black cloth buttons, striped trousers, a parti-coloured tie, a white hat and patent-leather boots?"

"Yes."

"He had reddish hair, reddish whiskers, a florid complexion, and wore a green patch over his left eye?"

"Yes."

"After some commonplace remarks, he ventured to ask you which way you were travelling?"

"Yes."

"You replied you were going to Paris?"

"Yes."

"He was delighted to hear it, because he was going there also, and it was very pleasant, in a foreign country, to have a travelling companion from one's native land?"

"Yes."

"On the whole, he made so favourable an impression upon your unsuspicious mind, that you were quite pleased to have his company?"

"Yes."

"On your way to Dover he gave you some account of his past life—of his trials, struggles, disappointments and successes?"

"Yes."

"He was an inventor—a man of genius, who had lived to benefit mankind and himself? England owed much to him, and so did France, and so, in fact, did the whole world?"

"His statements were to that effect."

"Very well, Monsieur, as I have shown you that I know the nature of your conversation, it is not necessary that I weary you with detail. This man, this inventor, was going to Paris to take out a patent for a new motive power—one that was destined to revolutionize the world. He was very sorry he could not show it to you then; but until his papers should be filed in the proper department, he would not trust his own father with the secret?"

"All correct, Monsieur."

"Now, most unfortunately, as it appeared, on reaching Dover, where you were to take the regular steamer for Calais, your new acquaintance, in some way unknown to you, received the startling intelligence that his father was lying at the point of death, which would require him to post to London immediately; and would you, in whom he had every confidence, do him the favour to take charge of a small box, containing some important papers, and, on your arrival in Paris, open it, and deliver them to their proper addresses?"

"Yes, Monsieur," said I, becoming most intensely interested.

"Curiosity, Monsieur," continued the Frenchman, "is not one of your failings, I am happy to say, or you might not now be living to hear what I have to reveal."

"Good Heavens!" ejaculated I, "what is coming now?"

"*That same box, Monsieur, is an infernal machine, intended to destroy your life the moment you open it!*"

"Can it be?" I exclaimed, with a thrill of horror—"can this be possible?"

"I will prove it. Get it, and come with me before a commissary of police!"

"Pray, Monsieur, who are you?"

"A secret agent of police."

I hastened to get the box, handling it with great care' and together we proceeded to the nearest commissary' when, with my permission, it was split open, and lo! to my astonished and horrified gaze was revealed a row of small, loaded pistols, so arranged that, had I unlocked and opened the box in the ordinary way, they would have been discharged into my body.

On my subsequently asking for an explanation concerning this mysterious affair—how so much connected with myself and others had become known to the police of a foreign city—I was gravely but politely answered:

"It is not allowed us, Monsieur, to reveal our sources of information. We are happy to have thwarted the plans of a villain and saved your life."

I never knew who that villain was, though I always suspected Byerly of having a hand in it. I do not know that my life was ever again attempted, but certain it is I never again permitted intimacy from an unknown stranger.

On my accession to the title and estates, which occurred the following year, I did not forget to reward Eugene St. Medard, *alias* Henri Pouget, secret agent of police, as I thought he deserved to be rewarded for the preservation of my life; and to this day I have not ceased to wonder over the perfection of the French system of police.

O. S. S.

Digitized by Google

Cute Constable Cobbles.

In the Commercial Room of the Black Magpie Hotel, near the Central Station, there entered, one evening, a faultlessly dressed and singularly frank and agreeable looking man of thirty.

He was followed very respectfully by Boots with some sample boxes bearing, in gold letters, the announcement:

"Trimmer and Jackson, Button Factory, Leeds."

"My name is Jones," said this imposing guest. "I shall stay some days. If anyone calls for me shortly, please tell them I am here, in the Commercial Room."

"I will, sir," said Boots.

A few minutes afterwards, he re-appeared bringing two such persons with him.

These also had fashionable clothes and pleasant, honest-looking countenances.

On Boots retiring, the visitors carefully looked round to see that no other people were in the apartment.

Then one of them exclaimed to Jones:

"Hallo, Bob! what on earth is this new game you are at? Wiring us from London to come to this town of all others? It's no use playing anything here. There's only one big jeweller in the place and the police here are as smart as smart can be. There's no chance!"

"I know that," replied Bob, "and that's why I've chosen it. There is no genius, no charm, in going to anywhere where you can make your living too easy."

"That's all very well for geniuses like you," put in the first speaker, "but it don't suit men of mere honest talent like us two. We daren't risk it."

"I quite admit that it's not safe for a pair of dunderheads like you to live anywhere out of a workhouse," answered Bob, "but I, who am, as you quite truthfully remark, a man of very superlative genius, take advantage of all difficulties to work mine ease the better thereby. Listen to me. A fine jewellers' shop—Messrs. Glitrums and Goldie of the High Street here—have £20,000 of splosh locked up in their safe every night. This safe is in the centre of a town supervised by a police so efficient that no professional communistic expert has ever attempted to get at it. Why? Because they never could do it and neither could I. The only man who could do that stroke here is a policeman himself."

"You've gone stark dotty," exclaimed both hearers.

"Nothing of the kind," retorted Bob. "All that is wanted is a constable who is known to be specially cute. That constable I have found. He is a beauty of the name of Cobbles and he is going to be on the High Street beat to-night. The rest is too easy."

"And do you mean to say you are about to be such a gull as to go pards with a policeman?" asked the audience in dumfounderment.

"Not so silly," replied Bob, "The policeman is going to let me rob the safe and skedddadle away comfortably with the whole of it, not to oblige me in any way and not for any share of the swag, but in the strict execution of his duty."

"Incredible!" cried both.

"Nothing of the kind. As easy as anything I've ever done. Listen to me."

And they listened.

* * * * *

It was a black, cold night. Constable Cobbles was on duty in the High Street, carefully wearing out the pavement with his fine flat soles.

"Constable Cobbles, I presume," said a well dressed gentlemanly man.

"The same, sir," said Cobbles.

"Don't you know me?"

"I can't say that I do, sir."

"Well that is strange, I would not have thought that of you who I've heard of as one of the smartest officers in this town."

Cobbles stood dumb with a mixture of shame and pride.

"I'm detective Ketchem of Scotland Yard," continued the gentleman.

"What him all the force is talking of? He as ran the great Brixton burglars to earth last week?"

"The same. I have just come from London close on the heels of two of the most desperate and clever men in the burglary business. From information received, I have sure grounds for believing they have planned for to-night a most daring robbery in this town."

"Good lor!" exclaimed Cobbles.

"Yes and it's near here and very near this hour that it's to come off. It's to be on the premises of Messrs. Glitrums and Goldie."

"You don't say so;"

"Yes. They got their particulars from a man lately discharged from that firm. He is keeping snug away in London. They have, from wax moulds, had keys made of the doors. In fact every preparation is perfect and the whole scheme most ingenious."

Digitized by Google

"Ha! ha! this is grand," said Cobbles, "how they will grin on the wrong side of their noddles when they find we've nicely copped them in the very act."

"Just so. And now Cobbles, to business. I usually work these little jobs single handed and, when I come into a town on a trail, I lay low till I've got my prisoners before I report myself to the local station. For I don't believe in doing that beforehand and letting the local chiefs get any of the glory or very likely bungle the thing by their meddling with it."

"There's something in that," said Cobbles.

"But this is a case where two are wanted. I must have an assistant, and he must be a man of superior intelligence and one with the true qualification of a detective—a man who can keep his mouth shut till exactly the right time for letting out."

"That's just it. You've hit off the definition of a smart officer to a tee, sir," said Cobbles.

"Quite so," replied Ketchem. "Furthermore, my long experience enables me to tell a man's brains by a first glance at his face, and I can see that you have 'em. They are—I admit—rare in the force—but you have 'em."

"It's very good of you to say that, sir; and I'm pleased to have it from a man of your 'igh standing," said Cobbles, bursting with satisfaction.

"Quite so. Now I wonder whether you know for what particular function I want an assistant in this case."

"It's because there are two doors to Messrs Glitrums and Goldie's premises. One in front and one in the alley in the rear. You want me to keep watch at the rear one whilst you have hold of the front one," promptly replied Cobbles, proud of his clear brains.

"Precisely. Then is that agreed?"

"I am your man," exclaimed Cobbles, exultant.

"Right! But first let me give you a professional wrinkle for your benefit. You have taken it for granted I am what I represented myself to be—Detective Ketchem of Scotland Yard. Now, for all you know, I might have been a burglar myself."

"I 'umbly apologise, Sir, for not having gone through that formality; but I could tell in a minute that you were a detective," answered Cobbles confidently.

"Another item which proves to me, Cobbles, that you are a man of clear perception. But still, the right thing is never to overlook official formalities," and the great man took out of his breast pocket some papers which he was just about to unfold when another idea seemed to occur to Cobbles. He stayed the gentleman's hand and said:

"No, don't trouble, sir. Allow me in my turn to make a cute remark. If you were a rogue you would never be such a jay as not to come properly prepared for such a game as this, and have ready faked, all papers required."

Mr. Ketchem took a keen side squint at Cobbles, with an uncomfortable feeling as to whether this innocent looking clodhopper was or was not talking irony.

Suddenly, Mr. Ketchem exclaimed:

"Hark! I hear wheels in the distance! The plan is for them to come in a light dog cart, similar to the one owned by Mr. Goldie. Quick! Come into the shadow."

Cobbles obeyed with alacrity.

They were not a moment too soon. For they barely had time to conceal themselves, before a natty dog cart turned into the top of the High Street. It rattled past, followed swiftly by the men in the shadow.

Two gentlemen were on the dog cart. They pulled

TO METAMORPHOSE FAT PERSONS.

CORPULENCY AND THE CURE. By F. CECIL RUSSELL. London: (Woburn House, Store Street, Bedford Square.)

"O that this too, too solid flesh would melt! has been the cry of countless mortals who have tipped the beam at several stones over their ordinary weight. They have sought relief of their burden of doctors, only in too many cases to find their advisers hopelessly at variance as to the methods to be employed for reducing them to the normal proportions. They have also had to combat the general but mistaken notion that excessive corpulence cannot be banished without danger to the general health of the body. Excessive fatness can never be considered a natural or healthy state of the body, and should be subjected to some sort of remedial treatment by everyone attacked by it. There has been no lack of attempts made in this direction by both medical men and scientists, but either the prescribed remedies have failed in affording permanent relief, or the system of cure recommended has been unfeasible for general adoption. Neither the one result nor the other, however, has attended the system of combating this malady prescribed by Mr. F. Cecil Russell; rather, from the fact that his work on the subject has just entered upon its eighteenth edition, must it be concluded that the system bearing his name has passed a very fair trial stage. In this little work the origin of fat, its dangers, symptoms, and so-called remedies are treated in detail, the workings of the latter explained, and the fallacy of trying superficial remedies clearly demonstrated. The system appears to be perfectly simple. It consists in taking three doses daily of a decoction made from common plants that (with one exotic exception) can be seen in our British meadows. If one reduces weight in a harmless way at the rate of 3lb. to 4lb. per week, and enjoys the moderate use of alcohol, it is very evident that this method is far away in front of the foreign treatment, which only makes the same reduction, and upon stringent regulations that are absolutely hostile to whisky drinking and almost impossible to maintain. One of the peculiarities of his system is that many patients upon reduction of superfluous fatty tissue become so healthy, and with an increased appetite, that they actually eat more food than before, and yet careful weighing testifies a daily decrease of flesh. The book is well worth reading."—*The Birmingham Daily Gazette*, July 3rd, 1900.

"DELIGHTFUL" TREATMENT FOR CURING CORPULENCE.

"CORPULENCY AND THE CURE.—People with a tendency to stoutness, and those who must be frankly classed as fat, will welcome any cure or alleviation of their condition, more especially this sultry weather. The process of clearing any physical disorder is so generally the converse of 'delightful' that the use of this and similar terms in reference to Mr. F. C. Russell's now popular treatment for corpulency naturally attracts special attention. These terms are to be found in a large number of the letters included in the just issued eighteenth edition of Mr. Russell's little volume of 256 pages, 'Corpulency and the Cure' (Woburn House, Store Street, Bedford Square, London, W.C.). These communications are from persons of both sexes, and it is apparent that their number is represented by thousands annually, who have found in this system of treatment a safe, rapid, and permanent cure for excessive fatness. This testimony forms in the aggregate, indeed, a remarkable record of the rapid reduction of excessive adipose tissue, and those who have personal reasons for being interested in the subject should send to the above address four penny stamps for a copy (post free) of Mr. Russell's notably suggestive little book. 'I think the treatment most delightful,' writes one out of large numbers of equally enthusiastic correspondents. And the expressions 'Admirable tonic,' 'Splendid stuff,' 'A delicious beverage, mixed with mineral waters' are of constant recurrence in this singularly interesting correspondence. The details given by many of the writers of these letters as to the result of the treatment fully justify the use of such eulogistic phrases. The experience, too, must be rendered still more delightful by the knowledge which may be gained from a perusal of Mr. Russell's book, that his preparation is a pure vegetable product, without any admixture of mineral poisons which are too frequently administered. Mr. Russell also prints in his book the recipe for the preparation."—*Nottingham Daily Express*, June 30th, 1900.

FREE.—SPECIAL OFFER.—FREE.

To all Readers of "Short Stories" suffering from Obesity.

Mr. Russell will be pleased to forward, post free, a copy of his book, "CORPULENCY AND THE CURE," 256 pages, in a sealed plain envelope to all applicants forwarding 4d. in stamps to Woburn House, Store Street, London, W.C.

Digitized by Google

up in front of Messrs Glitrums and Goldie's imposing establishment with its steel revolving shutters down and its black upper windows staring blindly into the night.

One gentleman alighted, opened the side door with a latch key, and went in.

"Now is the moment, Cobbles! Up you go the side alley to the back door! Sharp is the word!" whispered Mr. Ketchem.

But Cobbles now seemed much less alert in his movements than at first.

"Sir," whispered he, "had not you better go to the back and leave me to the front? You'll excuse me, sir, but your muscles are nothing like mine—and——"

"Don't be an idiot, Cobbles!" whispered Ketchem. "Do as I tell you! Don't you see the men will be off with the swag before we nab them if you dawdle like this?"

But the idiot had grown aggravatingly cogitative.

"It'll take 'em over ten minutes," whispered he, "before they can get off in that cart with anything worth taking. And I notice that one of the gents is remaining in the cart."

"Woodenhead," whispered Mr. Ketchem, whose face was blue with rage, "I warn you! Go at once to the back or I will give of you such a report to the Chief Constable as will get you kicked out of the force to-morrow morning, for the greatest dunderhead that ever wore blue trousers."

"You'll excuse me, sir," whispered the dunderhead, humbly, "but I remember that the back door is a narrow one and consequently you there alone can easily bar the passage of any number through it. Whereas, in front here, there is a wide door and two men and a horse to tackle and I am a young man of large and superior build. Every girl in the town will tell you that," continued the man in blue mildly.

"You'll drive me mad if you stop here a single second longer!" came from the parched throat of Mr. Ketchem, in gasping gurgles.

But Cobbles became more and more prosy in his conversation.

"Have you noticed, sir," he whispered, "how an idea grows in the mind by time and conversation, sir? An idea which, when first told, sometimes looks sometimes like something quite another after I've done a bit of a cackle all round it. For instance, there's another aspect of this fine notion of yours, sir, which has only just struck my thick head. It is this—but I'll tell it you later on. Meanwhile my place is at the back door, as you say, sir. Yes, sir, I'm off. See you again shortly."

Mr. Ketchem looked at the blank face of the ass as he disappeared into the side alley.

"Yes," reflected Ketchem, "I'm quite sure he is an ass. So that's all right."

The ass, as soon as he had turned off into the alley out of sight, made, with a swift rush, to a heap of stones in a corner, and filled his pockets with them. Remarking to himself complacently while he did so:

"Every ornamental accomplishment becomes useful some day if you only wait long enough—as the learned lady said when she found her manner of speaking Latin could scare the tramps away. I'm the champion fielder at cricket for twenty miles round. It's a-going to get me a fine rise in the police force to-night, unless I'm very much mistaken."

He then took a stone, and with a beautiful artistic aim, sent it clean into the centre of the middle back window of Messrs. Glitrum's and Goldie's establishment.

The crash of the glass resounded through the house like a shock of thunder.

Hardly had the concussion stopped than Cobbles was down at the end of the alley peeping round the front corner.

In half a second more he saw Mr. Ketchem and the gentleman, each with a packet in hand, rush out of the front door and scramble into the cart like grim death.

But before the last gentleman had got clear up the wheel to reach the seat, another artistically directed stone had landed on the first gentleman's skull and sent him, in a dream of stars, to the bottom of the vehicle.

And although not one quarter of a minute had elapsed between this occurrence and the starting of the horse at a wild rush up the High Street, yet the animal had not got his first pair of legs lifted ere a second masterpiece of projectile manipulation arrived just between the shoulder blades of the second gentleman in a way which made him suddenly howl for his mother and fall over the third gentleman, who was driving in front; and Cobbles had reached the cart and was hanging on to the back thereof.

The driver, and only remaining person in the citadel capable of combat, was now in an interesting position. He had to keep the horse from rushing them all into a lamp-post, or get over to the back of the cart and defend himself from Cobbles climbing into it.

In desperation he essayed the latter course; but the end of it came in a way which neither of them anticipated. The horse did not run into a lamp-post, nor did Cobbles get kicked off the cart.

The third man's entire weight being added to the weight of Cobbles dragging on to the back of the cart—which was a two wheeled one, so overbalanced the front that the horse, lifted off the ground by the strap running round him, and he, feeling so uncanny thereby, hanged his mind and stopped.

And the recoil, acting on the body of the third man, sent his chest over the back board in a way so handy for Cobbles to land his fist into, that he did so. And so effectively was this done that the third man went likewise, for the time, into the land of stars.

After this, Cobbles rammed the three down into the cart, one over the other, and, sitting on the top of them with a whip ready over their heads to keep matters peaceful on the way, drove them triumphantly to the police station, humming, as he went, those touching lines of a well-known music-hall poet:

"Do you take me for a silly, do you take me for a jay?
P'raps you think that I'm as simple as can be,
But you make a great mistake
For you'll find I'm wide awake,
It's no use of you to play your tricks on me."

Gaspard George.

Digitized by Google

THE
BEST OF ALL BEVERAGES
AND THE
CHEAPEST.

GOOD!
IT'S
MASON'S
Extract
of Herbs

8 Gallons
Prime Beer
for 6d.

Sample Free for 9 Stamps.
AGENTS WANTED EVERYWHERE.

NEWBALL & MASON,
NOTTINGHAM.

KOKO
FOR THE HAIR

UNDER ROYAL PATRONAGE.

KOKO for the HAIR is a tonic, cleansing, invigorating preparation, it eradicates scurf and dandriff, prevents hair from falling or turning grey, promotes growth, contains no dye or greasy substance, is the most cleanly of all hair preparations and invariably gives satisfaction.

OLD PEOPLE LIKE IT for its wonderful power to *invigorate decayed hair*, and induce an entirely new growth when that is possible.

MIDDLE-AGED PEOPLE LIKE IT, because it *prevents them from getting bald*, keeps dandriff away, and makes the hair grow thick and strong.

YOUNG LADIES LIKE IT. As a dressing, because it gives the hair a *beautiful glossy lustre*, ensures a *luxuriant growth*, and enables them to dress it and keep it in any style that may be desired.

CHILDREN LIKE IT. Because it keeps the hair and scalp cool and clean, *allays irritation*, and keeps the hair in whatever position desired.

THEY ALL LIKE IT. Because it is as *pure as crystal*, perfectly colourless, contains no poisonous substance, no sugar of lead, sulphur, nitrate of silver, or grease, and does not soil or colour *the scalp, face, or the most delicate fabric in clothing.*

1/-, 2/6, and 4/6, of all Chemists, Hairdressers, &c., everywhere

PHOTOGRAPHS IN COLOURS.
2/6
As an advertisement I will forward a photograph in natural colours, by an entirely new chemical process, ready for framing, to anyone sending carte or cabinet and Postal Order for 2/6, with 3 stamps postage. The delicacy of the tints produced cannot be approached by hand-painting. Size of frame required 10 by 8 ins. Two copies sent for 4/-.—J. LARETTE, 5 Portland Road, Notting Hill, London.

TOO STOUT
I was for years; by chance I came across a simple home remedy that reduced me from 17st. to 10st. 12lb., and I will willingly send particulars **free** to any sufferer enclosing stamp. Mrs. L. E. FELL, 195 Oxford Street, London, W.

SILVER QUEEN CYCLES.

IMMENSE STOCK. New and secondhand, FROM 10s. MONTHLY. Carriage paid. Free wheels and rim brakes **Illustrated Price Lists Post Free.**—THE SILVER QUEEN CYCLE Co. Ltd., 221 Tottenham Court Rd, London, W

WHY BE FAT?
When a lady, who has discovered a simple means of Self-Cure will be happy to send particulars of same to any sufferer from this distressing complaint. Free on receipt of stamped addressed envelope. ADDRESS:
Mrs. TREVOR WELLS,
63 HIGH HOLBORN, LONDON, W.C.

NOSE
MACHINES. LEES RAY. S. S. Dept., South Castle St. Liverpool, is a specialist on Ugly and Red Noses. Send stamp for particulars of his patent scientific Nose Improvers. Red Nose Cure, medically approved, 3/9. Outstanding Ear Machines 11/6.

Indispensable with Fruit, and Delicious, Nourishing!!
DEVONSHIRE CREAM
(Really Genuine.) In Patent Air-tight Tins. ½-lb., 1/4; 1-lb., 2/4; 2-lb., 4/-, including Tin and Postage.
Mrs. Conyers,
MORCHARD BISHOP, DEVON.

SEND FOR
DR. EVANS'S (U.S.A.)
Pamphlet on Nervous Diseases of All Kinds.
THIS PAMPHLET describes all the symptoms which arise from Diseases of the NERVOUS SYSTEM. It is up to-date, having been compiled after years of labour and experience in the Treatment of these Maladies. It is complete, practical, and can be readily understood and acted upon. It gives pure and simple advice to Sufferers. Send stamped addressed envelope to GEORGE WRIGHT, ESQ., Colne House, REMBRANDT ROAD, LEE, LONDON, S.E. (*Name this Paper.*)

KEATING'S POWDER
KILLS BUGS FLEAS MOTHS BEETLES
TINS 3D 6D & 1S
THE NEW BELLOWS 9D

JUNO CYCLES FOR LADIES & GENTS.
THE VERY BEST.
Discount for Cash.
FREE or FIXED WHEELS
The most up-to-date.
Carriage Paid.

Monthly.
£8 10s. ... 14/2
£11 11s. ... 19/3
£12 ... 20/-
£12 12s. ... 21/-
£14 14s. ... 24/6
Write for New Season's List.
LISTS POST FREE
JUNO Cycles and Accessories (over 100 pages) sent Post Free.
Leatherly Hard Wood Cycle Stand, 2/6. Handlebar Basket, 1/-
JUNO ... ... £10 ... 16/8 monthly.
Lady Safety ... £11 ... 18/4 monthly.
METROPOLITAN MACHINISTS CO. LTD.,
Juno Cycle School, and Works, 75, 76 Bishopsgate Street Without E.C., and Piccadilly Circus, London, W.

ALL FAT PEOPLE
can safely **Reduce Weight and cure Corpulency permanently** by taking **TRILENE TABLETS** (Regd.) for a few weeks. They are small, agreeable, harmless, and never fail to IMPROVE both HEALTH and FIGURE without Change of Diet. An English Countess writes: "*Your Trilene Tablets act admirably.*"
Send 2s. 6d. to **THE TRILENE CO.**, Sole Proprietors, 66 Finsbury Pavement, London.
SAMPLES OF TESTIMONIALS.
Princess Liechtenstein writes from Landsberg, Austria: "Pray send your excellent tablets directly." Mr. Canham, 87 Alexandra Road, Norwich: "Tablets cured my wife of extreme stoutness; it has never returned." Mrs. H. Cox, 28 Watnall Road, Hucknall Torkard, writes: "The Tablets reduced me 1½ stone." Mrs. S. Alexander, 102 Dixon Street, New Swindon, says: "They reduced me 23lb., and I am cured." Mrs. Darnley-Smith, of Landscove Vicarage, Ashburton, says: "Tablets have reduced me very much." Mrs. Crossley, of Rose Hill, Torver, Comston, says: "I weigh much less and can breathe so much easier; I am delighted."

Digitized by Google

The Brain Gymnasium

IN these competitions a prize of £2 will be awarded each week to the competitor whose attempt we receive giving the correct solutions of all the puzzles. If more than one is absolutely correct the prize of £2 will be given to the first correct attempt dealt with.

If no lists of absolutely correct solutions are sent in the first prize will be awarded to the competitor whose attempt is first dealt with showing the fewest mistakes.

Each week we shall award in addition to the above, either ten of our silver plated pencil-cases or ten popular six shilling novels, to be distributed amongst the competitors whose attempts are absolutely correct and have failed to win the first prize, or, if no complete lists of correct solutions are received, to those whose attempts show the fewest mistakes.

Write all your solutions on one sheet of paper, putting the number against each. Post the batch in an envelope marked "Brain Gymnasium," to reach the Editor, SHORT STORIES, 18 Henrietta Street, Covent Garden, W.C., by first post on Monday, August 6th, 1900.

Readers are invited to submit puzzles, acrostics, conundrums, word-squares, etc., for publication on this page. A gold-plated pencil-case will be given to each reader whose attempts are used. All attempts must be vouched for as original, and, of course, it is distinctly understood that the sender of a puzzle must neither compete in the competition nor divulge to anyone the solution. Any reader found infringing this rule will be severely dealt with.

No. 181.

WHEN is 9 the same as $4\frac{1}{2}$?

No. 182.

IF a clock takes five seconds in which to strike six, how long does it take to strike twelve?

No. 183.

I RUN, but without any exertion on my part. Behead me, I am a bird. Change my head, I am an article found in all houses.

No. 184.

RE-ARRANGE the following letters so as to form two word-squares, the connecting word of which means keepers:

AAA B D EEEEEEE LL NNNN OO RRR SS VVV WWW.

No. 185.

THE present of my FIRST reversed,
I truly hope you may;
Turned round aright it's often used
To mean the present day.

My NEXT an interjection, which
A health or toast implies;
To me and you what different scenes
This word will symbolize.

To find my WHOLE will prove a task,
Which all of you must face,
And yet your search will be in vain,
It's not in any place.

No. 186.

A COUNTRY of Europe; a river in England; a celebrated painter; a river in Scotland; an island in the Mediterranean; a city in Russia; a town in Portugal; mountains in Russia; a river in Italy; a town in England.

My initials, read downwards, give the name of an important English town.

RESULT OF BRAIN GYMNASIUM.

Nos. 156 to 162.

THE prize of £2 has been awarded this week to Mr. Edgar Baynes, of Ealing, W., whose solution was the first correct one dealt with.

A copy of "Settled Out of Court," by G. B. Burgin, has been sent to:

W. Hannay, Tollington Park, N.
George Morton, Dublin.
Mrs. L. Ellis, East Stonehouse, Devon.
Pte. A. E. Timewell, Stonehouse, Plymouth.
O. Parker, Fulham, S.W.
L. Hennessy, Dowlais, S. Wales
C. Arnold, Hove.
W. McSparrow, Blantyre, Lanarkshire.
Dr. Cooke, Kew.
F. Baynes, London, W.

SOLUTIONS TO PUZZLES.

Nos. 163 to 168.

No. 163. $99\frac{99}{99} = 100$.

No. 164.

R I N G
I D O L
N O R A
G L A S G O W
G A G E
O G R E
W E E K

No. 165. Chair, hair, pair, air, fir, fin.

No. 166. TURPENTINE.

No. 167. "The pen is mightier than the sword."

No. 168. FOOT-BALL-MATCH. Football match.

A BOOK FOR WOMEN.

THE ART OF BEAUTY.

By a Toilet Specialist.

Small Crown 8vo. Cloth. Price, 1s.

Some of the twenty chapters are:

The Cure of Stoutness ... ... Chap. I.
The Cure of Leanness ... ... ,, II.
The Figure ... ... ,, IV.
Bad Complexions: How to Cure Them ,, V.
The Complexion ... ... ,, VI.
The Hair in Health ... ... ,, VII.
The Hair in Ill-Health ... ... ,, VIII.
Moles, Warts, and Superfluous Hair ,, XIII.

C. ARTHUR PEARSON Limited, Henrietta Street, W.C.

SHORT STORIES ADVERTISEMENT RATES.

Single column, per inch, per insertion	£0 10 0
Double ,, ,, ...	1 0 0
Full page inside, facing page of matter, either white paper or 2nd or 3rd page of cover, or back page, per insertion	10 0 0
Half-page ,, ,, ...	5 0 0
Quarter-page ,, ,, ...	2 10 0
Eighth-page ,, ,, ...	1 5 0
Front page, whole ,, ,, ...	12 10 0
,, half	6 5 0

All spaces above one-eighth of a page are charged at per page rate.

Series discount: 5 per cent. for 13, 10 per cent. for 26, 15 per cent. for 52 insertions.

Black blocks are charged 25 per cent. extra. All advertisements are subject to approval. All copy must be sent in by Noon on Tuesday, July 31st, if intended for the issue on sale August 14th, and dated August 18th. The Proprietors reserve the right to hold over or suspend the insertion of any advertisement without prejudice to other insertions on order. All communications should be addressed to the Advertisement Manager, "Pearson's Weekly" Offices, Henrietta Street, London, W.C.

Printed and Published by C. ARTHUR PEARSON LTD., at Pearson's Weekly Buildings, Henrietta Street, London, W.C.

Digitized by Google

£3,350 IN CASH PRIZES

A FEW OF THE PRINCIPAL PRIZE-WINNERS LAST TIME WERE:

£100 IN CASH. WILLIAM SILL, 12 Winstanley Place, Bouston, near Kendal, Westmoreland.
£30 IN CASH. VALENTINE CAMBRILL, Monks Horton, Kent.
£15 IN CASH. OWEN OWENS, Maldwyn Stores, Llandegfan, Menai Bridge.
£10 IN CASH. H. L'ESTRANGE BURGESS, Bayham House, Sevenoaks.

In the first place make up the best sentence you can out of seven words, each word commencing with a letter of **"BRITISH."** Thus, for example: **"British Rule In Transvaal Is Safeguarding Humanity."** You can cut out and use the following form if you like.

Be sure and mark envelope, left-hand top corner, "Short Stories," and forward to A.B. Cycle Co. Limited, 59, 60, 67, 68 & 69 Chancery Lane, Holborn.

Competition closes on Wednesday, Aug. 15th, 1900.

I*_____ of†_____

hereby declare that the sentence below is the only one I have sent in for this competition.

B	R	I	T
I	S	H	Date of Posting.

Don't forget to enclose two penny stamps.

* State whether Mr., Mrs., or Miss. † Full address to ensure result reaching you.

We will give you full details of the above cash prizes, in which there is nothing to pay for any prize, and where every competitor is a Cash Prize-Winner, when we send you the results of this Competition, in which for the best solution we offer:

A £23 A.B. CYCLE FREE,

AND FURTHER PRIZES OF

2nd Class Prizes ... £23 Cycle for £9
3rd Class Prizes ... £23 Cycle for £10
4th Class Prizes ... £23 Cycle for £11
5th Class Prizes ... £23 Cycle for £12
6th Class Prizes ... £23 Cycle for £13
Consolation Prizes ... £23 Cycle for £14

53 Cycles have been won Free of Cost.

FULL NAMES AND ADDRESSES CAN BE HAD ON APPLICATION.

TAKE PARTICULAR NOTICE.—Competition is NOW OPEN, and CLOSES on Wednesday, August 15th, 1900.

Enclose two penny stamps for postage of Result of Competition. As so few are able to call and inspect the machines, **we guarantee to refund the full amount paid for any prize if the owner is not perfectly satisfied** with it on arrival. Results will be declared as soon as possible. Prizes unclaimed in a week or ten days are passed on to the next winner in rotation.

£100 **If you can purchase our cheapest machine, brand new, from us, or an agent, dealer, shipper, or factor can buy one for less than FIFTEEN SOVEREIGNS, we will promptly hand you a £100 BANK OF ENGLAND NOTE.**

Send your reply to the Managing Director, marking your envelope *Short Stories*,

A.B. CYCLE CO. LTD., 59, 60, 67, 68 & 69 CHANCERY LANE, HOLBORN, W.C.

Advertisements should be sent to "Short Stories" Advertisement Department, Henrietta Street, London, W.C.

Digitized by Google

WASHES EVERYTHING

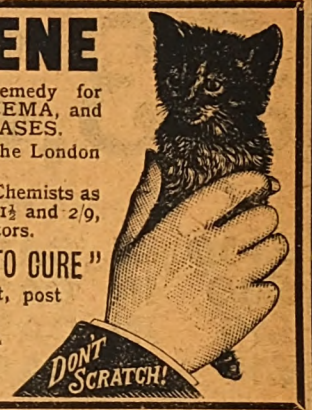
TO BE HAD OF ALL GROCERS &c.
MANUFACTORY: DUKINFIELD, MANCHESTER.
SCRIVEN

PARASITENE

is a new and important remedy for GOUT, RINGWORM, ECZEMA, and all IRRITANT SKIN DISEASES.

Prescribed by members of the London Medical Profession.

Can be obtained from all Chemists as a Lotion or an Ointment at 1/1½ and 2/9, or Post Free from the Proprietors.

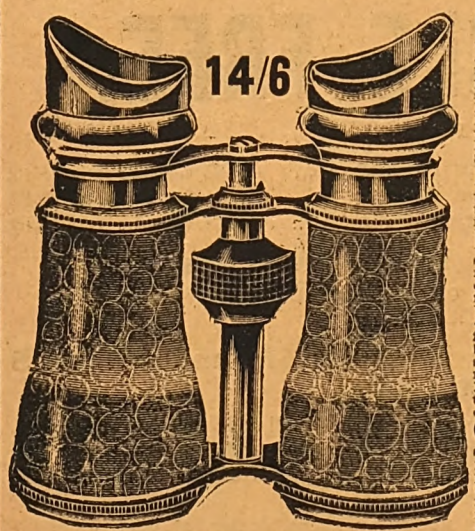


"SKIN DISEASES & HOW TO CURE"
By Parasitene Treatment, post free from
The WEDNESFIELD CHEMICAL SYNDICATE Limited,
WOLVERHAMPTON.

ZEBRA Grate Polish

No Hard Work.

A Free Trial FOR 2\6.



WE will send post paid to any reader of *Short Stories* on receipt of **2 6** one pair of these handsome Field and Marine Glasses. Price, complete with Crocodile Leather Case and Sling, only **14/6.**

IF you do not approve of them we will return your deposit in full.

IF you approve of them, you send us **2/-** on receipt, and **2/-** each month for five months.

BUT should you prefer to send the balance at once, send only **10/6** more, as we allow **1/6** discount to those who pay cash.

OR you may send **13/-** at once, and if you do not approve of the Glasses we will refund the money if returned in 7 days.

A PAIR OF ELEGANT FIELD GLASSES

That can be focussed to suit **ANY SIGHT** (Old or Young) sent Post Free..... **FOR** **13/-** **CASH.**
OR supplied on Monthly Payments (see above).

J. N. MASTERS LTD., JEWELLERS, RYE, SUSSEX.

MASTERS' GRAND VALUE.

J.N.MASTERS, Ltd RYE.

ONE OF THE BEST

and most fully illustrated catalogues of Watches, Jewellery, Clocks, and one thousand articles at prices 20 per cent. below London, will be sent post free to any address in the world.

☛ **In Case complete, 6d. extra.**

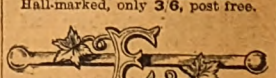
MISS WESTON, The Sailor's Friend, writes in her Magazine, "Ashore and Afloat": "If anyone makes a trial by writing to J. N. MASTERS, they will not be disappointed."

Masters' Registered Design.

HALL-MARKED MIZPAH BROOCH.
Two hearts mounted on bar, bound with lover's knot of fine cord.
Silver, 5/- Gold, 21/- Post Free.

ANY NAME CAN BE HAD.
Silver, 2/- Gold, 20/-
Your own name same price. *Government hall-marked.*

Real Gold Curb Brooch.
Hall-marked, only **3/6,** post free.



ANY LETTER CAN BE HAD.
Silver, 2/6. Gold, 6/6, hall-marked.

J. N. MASTERS Ltd., Jewellers, RYE, SUSSEX.

Advertisements should be sent to "Short Stories" Advertisement Department, Henrietta Street, London, W.C.

Digitized by Google

BEGIN OUR NEW SERIAL TO-DAY.

SHORT STORIES

A WEEKLY MAGAZINE FOR HOME AND TRAIN

No. 605. FOR WEEK ENDING AUGUST 4TH, 1900. [ONE PENNY.

EYES RIGHT! HEAD RIGHT!
STOMACH RIGHT! ALL'S RIGHT!

WITH THOSE WHO TAKE

BEECHAM'S PILLS

"WORTH A GUINEA A BOX" FOR ALL

Bilious and Nervous Disorders,
Sick Headache, Constipation,
Wind and Pains in the Stomach,
Impaired Digestion, Disordered Liver,
and Female Ailments.

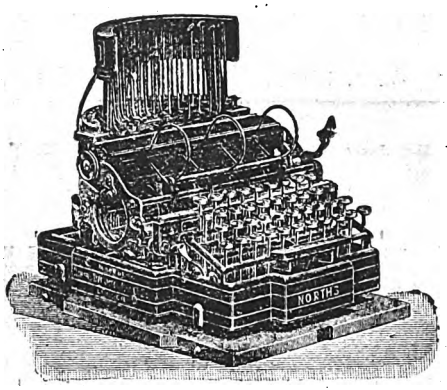
OVER SIX MILLION BOXES SOLD YEARLY.

Sold everywhere in Boxes, **1s. 1½d.** *(56 Pills)* *and* **2s. 9d.** *each.*

Digitized by Google

NORTH'S TYPEWRITER.

THE PREMIER MACHINE OF ENGLISH MAKE.



CATALOGUES—Apply

27a LEADENHALL STREET, LONDON, E.C.

35 TITHEBARN STREET, LIVERPOOL.

WATSON'S MATCHLESS CLEANSER

Has proved itself one of the Best Soaps ever used. Still Holds the Lead. Quality Perfect. Buy It, Prove It, and Secure a Prize.

BIG PRIZE SCHEME

For SEPTEMBER, 1900.

15,409 Handsome PRIZES, value **£6,641 10s.**

LIST OF PRIZES:

1	Cash Prize of £50	£50	0
2	Cash Prizes, £40 each	80	0
5	Pianos, £40 each	200	0
3	Cash Prizes, £30 each	90	0
3	Cash Prizes, £25 each	75	0
5	American Organs, £20 each	100	0
20	Ladies' Bicycles (free wheel), £17 17s. each	357	0
20	Gents' Bicycles (free wheel) £17 17s. each	357	0
5	Cash Prizes, £10 each	50	0
10	Cash Prizes, £7 10s. each	75	0
10	Cash Prizes, £5 each	50	0
20	Cash Prizes of 50s. each	50	0
50	Gents' Rolled Gold Waltham Levers, 50s. each	125	0
800	Ladies' Sterling Silver Watches, 30s. each	450	0
200	Cash Prizes of £1 each	200	0
250	Electro-plated Tespots, 15s. each	187	10
500	Gents' Umbrellas, 15s. each	375	0
500	Ladies' Umbrellas, 15s. each	375	0
100	Pairs of Witney Blankets, 15s. pair	75	0
500	Cash Prizes, 10s. each	£250	0
500	Handsome Meat Carvers, with Steel in Case, 10s. per set	250	0
500	Gents' Gun-metal Watches, 10s. each	250	0
503	Ladies' Umbrellas, 7/6 each	187	10
1,000	Ladies' Dress Lengths (Navy Blue Serge, 6 yds., double width) 7/6 each	375	0
400	White Linen Table Cloths, 70in. square, 6s. each	120	0
500	Cash Prizes of 5s. each	125	0
500	Brushes and Combs in handsome cases, 4/6 each	112	10
2,000	Cash Prizes, 4s. each	400	0
2,000	Ladies' Leather Handbags, 4s. each	400	0
1,000	Handsome Pictures "Charge of the Light Brigade," 4/- each	200	0
2,000	Handsome Work-boxes, 3s. each	300	0
2,000	½-doz. Fine Linen Cambric Handkerchiefs, 2/6 each	250	0
	15,409	**£6,641**	**10**

CONDITIONS OF COMPETITION.

Every tablet of **Watson's Matchless Cleanser** is enclosed in a Wrapper, with signature up the centre of same. Save the WHOLE Wrapper (tops of Wrappers will be disqualified), and send, postage or carriage paid, to **Joseph Watson & Sons Limited, Whitehall Soap Works, Leeds,** not later than SEPTEMBER 30TH, 1900. Each package will be counted as one lot; separate entries must be sent under separate covers. If any parcel arrives, postage or carriage not being fully paid, such parcel will be refused. Be careful to see that the full postage is paid. Each parcel sent in must contain the full name and address of sender, and number of Wrappers sent in must be marked on the same paper. On outside of parcel write legibly—"**Prize Competition.**" The prizes will be awarded in the above order to the senders of the highest numbers of Wrappers. A list, giving result of the Competition, will be enclosed with each prize when it is sent out. Every wrapper must have first contained soap. No employés of Joseph Watson & Sons Limited will be eligible. All prizes will be despatched about October 25th.

WATSON'S MATCHLESS CLEANSER

Is pleasant to use, its washing qualities are well-known. Dirt flies before it, and the washing is done quickly and easily. **It has the largest sale of 1-lb. tablets in the world.** Sold by all Grocers, Oilmen, &c., throughout the United Kingdom.

THE

BEST OF ALL BEVERAGES

AND THE

CHEAPEST.

GOOD! IT'S

MASON'S

Extract of Herbs

8 Gallons Prime Beer for 6d.

Sample Free for 9 Stamps.

AGENTS WANTED EVERYWHERE.

NEWBALL & MASON,

NOTTINGHAM.

ESTABLISHED 1851.

BIRKBECK BANK

Southampton Buildings, Chancery Lane, London.

2% on CURRENT ACCOUNTS, on the minimum monthly balances when not drawn below £100.

The BIRKBECK ALMANACK, with full particulars, post free.

FRANCIS RAVENSCROFT, *Manager*.

VARICOCELE.

Every man suffering from Varicocele and the allied troubles, should send for treatise, describing their Causes, Symptoms, Results, and Successful and Painless Treatment without surgical operation or the use of cumbersome trusses and electrical appliances. Will be sent sealed, post free, three stamps.

S. S. MURRAY,

7, Southampton Row, London, W.C.

ALL FAT PEOPLE

can safely Reduce Weight and cure Corpulency permanently by taking TRILENE TABLETS (Regd.) for a few weeks. They are small, agreeable, harmless, and never fail to IMPROVE both HEALTH and FIGURE without Change of Diet. An English Countess writes: "*Your Trilene Tablets act admirably.*"

Send 2s. 6d. to THE TRILENE CO., Sole Proprietors, 66 Finsbury Pavement, London.

SAMPLES OF TESTIMONIALS.

Princess Liechtenstein writes from Landsberg, Austria: "I may send your excellent tablets directly." Mr. Canham, 87 Alexandra Road, Norwich: "Tablets cured my wife of extreme stoutness; it has never returned." Mrs. H. Cox, 23 Watmall Road, Hucknall Torkard, writes: "The Tablets reduced me 1½ stone." Mrs. S. Alexander, 102 Dixon Street, New Swindon, says: "They reduced me 23lb., and I am cured." Mrs. Darnley-Smith, of Landscove Vicarage, Ashburton, says: "Tablets have reduced me very much. I weigh much less and can breathe so much easier; I am delighted."

SEVEN PRIZE MEDALS.

These series of pens neither scratch nor spurt. They glide over the roughest paper with the ease of a soft lead pencil. An assorted sample box for 7 stamps from the works, Birmingham.

Digitized by Google

SHORT STORIES

No. 605. Price One Penny.
Week ending August 4th, 1900.

THE ADVENTURE OF ELIZABETH MOREY OF NEW YORK.

In the sea story of Australia, from the days of Captain Phillip in 1788, to the end of the "fifties," in the present century, American ships and seamen have no little part.

First they came into the harbour of Sydney Cove as traders carrying provisions for sale to the half-starved settlers, then as whalers, and before another thirty years had passed, the starry banner might be met with anywhere in the Pacific from the sterile shores of the Aleutian Islands to the coasts of New Zealand and Tasmania.

Early one morning in October, 1804, the American ship *Union* sailed in through Sydney Heads, and dropped anchor in the Cove. She was last from Tongatabu, the principal island of the Friendly Group.

So soon as she had been boarded by the naval officer in charge of the port, and her papers examined, the master stated that he had had a very exciting adventure with the Tongatabu natives, who had attempted to cut off the ship, and that there was then on board a young woman named Elizabeth Morey, whom he had rescued from captivity among the savages.

In a few minutes the young woman made her appearance in the main cabin, and was introduced to the officer.

Her age was about six-and-twenty, and her manners engaging; yet whilst she expressed her willingness to tell the story of her adventures among the islanders, she declined to say anything of her birth or parentage beyond the fact that she was a native of New York, and some years previously had made her way to the Cape of Good Hope.

All rights reserved.

Digitized by Google

Her extraordinary narrative was borne out in all details as far as her rescue was concerned by the master of the *Union*, who she said had treated her with undeviating kindness and respect.

This is her story:—

"In February of the year 1802, when she was living at the Cape of Good Hope, she made the acquaintance of a Captain Melton, the master of the American ship *Portland*. His dashing appearance, his command of apparently unlimited money, and his protestations of affection for the unfortunate girl soon led her to respond to his advances, and ultimately to consent to accompany him on a voyage to the islands of the South Pacific.

"After a prosperous voyage the *Portland* arrived at what is now known as Nukualofa Harbour, on the Island of Tongatabu. Within a few hours after anchoring, Captain Melton received a note from a white man named Doyle, who was the only European living on the island, asking him to come on shore and visit the chief, who particularly wished to see him and secure his aid in repelling an invasion from the neighbouring group of islands known as Haabai.

"Had Melton known that this man Doyle was an escaped convict from Van Diemen's Land, he would at least have been careful; had he known that the man was in addition a treacherous and bloodthirsty villain, he would have hove-up anchor, and, sailing away, escaped his fate.

"But Doyle, in his note, enumerated the advantages that would accrue to him (Melton) by assisting the chief, and the seaman fell into the trap. 'You must try,' said the writer of the letter, 'to send at least one boat's crew well armed.'

"Melton was a man with an elastic conscience. Without troubling his head as to the right or wrong side of this quarrel among savages, he promptly complied with the request of the beachcomber, and called for volunteers; the whole of the ship's company responded.

"The chief mate, Gibson, picked four men; Anderson, the second officer, eight men, and these were at once dispatched on shore by the captain.

"The engagement came off on the following day, and the American allies of the chief (whom Miss Morey calls Ducara) inflicted fearful slaughter upon the enemy, and returned to the ship highly satisfied with themselves, and their native friends, who promised them every indulgence likely to gratify their tastes.

"In the evening Ducara himself came on board, and politely thanked the captain for his assistance.

"He slept all night in the cuddy, attended by Doyle, his minister of destruction, and took his leave early in the morning, promising to send ample refreshments on board in part return for favours received, and requesting that boats should be sent that evening to convey his gifts off to the ship.

"Within a few hours after he had returned to the shore, many hundreds of stalwart natives were seen carrying baskets of provisions down to the beach, and piling them in heaps in readiness for the boats.

"Melton, at this stage, seemed to have some sort of suspicion in his mind about sending the boats ashore after dark, for he gave the mate instructions not to dispatch them until he gave orders.

"The mate, however, who had been smitten by the beauty of a Tongan girl who had expressed her unqualified approval of his fighting capabilities in a very unconventional manner, had the utmost confidence in the good-will of the natives, and took it upon himself to disobey his captain's commands; consequently two boats were sent off just as daylight was breaking, and whilst the skipper lay asleep in his cabin.

"Within a couple of hours the smaller of the two boats returned, loaded with yams, 'gnatu' (tappa cloth), baked pigs, and fish.

"She was steered by the beachcomber, Doyle, and was rowed by two of the ship's boys, instead of the four men who had taken her ashore; these boys, it must be mentioned, had formed part of the crew of the larger boat, and had remained on the beach whilst the men had gone into the village at the invitation of Doyle and his fellow-conspirators.

"They, therefore, knew nothing of what had kept their shipmates from returning to the boats, when Doyle appeared, and said he wished to go off to the ship, and that the others would follow later on.

"Accompanying the boat was a flotilla of canoes, filled with hundreds of savages, who were allowed to come alongside, though the girl Morey was so terrified by their savage aspect that she begged her lover to instantly recall the rest of his men and heave up anchor.

"Melton, however, although he was now in a state of suspense owing to the non-appearance of his boat's crews, answered her calmly enough.

"'The two boys and Doyle say that the hands went up to the chief's house to see a native dance,' he said. 'I'll punish them for it when they return.'"

"Meanwhile the boat was unloaded, and again sent on shore with the two boys, and Doyle's native friends clambered up on board from any accessible part of the ship.

The beachcomber thrust a dagger into the throat of the unfortunate man.

Digitized by Google

"The beachcomber himself, a wild-looking, dark-skinned ruffian, who had clothed himself in a shirt and trousers, now came aft and again assured the captain that he need feel no alarm at the great number of naked savages who now thronged the deck, from the windlass right aft to the wheel. Perhaps, however, the villain had some feeling of humanity in his vile heart, for seeing the terrified face of the girl Morey, he suggested that she should go below until the natives had returned to the shore.

"But so impressed was she with a sense of imminent peril that she refused to leave the poop, and begged Melton earnestly, 'for goodness sake to take heed, and not thrust himself among the savages on the main deck.'

"The beachcomber gave her a glance—half rage, half pity—then with his left hand he suddenly dashed her aside, and with a ferocious yell sprang at Melton and thrust a dagger into the throat of the unfortunate man.

"In an instant his savage followers began their work of slaughter, and Mr. Gibson, the chief mate, the boatswain, and four seamen were soon lying dead upon the bloodstained decks, their heads battered out of all human semblance by the clubs of the islanders.

"Two lads, Miss Morey, and her negro servant-woman, were spared, but hurried down below.

"The bodies of the murdered men were at once thrown overboard to the sharks by Doyle's orders, and then he directed the natives to clear the decks.

"Elizabeth Morey, terrified out of her senses at the dreadful scenes she had witnessed, attempted to spring overboard, but Doyle caught her as she came on deck, urged her not to be frightened, and promised her in the name of the Virgin that no harm should come to her.

"So soon as the decks had been ridden of all traces of the ghastly work just completed, the half-unconscious girl was lifted over the side, placed in a canoe, taken on shore, and handed over to the care of a chief's wife.

"When she came to her senses she learnt from Doyle that all who were left alive of the ship's company were herself and servant, a Malay seaman, five boys, and an old sailor, who was a dwarf; the latter had evidently been spared, either on account of the natives ranking him as a boy, or from their aversion to inflict injuries upon anyone physically or mentally afflicted.

"The following three days were spent by the natives in unloading the ship, the work being carried on in the most systematic manner under the command of Doyle, the survivors of the crew being compelled to assist in the task.

"The cargo, which consisted mainly of bales of cotton, was got on shore in something less than a week; then the islanders began to dismantle the ill-fated ship.

"By the eighth day all the sails except the fore and main topsails were unbent and taken ashore.

"On the afternoon of this day but half-a-dozen natives were on board; they, with the five 'boys' (probably lads under eighteen years of age), and the dwarf sailor before mentioned, were 'spelling' for an hour or so before beginning to unbend the topsails, when, noticing that their captors were off their guard, the brave little man determined to retake the ship. In a few minutes he gained over his youthful shipmates to the attempt; they promised to stand by him to the last.

He picked up the axe and ran towards Doyle.

"Quietly arming themselves with axes, with iron belaying pins, with handspikes, with anything heavy and deadly they could lay their hands upon, they waited for the signal to begin the attack.

"Doyle, the blood-stained murderer, lay upon the skylight under the awning, half asleep and unsuspecting of danger; his native associates either slept or lounged about the main deck.

"A few hurried whispered words passed between the six whites; then the dwarf, carrying an axe negligently in his hand, ascended to the poop and laid it down on the deck. Then he turned, and his quick seaman's eye took in the surroundings.

"The trade wind was blowing freshly, the ship (she was a full-rigged ship, though under five hundred tons), was straining at her hempen cable, and the low, palm-clad shore was nearly two miles away.

"He picked up the axe and ran towards Doyle, who tried to spring to his feet as the weapon buried itself to the head in his bosom! In less than five minutes the dreadful work was done, and Doyle and the six Tongans were weltering in their gore upon the very deck which was still stained by the traces of their own crimes. Before the natives on shore could realise what had happened the cable was cut, the topsails loosened and sheeted home, and the *Portland* standing out to sea through the dangerous network of reefs which surrounded the harbour. Her recapture was a ghastly work, but the law of self-preservation is inexorable under such circumstances.

"Elizabeth Morey, aroused from a troubled slumber by the cries of her captors, came to the doorway of the chief's house, and stood watching the ship, which, though only under her fore and main topsails, was fast slipping through the water.

Digitized by Google

"In two hours the *Portland* was safe, and the broken-hearted girl sank upon her knees and wept. She was now utterly alone, for her negro servant-woman had gone on board the ship with Doyle to get some of her clothing, and had been carried off.

"The only remaining member of the *Portland's* crew was a Malay—a man of whom she had an instinctive dread, for since the massacre of the ship's company he had one day asked her with a mocking grin if she could not 'clean his coat.' It was Melton's white duck jacket, and the ensanguined garment brought all the horror of his death before her again.

"Then followed fifteen long, long months of horror, misery, and agony. She was a woman, and her terrible fate evokes the warmest pity. Whatever may have been her past before she met Melton and accompanied him on his fateful voyage, her sufferings during those fifteen dreadful months may be imagined, but not written of or suggested, except by the neurotic new-woman writer, who loves to dwell upon things degrading, terrifying, and abhorrent to the healthy mind."

* * * * *

In August, 1804, the American whaler *Union*, of Nantucket, after having refreshed at Sydney Cove, as Port Jackson was then called, sailed on a sperm-whaling cruise among the South Sea Islands. She arrived at Tongatabu on the last day of September.

So soon as the anchor was let go a fleet of canoes appeared, and the occupants made the most friendly demonstrations towards Captain Pendleton and his officers. In the leading canoe was a man whom the captain took to be a Malay, and upon being questioned this surmise proved to be correct. In broken English he imformed Pendleton that the ship would be provided with plenty of fresh food, water and wood, if the ship's boats were sent ashore.

He called the hands aft and explained the situation.

The captain's boat was thereupon swung out and lowered, and manned by six men, the captain and Mr. John Boston, the supercargo, going with them. These people were armed with six muskets and two cutlasses.

So soon as the boat was well clear of the ship the natives became very troublesome, clambering up the chain plates, and forcing themselves on board in great numbers.

The chief mate, Daniel Wright, seems to have shown more sense than most of the poor fools who, by their own negligence, brought about—and still bring about—these tragedies.

He got his men together and tried to drive off the intruders, but despite his endeavours thirty or forty of them kept to the deck, and their countrymen in the canoes alongside rapidly passed them up a number of war-clubs.

Wright, with the greatest tact, and with apparently good-humoured force, at last succeeded in clearing the decks and bustling all the natives except the chief, over the side into their canoes.

He was a big, brawny, New Englander, had served in the American Navy before he had taken to whaling, and knew the value of coolness and discipline in an emergency though he felt much inclined to pistol the chief, who all this time had been pretending to support his authority, though actually telling his people to be "more patient, as the time had not yet come."

This chief, whose name is not given in the *Sydney Gazette* of 1804, but who may have been the same "Ducara" of the *Portland* massacre, or one of Ducara's *matabulis*, at last took his leave with the usual protestations of regard so natural to even the present Christianised Tongan native of this year of grace, when he means mischief.

Descending into his canoe, he led the whole flotilla to the beach. Then the mate hoisted the ensign, and fired a gun as a warning to those of the ship's company on shore to return.

No notice was taken of the signal, and presently through his glass Mr. Wright saw that the captain's boat was lying broadside on to the beach, surrounded by a crowd of islanders, and without a boat-keeper. This was sufficiently alarming.

It was now late in the afternoon, and Captain Pendleton had been absent five hours. He at once came to the conclusion that the people who had gone ashore in the boat were either prisoners or had been murdered.

To send another boat after them, he felt sure, would only lead to the destruction of the whole ship's company in detail, and the ultimate loss of the ship without there being the least chance of effecting any good.

So he called the hands aft, explained the situation, and began to prepare to resist capture.

All the available firearms were loaded, heavy stones which formed the ship's ballast were placed along the waterways fore and aft in readiness to smash the canoes which he anticipated would come alongside, the drying-out works fires were lighted, and the huge dry-pots filled with water, which when boiling would add to their means of defence, by pouring it down in bucketsful upon the savages; the cable was prepared for slipping, sails loosened, and every other precaution which suggested itself to him made.

Digitized by Google

The sun dropped into the western sea-rim, and there was still no sign of the captain's boat.

On the shore an ominous silence prevailed, though now and then it would be broken by the weird, resonant boom of a conch-shell.

The night was passed in the greatest anxiety by all on board, every man, musket in hand, keeping a keen look-out.

Almost as the dawn broke, two canoes were seen to put off from Nukualofa beach, and come towards the ship.

They were manned by young Tongan "bucks" who, in reply to the mate's questions as to the whereabouts of the captain and his crew, answered him with gestures which the ship's company rightly enough construed as meaning that their comrades had all been killed, and that their turn would come shortly.

This so enraged the seamen that they tried to induce Mr. Wright to open fire on the canoes, destroy them, and get the ship away before worse happened.

But the mate, still hoping that his people on shore were still alive, and that he could yet rescue them, refused to comply, and the whole of that day and night passed without anything further happening.

On the following morning several canoes came within hail and then lay-to.

In one of them was the Malay, who asked the mate to come ashore as his captain and the supercargo wished to see him.

The mate temporised and requested the Malay to come on board and explain matters, but he refused and returned to the shore.

In a few hours he reappeared at the head of a fleet of canoes, and then, to Mr. Wright's intense astonishment, he saw that the Malay was accompanied by a young white woman, who was sitting on the for'ard outrigger of the canoe, in which the Malay was steersman.

The flotilla brought to within pistol-shot of the ship, and the woman stood up and called to him in English.

"Come on shore and see the captain. He wants to speak to you."

The mate made no answer, but beckoned to the fleet of canoes to come nearer. And then, mercifully, as he took another look at the white woman, he saw her, when the surrounding savages were not watching her, shake her head vehemently to him not to comply.

The flotilla came still nearer, and again Elizabeth Morey was made to repeat the mechanical request for him to come on shore and see the captain.

Wright, surmising that she was acting under coercion, appeared to give little heed to her request, but told the Malay, who seemed to direct the natives, that he would wait for the captain.

Then the fleet of canoes turned, and headed for the shore, and the captive woman gave the mate a despairing, agonised look that not only filled him with the deepest commiseration for her, but almost convinced him that poor Pendleton and the others were dead.

Another night of weary anxiety passed, and again with the dawn a single canoe came off, manned by half a dozen armed natives steered by the Malay and carrying Miss Morey. This canoe was followed by many others, but the leading one alone came close enough to the whale-ship to communicate.

Little by little her savage crew drew nearer, watching every movement of those on board with the utmost suspicion; the mate, who was standing at the break of the poop on the starboard side, desired them to come closer,

Wright, jumping overboard, helped the poor creature up over the side.

holding in his hand a loaf of bread, which he said he wanted to give to the white woman. The loaf was inclosed in a piece of white paper, on which he had written these words.

"I fear that all on shore are murdered. I will wait here a few days in the hope that you may be able to escape to us."

For some minutes the savages watched the white man, who, apparently disgusted with his attempts to induce them to come closer and take the loaf of bread, placed it on the rail and lit his pipe.

The Malay again urged him to come ashore and "see the captain," but Wright made an impatient gesture and told him he must come closer if he wanted to talk.

The scoundrel did bring the canoe a few fathoms nearer, and then stopped her way.

Then the girl, unable to restrain herself any longer, stood up and cried out:

"All your friends on shore have been killed," then she leapt into the water and swam towards the ship.

A yell of rage burst from the natives in the canoes, but it was answered by the fire of musketry from the ship and the thunder of two carronades, which, loaded with iron nuts and bolts, had been in readiness, one on the poop, the other on the topgallant forecastle—and the girl succeeded in reaching the ship's side in time to take hold of a life-buoy secured to a line which was thrown to her, and Wright, jumping overboard, helped the poor creature up over the side into safety.

Then began a desperate and furious assault to capture the ship. The savages, led by the renegade Malay, made three successive attempts to board, but were each time beaten back by Wright and his gallant seamen,

Digitized by Google

and the crystal water around the *Union* was soon reddoned to a deep hue. Meanwhile the cable had been slipped, and, like the *Portland*, the *Union's* company were saved from death by the freshness of the trade-wind alone.

In half an hour after the last attack had been repelled, the ship was out of danger from pursuit.

So soon as the vessel had cleared the passage Wright hove her to, and went down below to Miss Morey, who, exhausted and almost hysterical as she was, yet answered his questions readily.

"You must forgive me, madam, but it is my duty to at once ask you an important question. Are you sure that Captain Pendleton and the supercargo are dead? I cannot take the ship away if there is any uncertainty about their fate."

"I beseech you, sir, to have no doubts. I saw the two gentleman beaten to death by clubs before my eyes. They were sitting down to eat when they were murdered. One was killed by the Malay man, the other by an old *matabuli*. Oh, for Heaven's sake, sir, do not delay! The natives have been planning to capture the ship and murder her people for the past three days."

Then, as she became more collected, she satisfied him that all of Captain's Pendleton's party had been cruelly and treacherously murdered, and also told him her own terrible story previous to the arrival of the *Union*.

The destruction of poor Pendleton and Mr. Boston had been planned, she said, by the Malay; and when he and his native friends found that they could not induce Mr. Wright to further weaken his ship's company by sending another boat's crew on shore, so that the *Union* might the more easily be captured, she was ordered under the most awful threats to act as decoy.

Resolved to upset their diabolical plan, or die in the attempt, she gave an apparently cheerful assent to the meditated scheme of murder, and hence her appearance in the canoe with the treacherous Malay.

Under the kindly care of Mr. (now Captain) Wright, the young woman soon regained her health and strength in a great measure, and her delight knew no bounds when he announced to her his intention of returning to Sydney Cove to refit before proceeding home to America.

The *Union*, as we have before stated, entered Sydney harbour in October, 1804, and before that time the simple gratitude of the rescued girl to her rescuer had changed into a deeper and tenderer feeling. But we must not anticipate.

Soon as Captain Wright had made his report to the New South Wales authorities, Miss Morey went on shore, where she was treated most hospitably by the wives of some of the military officers, whilst Wright was refitting his ship.

A few days afterwards there arrived in Sydney Harbour an East India ship, the captain of which gave Wright some interesting particulars concerning the *Portland* and Captain Melton.

The latter had a peculiar history. At the end of the year 1800 he appeared in Manila, where he was intrusted with the command of a brig belonging to Mr. John Stewart Kerr, the American Consul of that city. His orders were to proceed to Batavia, and there dispose of his cargo, bringing in return saleable goods for the Manila market. He was given also a letter of credit for 20,000 dollars, the better to load the vessel.

On arrival at Batavia he sold the cargo and the brig into the bargain, and purchased in her place the *Portland*, a ship of about 400 tons.

From Batavia he wrote to Kerr—he seemed to have been the Captain "Bully" Hayes of his time—informed him of what he had done and mentioned that as he intended to make a long pleasure cruise among the islands of the South Pacific, he did not expect to return to Manila for some considerable time!

He also, it is needless to say, duly cashed his letter of credit for 20,000 dollars, which six months afterwards was duly presented and taken up by Mr. Kerr.

The *Portland* was then chartered by a firm of Dutch merchants at Batavia to proceed to Serra Bay to load rice and return to Batavia. Melton sailed to Serra Bay, loaded his cargo of rice, and instead of returning to Batavia, went to the Isle of France and there cheerfully sold it.

The next account of him received at Manila was that he was having a "real good time," at the Cape of Good Hope, where his fascinating manners and command of money (Kerr's money) made him many friends.

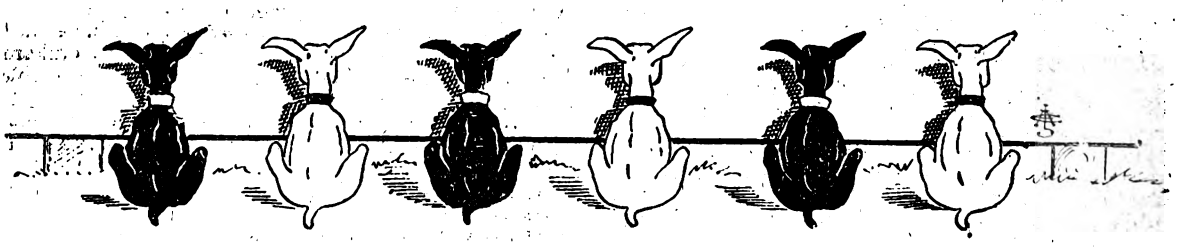
Suddenly, however, he and the *Portland* disappeared, and Elizabeth Morey, as we have mentioned, accompanied him.

He had given out that he was bound for the North-west coast of America, to enter into the fur trade, but, beyond that rumour, nothing more was heard of him until the *Union* arrived at Port Jackson, and Elizabeth Morey told the tale of his dreadful end.

* * * * *

No further mention of the names of Captain Wright, Elizabeth Morey, or the good ship *Union* appear in the early colonial records after 1804; but that the girl's rescue by the gallant mate of the whaleship led to her ultimate happiness we can safely assume, for in the year 1836 they were married in Honolulu, Sandwich Islands, one "Marie Kaulani Shepherd, daughter of John Shepherd, to Daniel Morey Wright, master of the ship *Patience* and son of Daniel and Elizabeth Wright, of Sa'em, U.S.A."

LOUIS BECKE.



Digitized by Google

My Last Rehearsal.

PROBABLY the theory of Evolution never received a more practical illustration, physically and mentally, than in my case. For whereas I am now a portly, sedate, well-to-do father of a family, churchwarden, overseer and guardian of my parish, some thirty years ago I was a slender, harum-scarum bachelor, impecunious, and ready at a moment's notice for any folly which might present itself to my excitable and mercurial temperament. Vicious I certainly was not, but merely thoughtless and inconsiderate.

My name is Mathews, and I was christened Charles, after my uncle, from whom my father had pecuniary expectations.

The late Charles Reade was undeniably right when he said that versatility never pays. I was a fair baritone singer, a clever caricaturist, and admirable mimic, and enjoyed great renown as an amateur actor. Yet at the age of twenty-five I was entirely dependent on my father for the necessaries of life and pocket money.

My largest creditor at this time was my tailor, to whom I was indebted for the sum of ninety-five pounds, four shillings and sixpence.

Unless my father "stumped up," I had as much chance of being able to pay the National Debt as defraying this amount.

For some reason or other my father proved unusually obstinate at this juncture, and declined to do anything in the matter; I remember he described his conduct as firmness.

I have omitted to mention that I was in love with a very pretty but portionless young lady of the name of Walker. My father characterised this circumstance as another sample of my thoughtlessness and perversity, as among my acquaintance were several young ladies with very tolerable fortunes.

I had a quasi-rival for Miss Walker's good graces of the name of Nobbs. He was so very plain and unpleasant in his manners that I entertained no fear of being ousted by him, and accordingly we were very good friends.

He employed the same tailor (Binks) as myself, and one memorable morning Mr. Nobbs came to me and told me that Binks had issued a writ against me for the amount of my debt.

The law against debtors at that date was much more stringent than it is at present, and I determined to leave London and go into hiding for a time, until I could prevail on my wealthy uncle to relieve me of Binks' claim.

I had a few pounds in my pocket, and informed Nobbs that I would start at once for a small watering-place which I will here call Seamouth. I had never been there, but had heard a good account of it from a friend who had found it cheap, quiet, and salubrious. In an hour I had my modest portmanteau packed (which had my name duly inscribed on a brass plate thereon), and was steaming at the rate of thirty miles an hour for the nearest town to Seamouth.

When I left the train, I found there was a coach about to start for Seamouth, a distance of eight miles. After an hour's drive I was deposited at the door of the "Red Lion." I was not much puzzled as to the choice of my hotel, for the "Red Lion" was the only inn in the place.

Seamouth consisted apparently of one long straggling street, with a few detached houses on the outskirts. At a distance of a hundred yards the open sea tumbled and tossed on a shingly beach.

In ten minutes I felt I had "done" Seamouth, and contemplated with some feelings of dismay a lengthened residence in this secluded spot. I had already secured a bedroom, left my portmanteau, and ordered a steak and accessories prior to my stroll round the place.

As I crossed the entrance hall to the coffee-room, I found myself the object of special observation by the staff of the hotel. The rubicund Boniface saluted me with a broad grin, the antiquated waiter smirked in a peculiar fashion as he hastened to open the door of the coffee-room, while a house-maid on the stairs was evidently much more occupied in studying my personal appearance than sweeping the carpeted stairs. A half-length of what was evidently the cook peered from the regions below.

I was about to seat myself at one of the tables when the host advanced, and with a very deferential bow, begged that I would accept the offer of a private room. Anticipating my objection, he went on to say that no extra expense would be incurred in consequence.

So a few minutes saw me engaged in discussing a juicy tender steak, some mealy potatoes, flanked by a tankard of nut-brown ale, with an obsequious waiter as my sole attendant. I determined to write to my uncle immediately after dinner, as my slender purse would soon be exhausted in defraying the cost of my present luxury.

As the waiter placed an apple-tart on the table, he remarked:

"I think this is your first visit to Seamouth, sir?"

Digitized by Google

I replied in the affirmative, muttering *sotto voce*, "and also my last; Seamouth appears to be a very sleepy kind of place."

The old waiter drew himself up, apparently resenting this stigma on the little watering-place:

"Very quiet, sir, but very select. But we shall be very lively now *you* have honoured us with a visit, sir."

I failed to perceive how the presence of a fugitive debtor could add to the cheerfulness of any place, but I made no reply, considering the compliment would be charged for in the bill.

"It's hastonishing, sir, what a difference the theatre makes when it is hopen."

"But Seamouth cannot support a theatre," I replied.

"No, sir, honly when a star comes; I remember, when I was a boy, seeing Mr. Macready hact here; and people came from far and near to see 'im. Our yard was full of traps of hevery description; and so it will be hon Thursday next, when Mr. Charles Mathews makes his appearance."

As he said these words the old waiter made a profound genuflection, and left the room. A light dawned upon me; my name was identical with that of the great comedian. The waiter had read the name on the brass plate on my trunk, and I had been mistaken for the coming man.

I was chuckling over the singular error, and had resolved to disabuse the staff of the "Red Lion" accordingly, whose curious reception of me was now explained, when a circumstance occurred which caused me to change my resolution. The window of the room which I occupied commanded a view of the coach road leading to the nearest town.

As I reflected over the curious blunder, I found myself mechanically watching a dog-cart which was rapidly approaching the inn. It drew up at the door, and from the vehicle descended a stout, coarse-looking man, wearing a very bad hat, and very seedy in his habiliments in general.

I was reading the advertisement in the *Seamouth Express* which announced the appearance of the London actor, in his celebrated character of Sir Charles Coldstream in *Used Up* on Thursday next.

This was one of my best impersonations as an amateur, and I had made such close study of the original representative that I could reproduce every tone, and glance, and gesture. My personal appearance was also very similar.

At this moment the waiter entered the room, holding his hand before his face, and apparently convulsed with laughter.

"I beg pardon, sir, but you will laugh as much as me when I tell you, sir. There is a sheriff's officer in the coffee-room, who wants to serve a writ on a Mr. Charles Mathews; he inquired if a gent of that name was here. I told him, yes—the noted hactor. He guv a sigh, and said that was not the gent he wanted. He is going to stop here, as he knows for certain that his man is coming to Seamouth directly, and he will watch the arrivals by coach."

As the waiter delivered this exordium my mind was at work endeavouring to solve the mystery of my hiding-place being discovered. Nobbs—that was the solution. On second thoughts he had disclosed the place of my retreat to Binks.

As the waiter concluded, my determination was taken. My natural love of fun and adventure, combined with the instinct of self-preservation, decided me to accept the honours thus suddenly thrust upon me. I made no reference to the waiter's story, treating it as too absurd for discussion.

"I want to send a note round to the lessee of the Theatre Royal."

"Certainly, sir. The boots can take it."

In a few seconds I had scribbled the following:

"Dear Simpson—to quote the Duke's Motto—I am here. Will you call a rehearsal of *Used Up* for to-morrow at eleven? Yours faithfully, C. J. Mathews."

This characteristic note was promptly dispatched, and I waited the result in serenity and with a keen sense of approaching enjoyment.

In half-an-hour the answer came.

"Dear Mr. Mathews, I am agreeably surprised by your early arrival, as I did not expect you till the morning of Thursday (the day of the performance). I suppose the papers are in error in advertising you as playing at Plymouth to-day, Tuesday? I shall be very pleased to make your acquaintance. Yours sincerely, T. Simpson."

Nothing could be more fortunate. Mr. Simpson had never seen the great comedian; and I was safe till Thursday. The reader may inquire, Why did I not make my escape from Seamouth while I had the opportunity? I can only reply, that my love of adventure was responsible for my conduct. I should inflict no harm on any one; indeed, I was conferring an actual benefit on the company of the Theatre Royal by affording them the great advantage of an extra rehearsal. And the actor himself would find his task on Thursday considerably smoother, as all my "business" was precisely the same as he would adopt.

Punctual to the hour appointed, I made my appearance at the stage-door on the following morning.

"Good-morning, Mr. Mathews," exclaimed a little, shabbily-dressed man, who was standing with his back to the fire-place, in conversation with the Cerberus who guarded the sacred portal of the drama.

"Good-morning, Mr. Simpson. Where is the company?"

"They are all on the stage, Mr. Matthews. I have got a pretty Mary for you, and a capital blacksmith."

I followed Mr. Simpson along a dimly-lighted passage to the stage. As we threaded the gloomy labyrinth, my conductor whispered to me:

"You were satisfied with the terms I offered?"

"Perfectly," I answered. "Nothing could have been more liberal." (How I wondered what they were!)

"Yes, I think that arrangement is the fairest for both parties," continued the worthy manager.

I found a group of seedy-looking individuals on the stage, who were severally introduced to me. The personator of Mary Wurzel was a pretty looking girl, but very pale and emaciated, while the representative of the blacksmith was a diminutive but sturdy little man.

"Hallo! this won't do; Ironbrace should be a big man or where is the alarming contrast between Sir Charles in the deadly affray which takes place."

The manager shrugged his shoulders.

"We can't get another now."

While they arranged the first scene I glanced round the theatre. It was a band-box of a house, and I should not have hesitated to play the piece in my own proper person had necessity compelled it. But when Thursday came I must be miles away.

Here I suddenly remembered that the individual I was personating was renowned for his vivacity and stores of anecdote. So I drew on my memory, an uncommonly retentive one, and poured forth a stream of witticisms,

Digitized by Google

which seemed to meet the circumstances of the case, for the company laughed immoderately, until at last the manager suggested a commencement of the rehearsal.

"We have all heard of your wonderful conversational powers, Mr. Mathews, and report has not exaggerated them, but suppose we——"

"Exactly, Mr. Simpson; business first and pleasure afterwards."

I at once addressed myself to the business of the scenes, and really worked very hard in putting the company through their facings.

It would not interest the general reader to mention in detail the very natural shortcomings of a scratch country company of strolling players. But I found them very docile and extremely anxious to follow my directions implicitly. Small as were my available resources, I expended half-a-sovereign in refreshment, and their countenances expressed their gratitude even more than their words.

There was another piece down for rehearsal, *Married for Money*, but I was totally unacquainted with the piece so I suggested it should be postponed till the morrow.

Towards the conclusion of the rehearsal I observed Mr. Simpson examining my features with great earnestness.

"You wear uncommonly well, Mr. Mathews; I was told you were about forty, but you don't look more than five-and-twenty."

"All habit, my dear sir, I never encourage the idea of age. I follow the advice of Bulwer Lytton. Decide upon the age at which you choose to remain, and refuse to become any older—I have selected five-and-twenty. Perennial Jove, you know, and all that sort of thing."

My auditor was convinced; I continued:

"Besides youth is my stock in trade. How could I play the youthful Jemmy Jessamys if I looked my real age?"

My logic was unanswerable.

Ere we parted Mr. Simpson shook my hand heartily.

"A cheque on Friday morning, as soon as we have verified the receipts; I suppose that will do, Mr. Mathews?"

"Perfectly," I replied, cordially returning the pressure.

I was walking leisurely towards my hotel, when I beheld a sight which almost turned my blood to water.

Striding along in his usual brisk and jaunty fashion was the great comedian himself. He was evidently going to the theatre. Fortunately the building was closed, as I had seen Mr. Simpson lock the door and walk away with the key in his pocket. But Seamouth was a small place, and the manager could soon be found. My course was plain. I must fly, and at once.

I met the waiter in the doorway. He grinned and pointed to a couple of trunks in the hall, on which was inscribed, "Mr. Charles Mathews."

"He's come, sir."

"Where is the sheriff's officer?" I inquired in as calm a tone as I could assume.

"He's gone for a walk on the beach. I have sent boots after him. The gent has not come by the coach. He came in a fly. Pretty extravagance in a man as can't pay his owings. But it's just like that class."

"Please make out my bill, waiter," said I, calmly, though I felt my heart thumping against my chest, as vulgar people say, nineteen to the dozen.

The waiter's countenance fell.

"Ain't you comfortable, sir?"

"Quite; your hotel is a perfect Elysium; but Mr. Simpson wishes me to stay with him till I leave Seamouth."

In five minutes I had paid my bill, and given the waiter a handsome *douceur*, and shouldering my portmanteau, was on my way to the theatre. The waiter expressed his regret that the boots was on the beach looking for the sheriff's officer, and so unable to carry my portmanteau, and he himself was unable to leave the hotel, "all the spoons being about, you see, sir."

Nothing could well be more fortunate for my purpose. As I strode away the horses were being harnessed to the departing coach, and as soon as possible I made my way to the road along which the coach must pass on its way to the town.

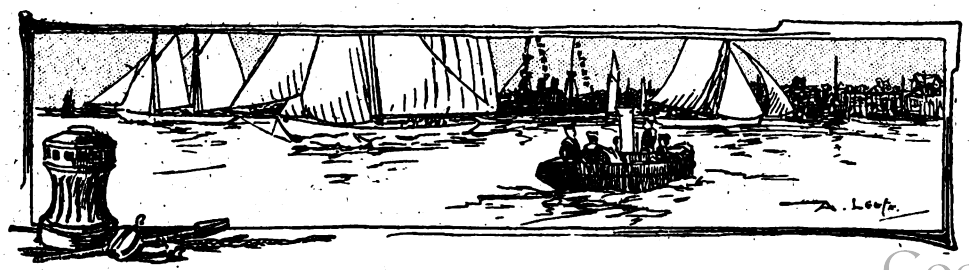
I did not feel safe till I had mounted the box-seat and had left Seamouth some miles behind. The coach was timed to meet the London train, and ere night fell I was once more under the parental roof.

Here I found a letter from my uncle, inclosing a cheque for a hundred pounds, and a nomination to a valuable Government appointment.

From that moment I turned over a new leaf, married Miss Walker, and forgave Nobbs (who protested his innocence as to my address). But as I considered conquerors can afford to be generous, I wrote a letter to the great comedian, explaining my conduct under very trying circumstances, and received a cordial letter of thanks in response for the very efficient rehearsal I had given the company of the Theatre Royal. The inconvenience to him from the sheriff's officer was but of brief duration, my flight having sufficiently shown which was the real Simon Pure.

I have never paid a visit to Seamouth again.

HENRY TURNER.



Digitized by Google

Mr. Bowser's Tribulations.

XVII.—HE BELIEVES IN TRANSMIGRATION AND SETS OUT TO PROVE IT.

THE Bowsers had enjoyed a quiet hour after dinner the other evening, when a dog was heard howling in front of the house, and Mrs. Bowser suggested that the animal be driven away.

"By George, but that's a curious coincidence!" exclaimed Mr. Bowser, as he got up. "It was only this afternoon that I was reading a long article on transmigration, and here a dog comes howling in front of my door."

"I don't see any curious coincidence about it," replied Mrs. Bowser. "If you had been reading a long article about Noah and his ark the dog would have come just the same. Please go out and drive him away."

"I'll do nothing of the sort. How can we tell that the soul of one of our dead friends has not passed into that dog and returned to earth again?"

"Nonsense."

"You may sneer and sneer, but there are thousands who believe in transmigration. I'm almost a believer myself. Hear that howl? There is something about it that reminds me of the voice of someone I have known. I won't do any driving away until I've had a look at the animal."

Mr. Bowser put on his hat and went out. The dog sat at the gate and was getting ready for another howl, but choked it off into a whine as the door opened. As no sticks were thrown or hard words used, he made bold to jump the fence and enter the yard. He was a long, lank, ill-used, bob-tailed dog, who had evidently broken loose from home and was prospecting round the country.

Mr. Bowser was about to utter a yell and scare the canine out of a year's growth when Mrs. Bowser spoilt it all by opening the door and demanding:

"Well, why don't you drive him away, or has he turned out to be an old friend of yours?"

Mr. Bowser snapped his fingers, and as the dog came trotting up the steps he was ushered into the hall and through to the sitting-room. The family cat was lying under a chair and seemed asleep, but it didn't take her over the thousandth part of a second to wake up and light on that intruder.

There was a mix up for a few seconds, during which Mrs. Bowser ran upstairs. Mr. Bowser got on a chair, and cat and dog rolled over each other on the floor. Then the cat flew upstairs after Mrs. Bowser, and the dog sat down and looked at Mr. Bowser and waited for further instructions.

"What on earth did you do that for!" called Mrs. Bowser from the head of the stairs.

"Because I want to make use of this dog," answered Mr. Bowser. "I'm going to give him something to eat and then study him."

It happened to be the cook's night out or there would have been a riot in the kitchen. As it was, Mr. Bowser cleared the pantry for the dog, and when there was nothing more to eat he returned to the sitting-room. Mrs. Bowser came down just then to say:

"I never heard of such a silly thing in all my life. Why don't you turn him out?"

"Let me tell you something," replied Mr. Bowser. "There's a familiar look about that dog's face. There's an expression about the mouth which awakens a memory."

Mr. Bowser got up on a chair, and the cat and dog rolled over each other on the floor.

Digitized by Google

I say, now, but just as true as you live one of the best friends I ever knew had just such an expression. Upon my word, I believe the soul of Will Baker, who died two years ago, has passed into this dog!"

"Then it had better pass out again. I'll open the door and you can drive him off."

"I'll do nothing of the kind. That expression almost clinches my belief in transmigration. Suppose it should be the soul of my dear friend come back to earth again? See him look at me. Why, woman, that dog seems to understand every word I say!"

"Well, you can talk over old times with him and I'll go up-stairs," replied Mrs. Bowser. "If he suddenly goes mad and bites you don't blame anyone but yourself."

"It's queer—mighty queer," mused Mr. Bowser after a long study of the dog's face. "That is Will Baker's mouth exactly. If he has come back to earth in the form of a dog I'll not cast him adrift. A dog can't talk, but if this is poor Will there ought to be some way of making sure of it. Doggie——"

The dog didn't wait for him to finish. He lifted his head and indulged in a long drawn howl which made things rattle.

"For heaven's sake, but what is going on down there?" shouted Mrs. Bowser.

"The dog howled. I was going to ask him if the soul of Will Baker had returned to earth in this form, when he—"

There was another howl. It was louder and longer than the other, and there was something so uncanny about it that Mr. Bowser found chills racing up and down his back.

He determined to turn the soul of Will Baker into the street forthwith, but he instantly discovered an obstruction in his path. The soul objected. That is, the dog stood firmly planted on his feet before him and not only howled again, but finished up with a menacing growl and a vigorous scratching of the carpet with all four feet.

"What is it now?" shouted Mrs. Bowser.

"The beastly cur won't let me move him. I believe he's going mad! You'd better open the front window and yell for the police."

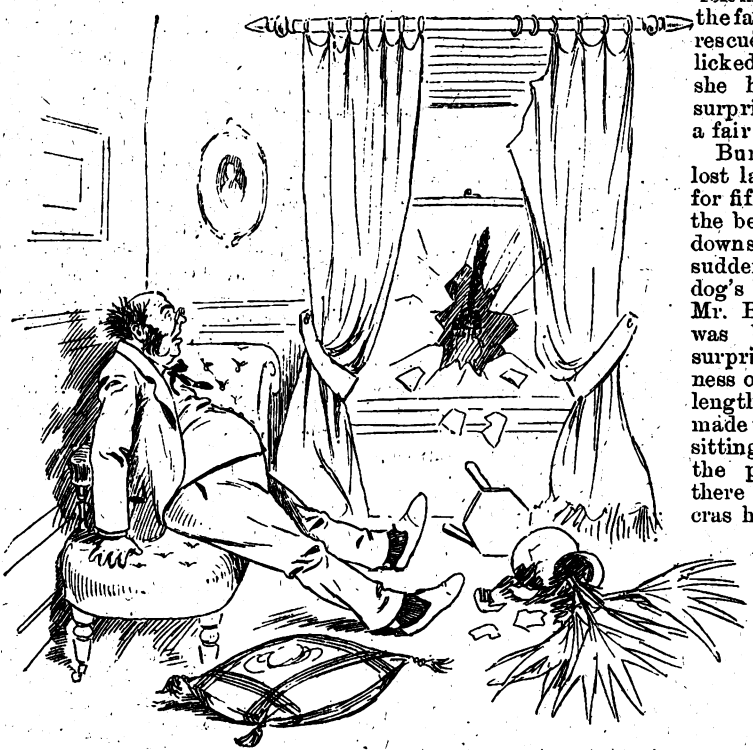
"We don't want to rouse the whole neighbourhood and have them laughing at you. If that's the soul of your dearest friend he'll go out if you ask him to. Is the expression of the mouth the same as it was?"

"It's a heap worse. Can't you slip down and open the front door?"

Mrs. Bowser said she'd try it, but she didn't. The dog decided to take a view of the second storey and made a start.

She heard him coming and had just time to reach her bedroom and shut the door when he banged against it. He tore round for a minute or two and then got down-stairs and drove Mr. Bowser on to the sofa, and stood in front of him and growled and chuckled and gurgled in a way to freeze the blood.

It was evident that the soul of Will Baker wasn't a gentle, peaceful soul. Mr. Bowser had shut his eyes and felt his helplessness when the family cat came to the rescue. She had been licked in the fight, but she had been taken by surprise and hadn't had a fair chance.



With the cat clinging to his back the dog had taken a header through the window.

Burning to recover her lost laurels, after hiding for fifteen minutes under the bed she had sneaked downstairs, and all of a sudden she landed on the dog's back. The soul of Mr. Bowser's old chum was both pained and surprised at the sharpness of her teeth and the length of her claws. He made two turns round the sitting-room, three round the parlour, and then there was a smash, a cras hand a howl.

With the cat clinging to his back and putting in forty-eight hours a day, the dog had taken a header through the parlour window and the Bowsers were saved.

"And this," said Mrs. Bowser, as she got downstairs and found Mr. Bowser pale faced and trembling and his knees bending under him—"this is transmigration, is it?"

"I thought—I thought——" he stammered, but she pointed to the broken window and interrupted:

"Yes, I know, and that's the result of it! You'd better let souls and dogs and transmigration alone and find some boards to nail over that till morning."

Mr. Bowser tried to work up a bluff and save his dignity, but it was a vain effort. There was a feeling as if a cold iron were being moved up and down his spine, and the wobble of his knees took his breath away.

M. QUAD.

Next Week:

HE TAKES A COUNTRY HOUSE FOR THE SUMMER.

Digitized by Google

The Three Receipts.

THERE were only two persons who could have stolen the Andelstone diamonds; John Record, solicitor, deceased, and Patrick Desmond, his confidential clerk, who had fled to South Africa. So common report shared the guilt between the two.

John Record's wife and children knew well enough that he, who had never done an unkind or unjust act all his life, was innocent. So they decided that I, his eldest son, should go to South Africa in pursuit of the absconding clerk.

Desmond was not a man whom we should have suspected of theft had there been any alternative. A hare-brained, hot-tempered, "home rule" Irishman, his hatred of the tyrannical Saxons in general seemed tempered by impulsive affection for many in particular.

He had appeared devoted to my father, who trusted him implicitly. When he was dying and Lady Andelstone sent for her jewels, he just whispered, "Desmond."

When the messenger came back to say that Desmond was nowhere to be found he was past speech. He died that evening; and next morning we opened the bank-safe with his key; but the diamonds were not there and Desmond never re-appeared.

A report reached us later that he was in the Transvaal, among the Boers whom everyone but our government knew to be preparing for war. My own theory was that he had sold the diamonds to assist in these preparations, rather than for his personal gain.

We scraped together some £4,000—about a fifth of the value of the jewels—and offered the amount to Lady Andelstone, but she refused to touch a penny of it. She was certain, she said, that our father was not to blame, and equally certain that Desmond, whom she disliked, was.

She was a wealthy woman, in her own right, and the value of the jewels mattered very little to her. She was willing, if need be, to pay to recover them, as they had long been treasured in her family.

"I trust you implicitly in the matter, Mr. Record, as I trusted your father," she assured me.

Her kindness made me doubly anxious to recover them and I set off without delay.

I arrived at the Cape in July, and found everyone full of the impending war. I was warned that my search in the Transvaal for Desmond would be as full of danger as difficulty. So I bought a rifle and a revolver—I could shoot a little already—and practised diligently for a week.

At the end of this time I had become a marksman, which afterwards stood me in good stead. Then I went to Pretoria, and for the next two months travelled from place to place in the Transvaal, and learnt to hate the Boers as heartily as they hated me and all my race. Possibly future historians may decide that there were faults upon both sides. I do not pretend to be an impartial judge.

It was, however, soon plain to me that the two races would never live peaceably together till the supremacy of one or the other was assured. I had not suffered the Boer arrogance for a week before I was ready to bear my part in the struggle.

Just before matters reached the crisis, a villainous half-Boer, half-Portuguese, Van Duplny by name, came to me in Johannesburg.

"You seek for news of the man Desmond," he said. "Is it so?"

"Yes," I replied.

"You will a price pay?" he asked with a leer.

"A small price," I answered cautiously, knowing the man by disrepute.

"Fifty pound, eh?"

I laughed.

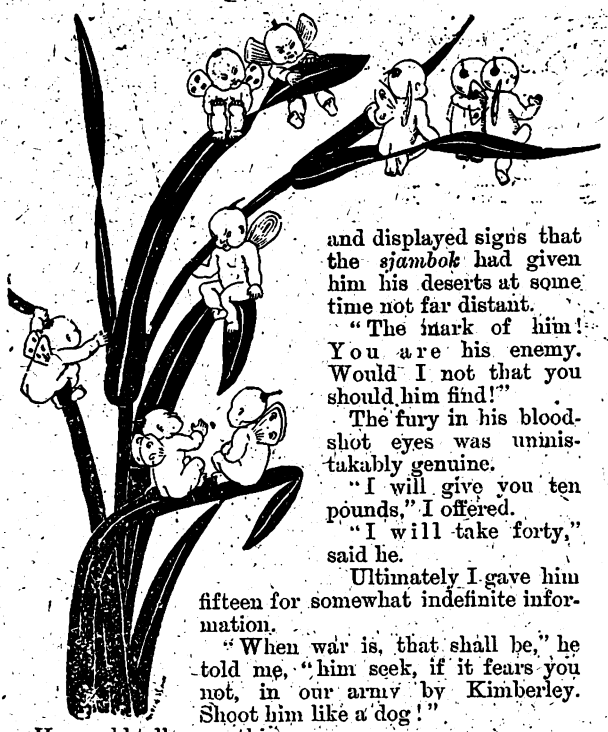
"Fifty shillings! And dear at the price. Besides, how do I know that you will tell me the truth?"

He scowled.

"See!" he snarled between his teeth.

He pulled the shirt away from the back of his neck

Digitized by Google



and displayed signs that the *sjambok* had given him his deserts at some time not far distant.

"The mark of him! You are his enemy. Would I not that you should him find!"

The fury in his bloodshot eyes was unmistakably genuine.

"I will give you ten pounds," I offered.

"I will take forty," said he.

Ultimately I gave him fifteen for somewhat indefinite information.

"When war is, that shall be," he told me, "him seek, if it fears you not, in our army by Kimberley. Shoot him like a dog!"

He would tell me nothing more.

The next day I heard of Kruger's ultimatum, and escaped, none too soon, into Natal.

Abler pens than mine have recorded the horrors of that journey. I will merely mention that we were huddled together so closely that we could scarcely breathe, and that a child, who was ailing, died during the journey.

The Boers at the halting places struck at us with whips, or fired revolvers just over our heads, when we asked for water for her. I was so exhausted myself that I had to lay up for a week at Ladysmith.

Then I got to Durban and took a steamer round to Cape Town, where I found that passenger traffic to Kimberley had stopped. So I joined the Mounted Rifles and went up with Lord Methuen's army till we were checked at Magersfontein.

During our long stay in the neighbourhood I set a Kaffir spy to work, and ascertained the whereabouts of Desmond. Incidentally I obtained information which led to fifty irregulars, including myself, being sent off on a sudden expedition one dark night.

A detachment of Boers and their mercenaries were mounting a gun upon Val Ran Kop, to strengthen their extreme left flank against attack in certain contingencies.

Our main object was to blow up the gun. My object was to capture Desmond, who, according to my informant, was among the party.

"Enemy to the North, sir."

The captain shrugged his shoulders.

"Hurry up, men."

Two artificers were working furiously at the breach of the gun in case the explosion should not damage it sufficiently. I was examining a dozen dead Boers to see if Desmond were among them.

"Enemy to the East, sir."

"Hang the enemy! Bring up the dynamite."

The men carried up the small cases and put them under the gun.

"Now lay the train," said the captain.

"Enemy to the West, sir!"

"Get to your horses, men. I'll fire it."

We ran down the slope and mounted. Our commander struck a match which went out; then another sheltered in his hands. Then he lowered it and a soft fizzing began.

"Enemy in front!" called the lieutenant.

The captain ran down the kopje with a laugh.

"Anyhow we've spoilt the gun," he said cheerily; but when he saw the force between us and our camp he looked grave. They numbered some 200. We could see them distinctly upon the moonlight plain. We ourselves were in a shadow for the moment.

"Shall we try to edge round them?" some one asked.

"No use. We should be caught between two fires. Go forward gently till the explosion. Then rush straight on. Everyone for himself. It's the only chance."

We cantered gently forward. We could not tell if we were seen, but the party came rapidly towards us. We could hear the thud, thud, thud of their galloping horses through the still night. I fidgetted with my rifle, and thought mechanically of irrelevant things, as one does at such times.

Crash!

There was an upheaval of smoke and flame in our rear. The horses broke into a gallop of their own accord except mine which reared and refused to proceed till my comrades were a couple of hundred yards ahead, fighting hand to hand with the foe. Most of them broke through with three or four Boers in pursuit of each. The rest were cut down, so I turned off to the right with three men close behind me.

Crack, crack, crack!

Three bullets whizzed by my head.

Crack, crack, crack!

Digitized by Google

Two more flew by, and a third grazed my sleeve.

I turned in my saddle and fired at the nearest horse. He fell heavily, throwing his rider over his head.

Crack, crack!

My horse had a flesh wound which merely spurred him on.

I fired again and missed. Then we came to some long grass and shrubs. My horse stumbled twice and nearly fell. I patted and coaxed him, and he gained twenty yards by a grand spurt across a small field. Then we came to rough ground.

He stumbled again and the two Boers closed upon me from either side. We leapt a hedge blazing away with our revolvers. There was a crushing pain in my left leg; an empty saddle on my right.

I fired at my remaining foeman and saw him totter in his saddle. Then our horses collided and fell; and we were hurled into the darkness side by side.

When I recovered from the shock and became used to the dim light I saw my enemy's hands groping feebly about the ground—doubtless for his revolver. Mine was still in my hand.

As I could not rise, I turned on my side and aimed at him.

"You—needn't—fire," he gasped. "I'm done for."

I hesitated.

"If I don't shoot you, you'll shoot me," I growled.

"No—I give you my word of honour."

The moon suddenly lit up his white face.

"Desmond!" I ejaculated.

He started.

"Who are you?" he asked faintly.

"The last man to whom you should talk of your honour. The son of John Record,"

"I never wronged him in my life," he said with sudden energy.

"Do you mean to say that you did not take Lady Andelstone's diamonds?" I demanded.

"Lady Andelstones diamonds! I!"

He tried to raise himself but fell back with a groan.

"Water!"

I dragged myself near enough to give him a drink from my bottle.

"Tell me what has happened."

I told him, somewhat incoherently.

The wound in my leg was paining horribly, and there was an ugly gash in my head, where I had struck the ground. I found it difficult to collect my thoughts.

When I had finished he laughed a faint laugh that was half a moan.

"So you think I took them! I! Look——"

The rest of his words were lost in a dizzy mist.

I was fainting.

When I came to, my head was on a stranger's knee, and my arms had been taken away. I was in the hands of the Boers.

They lifted me upon a stretcher, and I saw that Desmond was on another close by.

"You spared me," he said. "So they are going to take you to the English camp. Good luck!"

"The diamonds?" I cried.

"Look in your father's office desk; secret drawer; back of second from top; right hand side."

Then they carried me away.

When I reached home—I was invalided—I found that the desk had been sold; but fortunately the auctioneer was able to repurchase it, at a slight advance upon the sale price.

When it arrived we had it set down in the middle of the drawing-room and proceeded to search for the secret drawer.

After a quarter of an hour my sister Flo, who is quick-witted discovered it. The secret, like all secrets when you know them, was very simple after all.

But when the drawer came out we gave a united cry of dismay. There were no diamonds or valuables of any

Digitized by Google

sort, only a heap of old papers connected with various secrets entrusted to my father.

"So the scoundrel deceived me after all," I said bitterly. "I might have known it."

"I suppose we had better destroy the papers," suggested my mother with a sigh. "We have no right, really, to read them."

I growled assent, and the rest nodded, except Flo.

"No," she exclaimed. "Not till we have seen if they say anything about the diamonds."

I took the bundle again and glanced through it. Towards the middle I spied Lady Andelstone's signature, and pulled out this receipt:

"Received, April 18th, '99, my jewels from Mr. John Record.—MARY ANDELSTONE."

We stared at one another in speechless astonishment.

"Do not judge her till you have heard her story," said my mother at last. "We have misjudged poor Desmond already."

"Unfortunately," I said, "there is no room for doubt in the present instance. She has evidently had the jewels disposed of them for some purpose of her own; and thrown the blame upon my dead father."

I sent the servant to fetch a cab, and put on my overcoat. Flo begged to be allowed to accompany me, and I reluctantly consented.

"I have an idea, Fred," she said. "No, I can't tell you; but I *must* come."

So I took her.

If I had not done so we should probably never have discovered the rights of the matter. For, when I showed the receipt to Lady Andelstone, she went first red, then white, and finally refused to discuss the matter.

"I acknowledge the receipt," she said; and that was all that she would tell me.

Then my sister spoke.

"Will you swear that it is your writing, Lady Andelstone?"

Her ladyship started violently.

"Have I repudiated it?"

"Here is a former receipt of yours." Flo held them side by side. "Suppose an expert compared them."

Lady Andelstone went whiter than ever.

"It is mine," she said. "or—or—written by my authority."

"By whom? Do you wish to answer in court?"

"I will not say another word," she declared in a trembling voice, "there or here."

"But suppose I could show you a way to clear our father's memory, and at the same time avert disgrace from anyone dear to you? This must have been presented by some one near to you, or the writing would have been scrutinised and the forgery detected."

Her ladyship wiped her parched lips with a dainty handkerchief.

"What do you want?" she asked hoarsely.

"A receipt for your jewels—which we have found, let us suppose in the secret drawer."

Lady Andelstone dragged herself slowly from her chair, staggered across the room, sat down at a dainty desk and wrote the receipt. She handed it to me without a word, and we rose to depart; but my sister lingered.

"I am *so* sorry," she said gently. "So very sorry."

Lady Andelstone threw her arms round her.

"My husband!" she sobbed. "Heaven forgive him! My husband!"

OWEN OLIVER.

"TOMMY," said a fond father to his little boy, who had received a linen-mounted book of pictures as a present, "What are you crying for?"

"Because I can't tear my picture book, papa," was the ingenuous reply.

LITTLE ETHEL: "Mamma, I wish you'd wash Willie Prettie's face."

Mamma: "The idea! He's not my little boy. I have nothing to do with him."

Little Ethel: "But I have. We's become engaged, an' I want to kiss him."

"WHAT's wrong with our new midget? He doesn't seem to draw."

Manager: "Of course not. See what a mess you've made of the advertisements. You've put his height at three feet. Make it thirty-six inches, and the people wil lcome with a rush."

"GREAT SCOTT, man! what are you doing with four alarm clocks in your room?"

"I want to try and get a little sleep."

"How can that help you?"

"My wife and baby have gone for a visit, and everything is so quiet. I can't close my eyes."

SHE: "You won't object to have my dear mamma live with us after we are married, will you?"

He (a young physician): "Not at all. In fact she'll be most welcome."

"I'm so glad you feel that way."

"Yes; you see she is always ailing, and I really need somebody to experiment on."

A YOUNG minister, unexpectedly called upon to address a Sunday-school, asked, to gain time:

"Children, what shall I speak about?"

A little girl on the front seat, who had herself committed to memory several declamations, held up her hand, and in a shrill voice inquired:

"What do you know?"

AT a bazaar superintended by some professional beauties of London a sailor lad stood in front of one of the stalls in breathless admiration. Then, taking a sixpence from his pocket, he laid it shyly upon the table and passed on.

"Won't you have something for your money?" asked the fairest of the attendants.

"I've had more than my money's worth already," answered Jack gallantly, and walked on quite satisfied.

THE ART OF BEAUTY.

(BY A TOILET SPECIALIST.)

Small crown 8vo. Price 1s.

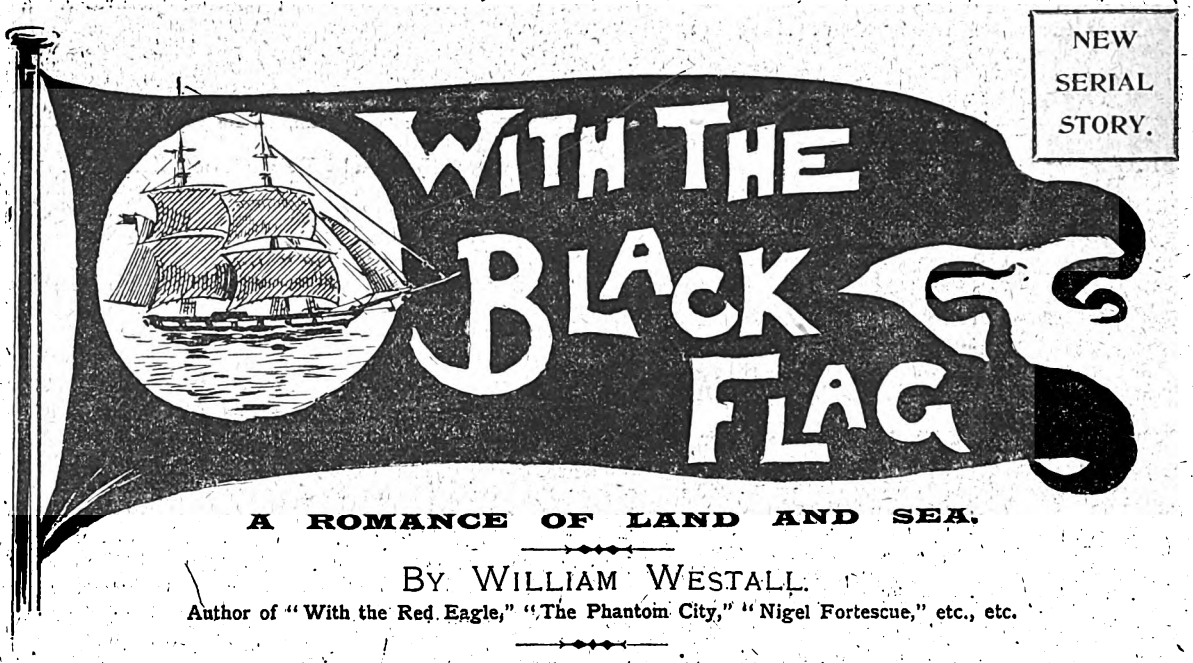
Some of the twenty chapters are:

The Cure of Stoutness	Chap. I.
The Cure of Leaness	„ II.
The Figure...	„ IV.
Bad Complexions, How to Cure Them ...	„ V.
The Complexion	„ VI.
The Hair in Health...	„ VII.
The Hair in Ill-Health	„ VIII.
Moles, Warts, and Superfluous Hair ...	„ XIII.

C. ARTHUR PEARSON Limited, Henrietta Street, W.C.

Digitized by Google

NEW SERIAL STORY.



A ROMANCE OF LAND AND SEA.

BY WILLIAM WESTALL.

Author of "With the Red Eagle," "The Phantom City," "Nigel Fortescue," etc., etc.

SUMMARY.

Major Wyvenhoe leaves England on the *Campanella* with a detachment of troops, raised by Major Barnish, to help the Venezuelans in their struggle for liberty. Major Barnish is accompanied on the vessel by his wife. At Cork a detachment of Irishmen is taken on board together with General Molyneux, who is connected with the Venezuelan Army, his secretary and chaplain. When the vessel has been out a few days Major Barnish meets with a fatal accident, and on that same day a mutiny breaks out among the troops, but it is speedily quelled. On the day of Barnish's death a sail is sighted, and the vessel proves to be the *Dulcinea*, a Spanish warship. The *Campanella* is ordered to stop so that her cargo may be examined. The captain (Cautley) objects, and while negotiations are going on, the *Dulcinea* is boarded by a party from the *Campanella*, when the guns are spiked and the vessel put out of working order. General Molyneux, who had come with the party unasked, kills a Spanish sailor, and is left with the Spaniards as a prisoner.

Shortly after this a small sailing boat is seen and stopped by the *Campanella*, and it is ascertained that the chief towns on the coast are still occupied by the patriots. As Captain Cautley does not know the Venezuelan coast well a pilot has to be obtained, and it is found that Conroy, one of the chief mutineers, is able to act as such, and the course of the ship is intrusted to him.

CHAPTER VI.

THE CAPTURE OF THE *Santa Marta*.

THE cove or lagoon, whither Conroy piloted us, fully justified his description, being so secluded and begirt with great trees that there was no sea view even from the mast-head, and, to our misery, no sea breeze, the want of which made it like a furnace by day and an oven by night. Moreover, to the discomforts of intense heat were added the onslaughts of myriads of mosquitoes and sandflies, which drove us nearly frantic. But as the brig was so moored as to command the narrow entrance to the cove (into which she had been warped), and the country covered with an impenetrable growth of underwood and prickly-pear trees, we were well protected both on the land side and the sea side, though it was not pleasant to think of what our fate might be if we were blockaded.

These prickly-pear trees are the most formidable defensive works I ever encountered. They tear the clothes off your back and bury their arrow-like points in your skin, poisoning the blood and inflicting painful wounds which heal with difficulty and sometimes mortify. Forcing a way through them is out of the question, and the few paths made by the natives are so narrow that contact with these cannibal-like thorns, which dart on their victim like birds of prey, cannot be avoided.

For the rest, Margarita is a hot and thirsty land, and for the most part, a barren land, and so dry withal, that except in and shortly after the rainy season water has to be imported, and the inhabitants live principally on fish and by fishing.

Not long before there had been a prosperous pearl fishery leased to Messrs. Rundle and Bridge, of London, but when General Morillo occupied the island, he had all the divers (who were suspected of "patriotism"), together with their wives and families, knocked on the head; so the industry perished, no others caring to run the double risk of being eaten by sharks and slaughtered by Spaniards.

Altogether, Margarita could not be described as a desirable dwelling place, the cove being perhaps the least desirable part of it, and we were all pleased when on the day after our arrival Cautley said with great emphasis, "We will clear out of this hole before this time to-morrow."

But we had first to gather more precise information as to the position of our friends and the movements of our enemies than had yet been forthcoming, for which purpose one of the ship's boats was sent out to make inquiries, in charge of Hankin, the second officer, with whom went Conroy as pilot and myself as interpreter, each wearing the national costume of Venezuela, a shirt and a pair of trousers, the former garment outside the latter, and a straw hat.

I had also to keep an eye on Conroy.

"I don't think he means either to desert or betray us," the captain had said; "but if he offers to do either, shoot him."

Conroy did not offer to do either, probably because he had nothing to gain thereby, so I was not called upon to act as executioner, greatly to my satisfaction, killing men in cold blood, even though they are miscreants, not being my *métier*.

It was the hottest day I had ever known; the heat of the sun, together with the heat reverberated by the rocks, made us perspire so profusely that we could only see by

Digitized by Google

continually wiping our eyes, and our clothes became as wet as if they had been dipped in water.

Out at sea it was probably cooler, but as there was a possibility of falling in with a Spanish cruiser, we did not think it prudent to venture far from the coast, with which Conroy seemed quite familiar.

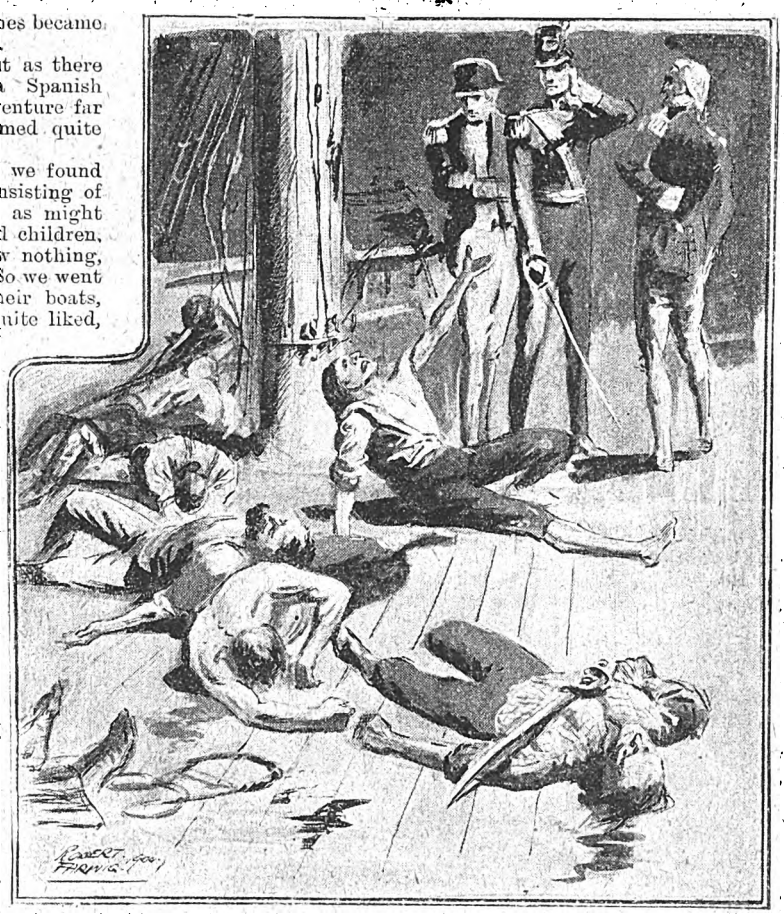
He piloted us into a small inlet where we found swarms of mosquitoes, and a hamlet, consisting of half-a-dozen roofs on stilts, inhabited, as might appear, by lanky, long-nosed pigs, naked children, and dirty, scantily-clad women, who knew nothing, and the men folk were all away fishing. So we went on, and, after awhile, found one of their boats, albeit rather further out at sea than we quite liked, though, as we presently ascertained, there was little or nothing to fear, the cruisers seldom coming so far north, and owing to the shallowness of the water thereabouts, always giving the land a wide berth.

At first the fishermen regarded us with suspicion, but on learning that we were against the Spaniards they became quite communicative and told us all they knew, which turned out to be all we wanted to know.

Pampatar had not been attacked, nor was there any sign of an impending attack.

Two Spanish sloops of war were cruising between Margarita and the Main, though now and then they would weather the north point and come round the other way. But for the most part one was so close in shore and the other in the offing, on the look-out for transports which, as was said, were bringing troops from England for service in Venezuela.

My retort confirmed Cautley in his decision to leave the cove that night or early next morning, so timing his departure as to be off Pampatar shortly before dawn.



Many of the Spaniards were killed and wounded.

"It is then we are most likely to catch the inshore sloop unprepared; and if I can get the weather gage, I shall give her a broadside, and carry her by boarding before the other can come to her help. It will be a fine chance for your fellows to show their mettle."

The remainder of the day was taken up in making ready for battle. The magazine was opened, boxes of round shot, grape, and canister were brought on deck, rammers, sponges, and canisters placed near the guns, cartridges served out, muskets cleaned, flints examined, cutlasses sharpened, and to the strain of suspense succeeded the bustle of preparation, greatly to the delight both of soldiers and sailors, who were weary of the long voyage and spoiling for a fight.

Cautley studied his charts and had several consultations with Conroy touching tides, currents, shoals, and soundings.

About midnight the *Campanella* was warped out of the cove and stood out to sea, edging away from Margarita northward on the starboard tack, the object being to gain a wide offing, and then "bearing up round," run to Pampatar before the wind, which in that part of the Caribbean sea generally blows from east to west. The operation was rather tedious, and as it involved frequent tacking, our progress at the beginning was rather slow. But the weather and the night favoured our design. Though there was no moon, the stars shone so brilliantly that Cautley had quite as much light as he wanted, and we were little more than an hour's sail from Pampatar when they began to pale.

Everybody was on the alert, look-out men were stationed at the masthead, in the bows, and aft, and the skipper and his mates continually swept the horizon with their night glasses.

But for a time all to no purpose, and some of us were beginning to fear there would be no fighting, which after so much preparation and high strung expectation would have been a great disappointment, when the man at the masthead sang out: "Sail ho!"

"Where away?" asked the captain.

"On the port bow."

"Can you make her out?"

"Not quite."

Then a moment afterwards:

"A single-masted ship on the starboard tack."

The stranger could presently be discerned from the quarter-deck, and, after a long look through his glass, Cautley pronounced her to be one of the Spanish sloops. Whether she had sighted us was as yet uncertain, but there could be nothing so sure as that she would do so, and our captain took measures to deceive her as to our character and intentions, for if the Spanish captain suspected we were armed and meant fighting he might wait for his consort, and we were not strong enough to tackle them both. True, we should probably be able in any event either to beat them or give them the slip, but that was not enough, Cautley had made up his mind to sail into port with a prize.

Digitized by Google

So instead of bearing boldly up to the sloop, as though he meant mischief, the skipper ordered every stitch of canvas to be spread, as though he wanted to avoid her. But as it would have defeated his object to go too fast, a heavy boom was drooped astern which checked the ship's way.

The trick succeeded. The Spaniard shook out his huge mainsail, hoisted his foresail, and altered his course so as to get between us and Pampatar, which was the very thing we wanted.

The deck had already been cleared for action, every man was at his station, and two hundred soldiers with loaded muskets were lying behind the quarters, but we were not to show our teeth until the last moment.

Meanwhile the sloop came on as if her commander either expected no resistance or counted on an easy victory. Cautley, on the other hand, contrived to keep the weather gage, and a collision being now inevitable, the boom was hauled on board, and the *Campanella* went ahead at a pace that evidently surprised the Spaniard, who straightway sent a shot across our bows as a gentle hint to heave to. No notice being taken, he fired another, which grazed the foremast and nearly knocked a seaman's head off.

"That is from his bow chaser, he has got a 'Long Tom,'" quoth Cautley coolly.

"He seems to be ready; anyhow, he is more prepared than you expected. All his men are at quarters," I said.

Arismendez was broad-shouldered, deep-chested, and built like an athlete.

"He is not prepared for the reception I am going to give him. Run out the guns; up with the flag!"

The Spaniards now began to fire in earnest, but owing to the relative position of the ships most of their shots went wide, though we were several times hulled, and the "Long Tom" hit us repeatedly, sending two poor fellows to their account.

Not until the *Campanella* had gained the position for which Cautley had been manœuvring did he give the order to fire.

Great was the havoc wrought by that one discharge. The sloop was raked fore and aft; many of the Spaniards were killed and wounded, among them the man at the wheel, and there being no one ready to take his place, she flew up into the wind, on which our captain ranged alongside and grappled, after giving them a volley of musketry at point-blank range. Then he gave the order to board, on which my men leapt on the sloop's deck, wildly cheering, and there followed the fiercest hand-to-hand fight I had ever seen. The Spaniards, driven to bay, fought a hopeless battle with the ferocity of despair, for they were outnumbered by two to one, and seeing that unless they yielded all must perish, I called to them in their own language to surrender.

"Will you spare our lives, then?" demanded an officer whose face was black with powder and streaked with blood.

"Certainly," I answered.

"On your honour?"

"On the honour of an Englishman."

He ordered his men to lay down their arms, I bade my bugler sound the recall, and the combat, which had been going on all over the deck, ceased.

The officer, who turned out to be the captain, tendered me his sword, which I refused to accept, and, after complimenting him on his courage, inquired why, when resistance had become altogether hopeless and there was no chance of saving his ship, he had not hauled down his flag.

"Because we thought that, as you were fighting under the Venezuelan ensign, you gave no quarter."

"And do the Venezuelans never give quarter?"

"Never. If you were Venezuelans—patriots they call themselves—our wounded would be thrown to the sharks, and the rest of us either hacked to pieces or hanged."

I was too polite to believe the gentleman, who, however, evidently believed what he said. But I could not. It was too horrible. His name, as he told me, was Moro—Don Tadeo Moro—that of the sloop, *Santa Marta*. She was in a dreadful condition. Our broadside had destroyed a great part of the bulwarks, damaged the rigging and ploughed up the deck, which was slippery with blood and strewn with mangled bodies and wounded men. The former were disposed of in the only way possible; for the latter, all was done that could be done. As the sloop's cockpit was already crowded and her surgeon overwhelmed with work, many of them were removed to the *Campanella* and placed under the care of our own surgeons.

We, too, had suffered, though not nearly so much as the Spaniard, and it took some time to repair our damages, and put the *Santa Marta* in a condition to be taken back to Pampatar.

Meanwhile the other sloop had been sighted to the sou'-west, between us and the Main.

"We were not much too soon," said Cautley as he pointed her out to me. "An hour later and we should have had to fight them both or run for it. I am not going to run now, and if she comes much nearer I'll try conclusions with her."

The second sloop did come nearer, but getting no answer to her signals, moved off and headed towards the coast.

"Do you think we can overhaul her before she gets too close to Cumana, Conroy?" asked the skipper of the pilot, who was close behind us.

"I would not advise you to try, sir. She sails fast. Cumana is not far off, and if the wind were to fall off after

Digitized by Google

you had weathered Point Escarpca, you might find yourself in a fix, especially if there are gunboats in the bay, as is very likely."

The advice seemed sound. I seconded it, Cautley acted on it, and the brig and the sloop, the latter with a prize crew on board, were presently bearing up for Pampatar.

As we neared the port, three guns were fired, and Cautley, taking this for a salute (though it turned out to be an alarm signal), answered with three guns from each vessel. Then, in order to reassure the garrison and the inhabitants, who might think we were Spaniards, he ordered the Union Jack to be displayed over the stern of each vessel, and the Venezuelan flag at the head of our fore-top-gallant mast.

We had no sooner anchored than several boats came out, one of which contained two men in uniform, whom we took for officers of the port. On learning whom we were they seemed greatly pleased, and said that General Arismendez, the Governor, and General Urdenetta, his second in command, were at the Government House, and invited the captain of the *Campanella* and the commander of the troops to honour them with a visit, on which Cautley ordered his gig to be lowered, and we went on shore.

The two generals received us with great cordiality, and when I told them of the capture of the *Santa Marta*, overwhelmed us with thanks, compliments, and embraces. Arismendez put his arms round me, patted me on the back with both hands, and kissed me on both cheeks, while Urdenetta treated my companion in like fashion. Cautley made a wry face, fortunately unobserved by our hosts, whose effusive greetings would have been more agreeable if they had not smelt so excessively of garlic.

Notwithstanding the warmth of our welcome, Arismendez did not at first impress me favourably. He was about fifty years old, but looked older — broad-shouldered, deep-chested, and built like an athlete. His features were Spanish, his complexion and hair Indian, his furrowed, weather-beaten face was scarred with wounds. The general was much given to smiling, but his smiles were not pleasant; and his laugh, owing to the distortion produced by his scars, made him look absolutely appalling. Yet, as I afterwards discovered, he was one of the ablest of his country's leaders, and though, perhaps, as cruel as a man of his blood can be, honest, honourable, and straightforward, qualities very rare at that time, and even yet, in Venezuela.

Either by accident or neglect he had received no advice of our coming, and on hearing that Major Barnish had defrayed the entire cost of the expedition, of raising the troops and of the munitions of war we had brought with us, he appeared deeply touched, protesting that so much devotion to the cause of Venezuelan freedom deserved to be handsomely recompensed, that the matter should be brought before Congress, who would no doubt pass an order for the immediate payment to Mrs. Barnish of all that her husband had laid out, so soon as the finances of the Republic were in a little better condition.

Then, with one of his queer smiles, he added: "If we had any money I would take the responsibility of making Mrs. Barnish a payment on account. But we are unfortunately very poor."

As for the *Campanella*, she would make a valuable addition to the national navy, he should recommend her acquisition, and Mrs. Barnish might name her own price. The troops and the *Campanella*'s ship's company were also to be handsomely rewarded for the capture of the *Santa Marta*, and Captain Cautley might regard his appointment to a command in the Venezuelan navy as assured.

Nothing could have been more satisfactory, though I did not quite like the general's qualifications about the finances of the Republic. On the other hand, I harboured no doubt as to his sincerity, and felt sure that he meant all that he had said. But the Castilian tongue lends itself to exaggeration, and I had not yet learnt that Spanish Creoles are given to promising, in perfect good faith, more than they

"I don't want to have anything more to do with you, Conroy."

are able to perform, and that almost any other Venezuelan in the general's position would have promised payment in a month or a week without any qualification whatever.

Cautley was highly elated at the turn things were taking.

"What a relief it will be for poor Mrs. Barnish," he exclaimed, and I had to be the interpreter of his warmest thanks to General Arismendez, as also General Urdenetta, whom he invited to pay a visit to the *Campanella*. The compliment pleased them, and the invitation was graciously accepted.

As we were about to take our leave I bethought me of the prisoners, and asked the chief how we should dispose of them.

"What prisoners?"

"The survivors of the *Santa Marta*'s crew."

"You have not killed them all, then?"

"No. Only those of them who fell in action."

"Ah! I understand. You English don't kill your prisoners of war. Well, send them ashore and I will save you the trouble," answered Arismendez, with a laugh that made him look like an hyena.

"Pardon me, general, but that must not be," I said respectfully, but firmly. "I induced these men to surrender by promising them, on my honour, that their lives should be spared."

The general laughed again, his face worked convulsively, and I thought there was going to be an explosion, perhaps a quarrel, for I would have perished rather than permit the Spaniards to be put to death. But by a strong effort he suppressed his anger.

"Very well, they are your prisoners, not mine. Do with them what you will," he said, "only they must not land.

Digitized by Google

Towards the end of the banquet several orators were often on their legs at the same time.

So long as I am in command here I will not suffer a Spaniard to live in Margarita, and even though I were disposed to do so, I would not answer for my men."

I thanked Arismendez for conceding so much, little as it was—and, considering what manner of man he was, he deserved my thanks—though Cautley and I went away feeling a good deal less elated than we had done a few minutes previously.

"What shall we do with these wretched Spaniards? They are not safe here," I said.

"They must be off to-night in the sloop's boats; and if they won't hold them all, I will give them one of mine."

I was very glad I had not reported the mutiny to General Arismendez, and so told the skipper.

"Why?" he asked.

"He would have had all the mutineers shot, and though several of them richly deserve it, the execution of so many, besides being unjust, would have a bad effect on the other men and be a very bad beginning."

"Very. But what will you do? Mutiny is not an offence to be lightly passed over."

"The best I can in the circumstances. Dismiss Price and Bryan and about twenty more from the force and leave them to get home as best they can, merely telling Arismendez that they misbehaved so badly during the voyage, that I have lost all confidence in them, and after the lesson the others have already received, I think they will prove amenable to discipline, especially as I shall let them know what the consequences will be if they play any tricks."

"Death?"

"Yes. Unless I am greatly mistaken the general would deal as ruthlessly with mutineers as he deals with Spaniards."

On our return to the *Campanella* I paid the men who had returned to their duty the balance of their bounties, and informed the rank and file of the mutineers that I had decided to give them another chance, and what would happen if they misused it. The ringleaders, however, I kept under arrest, and in ignorance of the fate in store for them. This done we settled with Conroy, but gave him no thanks, for he was the worst offender of the lot, and should have been the most severely punished, yet we were letting him off scot free, and putting money in his purse.

"Cannot you keep me as pilot, Captain Cautley?" he said. "You won't find anybody who knows these seas and coasts as well as I do. I know the Orinoco, too, and could take your ship up to Angostura if you are ordered there."

"I daresay you could, but I don't want to have anything more to do with you, Conroy. You may stay on board another night, but to-morrow the troops disembark, and you must go ashore and find quarters for yourself; and mind what you are about! If I hear of your playing any hanky-panky tricks, I shall report you to the Governor. You know what that means."

"I guess I do. All the same, Captain Cautley, it would have been worth your while to give me a 'berth,'" answered Conroy with an evil smile, and then turned sullenly away.

"You have made an enemy of a revengeful man," quoth I.

"Well, you surely would not have me make a friend of the rascal, would you?"

"Not at all. Only it might have been better policy to refuse his request less curtly, and say nothing about the governor. He has been very useful and gave us good advice about chasing the other sloop."

"That is true, but the real grievance is my refusing his request for a berth; which was quite out of the question. Besides, how can he hurt us? Not by stirring up another mutiny on board for he won't be on board, and he is not such a fool as to attempt aught of the sort with your men ashore. He knows what the consequences would be. I have sent the gig for Don Tadeo; we must arrange about his departure. He is coming now," pointing to the *Santa Marta*.

The gig was about a hundred yards from the sloop, and following her were several boats thronged with townspeople, who had come off to see the *Campanella* and her prize.

"What are the beggars shouting?"

"*Ahorcadle! Degalladle!*" I answered, after listening a minute or two, the cries being so confused and discordant that their purport was hard to catch.

"And that means?"

"Hang him! Cut his throat!"

Digitized by Google

"By Jove! What a bloodthirsty lot they must be! Women, too!"

"Yes, their shouts are the loudest; at any rate, the shrillest."

"The Spaniards must be sent off at once, anyhow, as soon as possible, or we shall have further trouble. In the night would be best, don't you think, when these furies are abed?"

"In the night, by all means. Were they to start by day, they would stand a good chance of being pursued and massacred."

The gig presently drew under our lee quarter, followed by the Margaritanos, who were still clamouring, though a little less vociferously, for Don Tadeo's blood, who sat in the stern sheets as impassive as a bronze statue, which he rather resembled, his features being massive and clearly cut, and his naturally dark skin tanned to the colour of mahogany.

Without casting a glance behind him, he mounted the ship's side, and on reaching the deck greeted us with the high-bred courtesy of a Spanish hidalgo.

I told him briefly—for we knew not how soon the governor might come on board—that as General Arismendez would neither let them and his people disembark nor protect them, we had decided to let them go away in their own boats, and having regard to the temper of the townspeople, we thought they had better leave after nightfall, and recommended Don Tadeo to take measures accordingly.

"You are very kind, señores, and I am very grateful," he said in his stately way. "I knew that the promise you made would be faithfully kept. But in releasing us you are doing more than you promised, and if it should ever be in my power I shall do as much, or more, for you. You see, señor, I was quite right in saying that the Venezuelans kill their prisoners."

"It seems so, but pray tell me whether, when they fall into your hands, you treat them any better?"

A look of lofty disdain and intense scorn swept over Don Tadeo's face.

"I am sure, señor," he said, "you do not mean to suggest that there can be any comparison between pestilent low-bred rebels and loyal subjects of his majesty the King. If you did, and I were not a prisoner——"

"But you are a prisoner, and we have no time for argument or differences," I interrupted, "we are expecting the governor, and it might be unpleasant for us all if he were to find you here. Is there room in your boats for all your people, including the wounded?"

"I think so, we are fewer than we were yesterday, and if we leave at midnight we ought to reach Fort Arraya soon after sunrise."

"As to that you will have to use your own discretion. The officer in command of the prize will be told to place the boats at your disposal, and that you are free to go whenever you think fit."

"It is all I could expect and more than I dared to hope, and now, señores, I will wish you farewell and return to my ship—I beg your pardon—the ship that was mine."

Then we all saluted, and Don Tadeo went over the side and was rowed back to the *Sante Marta*.

"My ship! Rather good that, wasn't it?" said Cautley, laughing; "he got out of it very well, though. Why did not you put in 'and never will be again.' If I knew Spanish well enough I would have done."

"For three reasons. I did not think of it, it would not have been polite, and he is very touchy."

"I should think he is touchy. How he flew up when you asked whether the Spaniards don't measure out to the Venezuelans the same measure as the Venezuelans mete out to them? I begin to see how the land lies, the Venezuelans having been treated like dogs, are retaliating like fiends."

Soon afterwards came the generals with their respective staffs, all in gala uniform, and very grand. I rather feared that my refusal to let General Arismendez massacre the Spanish prisoners might have set him against me, but so far from showing coldness or displeasure, he was, if possible, more affable than before. I introduced him to Mrs. Barnish, to whom he said many handsome things about her late husband, laid himself (metaphorically) at her feet, and assured her that all he possessed was at her disposal.

The poor woman, as I could see, was rather frightened, especially when the governor smiled, which was often, but she bore up very well and made a touching little speech in reply, which I had the honour of interpreting, and when he asked her to make his house her home, and mentioned that Senora Arismendez would pay her a visit later in the day, she brightened up wonderfully, and the skipper whispered to me that he had never seen Mrs. Barnish look so handsome.

The governor next invited us—Cautley, myself, and all our officers, to a banquet which he proposed to give in our honour in the evening. I said something, as also did the skipper, about not liking to leave the ships and troops to the under officers, but Arismendez brushed this objection aside and we were fain to accept the invitation as it was given.

Father Bartrum was also introduced at his own request, and the General was agreeably surprised to find that we had a Catholic chaplain.

"*Caramba!* Some of you are Christians, then! I thought you were all *ereticos*," he exclaimed pleasantly.

His reverence accompanied us to the banquet, and, I am sorry to say, got very tipsy, like a good many others, for there was no stint either of food or drink, and the *vin du pays*, especially some fine old white Carupano rum, was very potent. The guests were numerous, and many toasts were drunk and many speeches made. Indeed, towards the end of the banquet several orators were often on their legs at the same time. It lasted till past midnight, and had a dramatic and picturesque termination. Two gentlemen mounted the table, and after a few wildly incoherent observations, tried to rush into each other's arms, but missing their aim, fell on the floor with a mighty crash.

On this Cautley and I thought we had better be going, and took our leave of General Arismendez, who, though he had drunk deep, had not lost his senses.

When we had got all our men together, a matter of some difficulty, we went down to the jetty where our boat was waiting.

"Go first to the sloop to put Mr. Benn aboard (the third officer in charge of the prize), then to the *Campanella*," said the skipper to the coxswain, to which the coxswain answered, "Ay, ay, sir."

"I see no lights on the sloop, Mr. Benn. How is that?" he demanded, sharply, when we had been a few minutes under way.

"I am sure I don't know, sir. I saw the lanterns lighted before I left her," replied Benn.

"They must have gone out, then. Very queer, though, the wind has not been high, and even if it had—Make way, men!"

The *Santa Marta* was anchored a cable's length north of the *Campanella*, whose lights were quite visible, and in a line with her. Thither the boat was steered, and speedily arrived; but, barring a few small hookeys, nothing could be seen nor, though we rowed round and round, to and fro, halloing till we were hoarse, did there come any answering hail.

The sloop was gone.

(*To be continued.*)

Digitized by Google

WITH APOLOGIES TO PLUMBERS.

We devote, every week, two pages of *Short Stories* to pithy, humourous anecdotes similar to those which appear in these columns. A prize of £1 1s. will be sent to the reader who submits the best storyette this week, and a copy of "The Little Legacy," by L. B. Walford, to each of those whose attempts are used. The anecdotes may be either original or selected; in the latter case the source *must* be stated. The prize of One Guinea offered for the best Storyette in this competition has been won this week by Mr. W. J. Ormiston, Cameronian Cottage, Brynhyfryd, Swansea. Attempts for this week's prize must deal with STORIES ABOUT SEASIDE LODGINGS, and must reach the Storyette Editor, *Short Stories* Office, Henrietta Street, Strand, London, W.C., by Tuesday, August 7th. Post-cards only, please.

The War Responsible.

PILEITON, the plumber, had executed some repairs for Mrs. Softcash, and presented his bill for same. Recollections of previous bills promptly paid by Mrs. Softcash without dispute had encouraged Pileiton to exert his great talents in this branch of the profession to the utmost, and the bill in question was a masterpiece. He surpassed himself, and Mrs. Softcash awoke at last to a faint suspicion that she was being overcharged.

"But, Pileiton," she remarked, "this seems a heavy charge for such small repairs."

Pileiton, prevaricating plumber, was prepared.

"All on 'count o' the war, mum," he replied.

"The war? How does it affect plumbing?"

"Lead orful scarce, mum. War Orfice buys it orl up for bullets, mum, so its riz appallin', mum!"

W. J. O.

Bowser Again.

BOWSER, on returning home the other afternoon, found a strange man in the kitchen smoking his pipe and chatting to the cook.

"Who is this gent'eman?" inquired Bowser suspiciously.

"I'm the plumber, sir," replied the workman; "got a little job with the pump, sir."

Bowser turned pale. "Oh, dear!" he groaned, "is it so bad as that? I was hoping you were merely the broker's man." And he staggered gloomily away.

H. E. L.

Served Her Right.

AN amusing story is told of a plumber and a widow. The latter had suddenly lost her husband, who had died intestate, and the widow, being desirous of securing the whole of his estate, persuaded a plumber—a neighbour—to take the place of her sick husband in bed while a lawyer attended to take down his will.

The plumber was quite willing, and, when the lawyer arrived, in a feeble voice bequeathed half the estate to the widow.

"What shall be done with the remainder?" asked the lawyer.

"The remainder," said he, "I give to the poor old plumber across the street, who has always been a good neighbour and a deserving man," thus securing a rich bequest to himself.

The widow was thunderstruck with the man's cunning, but did not care to expose the fraud.

E. J. B.

Turning the Tables.

A CERTAIN gentleman was very fond of laying traps for workmen who might happen to be working in or about his house by leaving money or some valuable article about.

A plumber, well aware of this fact, found a half-crown lying on the floor of one of the rooms.

He smiled as he said to himself:

"I know what that's for," and, taking a brace and a bit from his bag, he drilled a hole in the coin, and, putting a large screw-nail through it, he fastened it securely to the floor.

The gentleman has not set any traps since. L. H.

A Smart Retort.

A BOY was holding a lighted candle for his master, a plumber, who was engaged upon some repairs on a water-pipe in a dwelling-house the other day.

The boy, being rather careless, put the candle too near his master's head, and up went the latter's hair in a blaze.

The master turned round in a rage, and after inflicting punishment upon his apprentice, said:

"You stupid idiot, can ye no watch whit ye're daein', the fowk o' the house'll think we have been singeing a sheep's heid by the smell we're setting up."

"Aweel," replied the boy, sulkily, "they'll mebbe no be far wrang." L. S. B.

The Reason He Was Quiet.

A LOCAL plumber was called to execute some repairs in the kitchen of a large deaf and dumb institution recently, and after instructing the man as to the nature of the repairs, the superintendent left him to do the job.

Without a moment's loss of time, the craftsman set to work with a will, much regretting, of course, that the attractive feminine staff and everybody around him could not be talked to.

As evening and the knocking-off hour came on, the repairs having been made, the workman, shouldering his bag of tools, was turning to leave, when a bonnie, bright-eyed domestic laughingly remarked:

"Well, you're the quietest plumber we've ever had here!"

"Good heavens!" gasped he, almost dropping his tools, "why, I thought you were all deaf and dumb."

And as the poor fellow dejectedly departed, he was overheard to mournfully murmur: "Oh! it is too cruel—a whole day wasted!" W. J. B.

Digitized by Google

A Plumber Who Hurried Himself.

MARK TWAIN gave recently a lecture to young people on "Economy of Time," and in the lecture gave the following sad incident about an "industrious" plumber:

"I once knew a plumber," said the American celebrity, "who, incredible as it may appear, finished some work he had to do for me in a great hurry. This plumber was mending a tap which protruded from the roof of my five-storeyed house, and, to speak perfectly candidly, I never knew a man finish his work so speedily. Yes, my young friends, he finished his work speedily, if not hurriedly.

"He fell off the roof."

T. A. W.

A True Tale About "W. G."

Two plumbers were working outside the Pavilion, in the Aigburth Cricket Ground, Liverpool, during a match between Gloucestershire and Lancashire.

W. G. Grace came in to bat and hit his first three balls to the boundary.

One of the plumbers was surprised at his not running, and after the third stroke, exclaimed:

"I say, Jimmy, how many trials is that big bloke going to have?"

J. H.

Honest Plumbers.

THE day was young. Two men, each carrying a bag of tools, came slowly up to the corner of a street and there paused. A tram had just passed the corner, and was about twenty feet away.

"There's our tram," remarked one calmly.

"No matter," replied his companion; "we'd have to hurry to catch it. There'll be another in an hour."

And they seated themselves in a doorway and lit their pipes. They were plumbers!

A. H.

The Plumber in Danger.

A PLUMBER and his assistant went one day to repair a lead cistern at a large house in Bedford Place.

After letting all the water out of the cistern the plumber got into it to mend it. As the cistern was about six feet deep, and with only a small door at the top, he had rather a difficult task to get down to the bottom, and was compelled to use a pair of steps for the purpose.

When the plumber had found the leakage and mended it he told his ass stant to go and turn the water on, while he got himself and the tools out.

The assistant, forgetting that his master would require the steps for the purpose of getting out, took them down to the cellar so as to be able to reach the stop-cock. After doing this the cook asked him to have some lunch, which he did and then went upstairs expecting to find his master ready to go home.

Instead of this, the assistant found the plumber calling out for all he was worth from the cistern, and then he suddenly remembered that it was quite impossible to get out of the cistern without the steps, and his master would no doubt have been in danger of drowning had he arrived much later. As it was the water was well up to his waist.

R. C. P.

If!

HE was anxious to get into his new house at once, and he said to the foreman plumber:

"When will you be finished with your work?"

The canny foreman truthfully replied:

"Weel, ye see it a' depends. The maister's awa' lookin' aifter anither job. If he gets it we'll be finished the nicht, but if he disna we'll no' be finished till the end o' next week."

J. S. A.

Tit for Tat.

A PLUMBER was once sent to a gentleman's house to make some repairs.

Whilst at work, the lady of the house, a sour and elderly person, entered, and noticing some of her silver plate lying about, sent for the butler, bade him lock it up, as, she said, "she did not know who was who."

The plumber heard the remark, and, calling to his apprentice, he said loudly:

"Take home my watch and chain, Jimmy, there seems to be shady people about this house."

L. J. B.

A Soft Fall.

A PLUMBER, repairing the roof of a grocer's establishment in Glasgow, fell through the skylight and alighted in a large tub of butter, in which he was thoroughly immersed.

The fall being thus broken, he scrambled out of his soft bed safe and sound.

The grocer's wife, who had fainted with fright, on coming to, exclaimed:

"Come here, ma man, dinna run off till I scrape ye. There a pun or twa o' ma best butter sticking on to yer boots."

F. L.

Paid by Time.

LAST winter the roof of a gentleman's house was so damaged by the snow and frost that he was obliged to send for the plumbers to repair it.

Two men and a boy came and set to work.

With such a force employed it was expected that the job would be completed in a day.

But three days passed, and still the two men and the boy kept making their appearance every morning. And yet they seemed to work hard, too; for the noise of hammering on the roof resounded through the house from morn till night.

At last the owner of the house determined to see for himself how things were proceeding. Accordingly he crept up through the skylight.

A strange sight met his eyes. The two men were comfortably settled behind the chimney stack smoking and playing cards, while one of them called out to the boy, who had a hammer in each hand:

"If you don't make more row than that, you young beggar, they'll think we're doing no work."

P. S. T.

THE PRIVATE LIFE OF THE QUEEN.

BY ONE OF HER MAJESTY'S SERVANTS.

With numerous Illustrations. Crown 8vo, cloth. Price 2s. 6d.

C. ARTHUR PEARSON LTD., HENRIETTA STREET, W.C.

Digitized by Google

Mascheretti's Menagerie.

CLAUDE RAYNOR was the son of a rich Baronet in Yorkshire. He was not a man of great ability, but he was remarkable for his extreme tenacity of purpose. He called it his indomitable perseverance. His friends and family called it wilful obstinacy. He had set his heart on taking high honours at Oxford; but when he had secured his "Double First," his health gave way.

When he recovered from a serious illness, his family could not be persuaded that he needed rest and quiet; they said that what he wanted was change. So they sent him, with plenty of money in his pocket, to amuse himself in Continental capitals. But the mental evil was far greater than they suspected. Overwork had made him a monomaniac, and the form his monomania took was a passion for natural history.

One night, in Paris, when he had been strolling alone under the flaunting gaslight along the Boulevards, watching the men and women who crowded the broad pavement, sat on chairs before the cafés, or poured out of the theatres, his eye was attracted by a placard, which announced to the public, in large letters, that within might be seen the Javanese Menagerie, among whose wonders were six noble lions.

The largest lion, it said, would play at blind-man's-buff with Signor Mascheretti, "the same," added the advertisement, "who had had the honour to be severely wounded by a Royal Bengal tiger in the presence of Her Britannic Majesty."

"Poor animals! Poor imprisoned beasts!" exclaimed Raynor, talking to himself, for he had no one else to talk to. "Poor unhappy animals!—dragging out existence behind iron bars. What would I not give to restore you to freedom! You are victims of the race of man—a race to which happily I feel myself to belong no longer. I am conscious of a process of evolution into a higher state. How can any creature who partakes of the divine intelligence imagine that the flaunting, pleasure-seeking, vicious, loitering crowd of human beings that I see upon the boulevards are your superiors? I am sick of the pretentions of mankind!"

The next morning he drove to the Menagerie Mascheretti, on the Boulevard Saint Martin.

The Menagerie occupied a former carriage factory. The public entrance was from the Boulevard, but a private entrance through a long, dark passage led also to the interior. This passage had an iron door at each end; the kind the French call *grilles*.

One of these opened on a tiny courtyard, leading to a back street; the other opened into the great hall, where were the cages of the wild beasts, and also a little chamber, occupied by Signor Mascheretti, who, being exceedingly attached to his animals, was unwilling to trust them by night to the care, or carelessness, of his subordinates.

By day he was usually to be found at a café on the Boulevard, opposite to the Menagerie, and there Raynor was directed to seek him.

After introducing himself briefly to the "artist," he said, abruptly:

"I want to buy your Menagerie."

"My Menagerie is not for sale," was the answer.

"Oh! but," replied Raynor, "money can buy anything. I have come here to purchase your Menagerie."

And, in the end, though Mascheretti was most unwilling to part with his animals, Raynor became the purchaser.

It was stipulated that Mascheretti was to give one more performance, during which he would take leave of the public.

On the day after that he was to pay off all his helpers and performers, and take a tender farewell of his animals.

"I will leave you my second in command," he said. "He understands all about the beasts as well as I do."

"I don't want him," replied Raynor. "Pack him off with the rest. I have people enough to do all I shall require."

Then Mascheretti took the new purchaser to see his beasts.

When they reached the iron gate of the private passage, he took several keys from his pocket.

"To-morrow I will give you these keys," he said. "Now let me show you my animals—yours, I mean," and he gave a deep sigh.

As they entered the passage, Raynor perceived an immense dog-kennel just inside the iron gate that opened into the Menagerie. It contained an enormous mastiff, who, though fastened by a chain, sprang furiously forward with bristling back and flashing eyes.

His master quieted him by a glance, but not before he had excited the admiration of Raynor, who instantly asked if he had purchased him, too.

"Yes," answered the Signor, "but on condition that you will pay five hundred francs to my employees, to make up to them for losing their places without warning."

"All right," said the Englishman. "Good dog!" he added, addressing the mastiff. "What a noble animal!"

They entered the hall, at one end of which were the cages of the wild beasts. At Mascheretti's appearance

Digitized by Google

there arose a chorus of roars, howls, jabberings, and other noises.

"Here is my famous Bengal tiger," said the showman. "He came near ruining my shoulder for life, but he made my fortune. We were performing to miserably small audiences in London, but the day after the accident our Menagerie became the rage. Here is Queen Mab, my pet panther. I would not like to let everyone know it, but she has eaten her man. The jaguars have done worse. They attacked and seriously injured one of my elephants. Toby, there, is a splendid lion. He tore three Arabs in pieces when he was very young. That white bear, Nimrod, is a splendid fellow. He was captured with great difficulty in the Polar Seas after he had disposed of a canoe and some Esquimaux. His mate is less distinguished. She eats only her cubs. And there, too, you see all the rest, hyenas, tiger-cats, birds, leopards, monkeys.

"It makes me sad to think that I have sold them. Yes! my poor fellows!" he went on, with a Southern effusion that rather astonished Raynor, "your master has sold you! He has exchanged you for a handful of English gold! But one thing I promise you. I will never fill your places. I will own no other wild beasts. I will set up no other Menagerie. My career as an artist is ended. To-night will be my last performance.

"After that we will share no more triumphs; never again shall we enjoy the pleasure of terrifying an audience. To-morrow you will be nothing but caged beasts and I shall be a man out of employment, like any ordinary mortal."

"Yes! To-morrow," thought Raynor, "about midnight, I will have you snorting in some restaurant or café, with liquor in your head, and bank notes in your pocket, while I creep softly into this great hall and let out all your former pets upon the crowded Boulevard."

As he spoke, there passed through his disordered brain a vision of what would happen when he did so. He saw the first uncertain steps of the freed animals; then their wild bounds, their rising fury, their excitement, their ferocity. He saw the terror of the crowd upon the Boulevard; their panic; their fright; the selfish, *sauve qui peut* of the many, the heroic self-sacrifice of the few.

He saw Paris become suddenly a wild beasts' hunting-ground. He heard shrieks, volleys of musketry, the ringing of alarm bells, the roar of the infuriated beasts, the general consternation. He thrilled with pleasure at the thought that all this would be his doing.

The next morning he paid Mascheretti, who was half tipsy by mid-day. Two hours later he was more tipsy, though he did not seem so. He was accustomed to command himself. His business required self-possession But the liquor he had imbibed made him break forth in a maudlin lament for his lost Menagerie.

"How sad it will be," he said, "to have nothing to do but to amuse myself!"

And he walked down at four o'clock to the quarters of Javanese Menagerie to see if the Englishman was having his pets properly fed.

He found that every animal had had as much as it could eat; all were stuffed to repletion, all had a bewildered, sleepy look, except the mastiff. He had declined to eat what had been set before him. He was grieving for his master.

"They will sleep soundly till midnight," thought Raynor. "They will not wake until I shall have warily and noiselessly opened their cage-doors, and shall have taken my place on a balcony I have hired in a house opposite. I shall see them when they wake and walk forth at liberty. Oh, what fun!"

He had mixed a strong anodyne in the food that he had given them, and felt sure that they would sleep for several hours.

"And now," he thought, "I must make sure of the Signor."

He therefore invited him to dine with him, meaning to leave him dead drunk under the table.

Sure enough, late in the evening, after a luxurious dinner at a fashionable restaurant, where claret and champagne had flowed freely, Signor Mascheretti sat in his chair fast asleep. The Englishman called a waiter, and, giving him a handsome fee, desired him not on any account to wake the gentleman. After that he went away. The moment for his enterprise had come. His heart beat with impatience and satisfaction.

It was eleven o'clock. The Boulevards were brilliant with gaslight. From the Madeleine to the Porte Saint Martin all was splendour and gaiety. Horses champed at the bits and shook their harness. Carriages rolled over the stones. People came pouring out of the theatres and dancing-halls. It was a lovely night. All Paris was abroad, and what part of it was so brilliant and so crowded as the Boulevards?

The Englishman crept furtively through the crowds. No one noticed him. At last he reached the back entrance to the Menagerie, where only one gaslight shone in the darkness. The back entrance opened on a little courtyard.

He went on into this place and stood before the iron *grille*. He put the key in the lock. He turned it carefully. The door opened. He passed through, and closed it after him, putting the key in his pocket. This was a precaution lest he should be surprised by Mascheretti.

He went on towards the inner door. He saw the fierce eyes of the mastiff gleaming at him through the bars, and heard the rattle of his chain.

He unlocked the second door, and entered the Menagerie. The animals seemed to be waking up.

When they heard him approach, they began to make various noises. He had a candle in his pocket. He lighted it and looked into their cages.

None of them were fully roused, but all seemed to be on the point of waking. There was no time to be lost.

Very softly he opened the door of the tiger's cage, then that of the lions, one after the other, until at last all were emancipated.

"All right, so far. Now in half-an-hour I shall see all Paris in an uproar. What fun! What fun!"

Having opened all the cages, he left the iron door open that led from the Menagerie to the long passage, and proceeded down that passage to the outside entrance, the door which he had locked so carefully.

"The jaguars will come out first," he thought. "They seem more fully awake than the others; then the two white bears; then the lions; all will be ready for a midnight banquet. By that time the alarm will have been given. There will be racing and chasing in all directions. Men will shout and women will scream. I defy any man on earth to go in that hall and shut the cages after the beasts begin to swarm down this passage."

And he kept on saying at intervals to himself:

"Oh, what fun!"

"When I set the outer gate open," he reflected, "I will fasten it back so that there will be no chance of its shutting to. There is too much gaslight," he added.

Digitized by Google

"It may dazzle their eyes as they come out, and it may drive them back again."

So saying, he tried to turn off the gas with his cane; but the cane was too slender. He remembered to have seen an iron rod standing behind the door. With this he put out the gas.

"And now," said he, "for the outside door. When that is open, my part will be played, and then will begin the fun!"

At that moment he was nearly knocked down by a swift blow upon his back. The mastiff was upon him. He had broken his chain! The Englishman had only time to spring aside, and to strike frantically about him with his bar of iron. He darted forward to open the iron gate, now within three feet of him. The jaws of the mastiff had not wounded him. In the darkness, the dog had only secured a mouthful of his clothing.

But, horror! Part of that mouthful was his pocket. In that pocket was the key of the outside gate and his pocket-pistol!

With the rapidity of lightning he saw the hopelessness of his situation. On one side was the gate, which he could not open; on the other, was the mastiff, a wild beast in himself, and his only weapon in the dark was his bar of iron! It seemed to keep the dog in check, but what would it do against all the wild beasts in the Menagerie?

Raynor was strong and active; but do what he would, he could not burst the bars of the iron door, nor break the lock. He dared not try to climb over the high gate. Such an attempt would force him to lay down his iron bar, and to expose himself in the rear to the attack of his enemy. He dared not cry aloud for help. A cry might bring upon him all the wild animals.

A cold sweat broke out all over him.

"And this dreadful dog is mine," he thought. "I paid five hundred francs for him. I am his master. I don't even know his name. Hi! Hector, Lion, Cæsar, Bull, Fox, Sport, Tray, Dash!—what is the use? He has some French or some Italian name that, of course, I never heard of. To think of his having broken his chain. So much for French hardware. And there's the Signor asleep with his head on the table in the restaurant, while I——"

Here he was interrupted by low growls from the Menagerie. Momentarily they increased in violence. The dog seemed to turn his attention that way.

The Englishman profited by this to make a last supreme effort. He flung himself against the iron door with all his might, he tried to force the lock with his iron bar—when suddenly the door was thrown wide open. He fell through it on his face, and fainted away.

It was Signor Mascheretti who opened the door.

He had retained a pass-key, and had come down to the Menagerie at midnight to look upon his beloved animals once more.

"I should like to know," said he to Raynor, when he stood by him in the little courtyard, as he came to his senses, "what all this is about? I find my dog with a broken chain and all the cages open. While you came to yourself I have been in and fastened them. My good sir, the police will be apt to look into this matter. You little understand how to care for your Menagerie."

"Mine?" cried the Englishman. "It is yours. I give it all back to you. Keep it—the dog and all! But never say a word of this, for your life!—never a word!"

Signor Mascheretti kept the secret; and how I came to hear about it you will never know E. W. L.

A BOOK FOR WOMEN.

DINNERS OF THE DAY.

By a Careful Cook (Mrs. Praga).

Crown 8vo, cloth. Price 2s. 6d.

"No British matron need plead that she knows not how to vary culinary monotony if she will only buy Mrs. Praga's book."
Gentlewoman.

"A capital cookery book."—*Scotsman.*

Prizes for Making Faces.

An entirely new sort of competition starts in this week's PEARSON'S WEEKLY. All you have to do is to find two faces out of a mixture of lines. There is a lot of fun to be got out of it, and the prizes are well worth trying for.

THE DOG DAYS HAVE COME.

The most refreshing tonic for the heat of the dog days is the August number of PEARSON'S MAGAZINE, now on sale.

The August PEARSON'S is crammed with light, bright literature. If you are hot, read the article on "Icebergs"—a delightfully cool subject, delightfully treated, and illustrated with superb photographs of floating ice mountains. Then you will be fascinated by a paper by Mr. J. G. Millias, F.Z.S., on "How Animals Swim," illustrated with beautiful sketches by the author, done from life, and showing the different action of various animals in water.

What with these and other striking articles, together with a powerful array of fine short stories, PEARSON'S for August will supply you with enough reading matter to last a month.

FREE "WANT" ADVERTISEMENTS.

IF YOU ARE OUT OF A SITUATION,

IF YOU WANT A CHANGE,

IF YOU WANT A CLERK OR A SERVANT,

GET THE

"Illustrated Weekly News"

this week and read about the offer to insert advertisements *free of charge*. Scores of people have been helped in this way. Why not you?

Digitized by Google

NIPPED IN THE BUD.

A RAILWAY ROMANCE.

I WONDER how it happens that I was always so ready to fall in love? For one thing my parents made a runaway match of it, after only once meeting, and that at a ball. Then again my father died soon after my appearance, and my mother consoled herself with the circulating library.

My earlier efforts at falling in love hardly met with the success I had been led to expect from the story-books; in fact I was hardly ever able to speak to the charmer. None of those happy occasions for rescuing her from unforeseen peril, or even for picking up her handkerchief happened, leading me to doubt that special Providence, so largely drawn on by my chosen romancers. But I hoped against hope.

My twenty-first birthday put me in possession of a comfortable independence, of which I took advantage, by leaving home and living in lodgings.

One fine Saturday morning I was strolling up and down Paddington Station having resolved to spend the week-end snaring the wily roach from a punt, on which boat, in my opinion, builders have never improved. In what other craft, I ask, can you have a comfortable chair?

I had a few minutes to wait, and was wandering aimlessly about, when I turned and came face to face with the most beautiful creature I ever saw, that is, till I met the present Mrs. Smith. She was tall and fair, quite divinely so, as some one remarks.

With her was an old gentleman, her father obviously. One quiet glance of her eyes finished me completely; if grovelling on the ground could have won her, I would have grovelled; perhaps I could display my valour and knock somebody down—a porter, say, or the old gentleman. On second thoughts, it seemed injudicious to do either. The old gentleman was her father, and the porter—well, he was as big as I was.

Something, however, must be done. At last they took their seats in the train I was going by. Happy thought, I would see where they got out, and track them home.

"John," I said to myself, "you are a man of sound common sense, the idea is worthy of you."

As I was mentally congratulating myself, their compartment filled up, and I had to content myself with the next. However, I secured a corner on the up-side, and so insured my seeing them as they left the train.

As we steamed out of the station I leant back and gave myself up to meditation. The first-class carriages on the G.W.R. are very comfortable, the sunshine was delightful, and my cigar was super-excellent.

Brighter and brighter grew the castles in the air, the wedding-day was fast approaching, when I was rudely awakened. "Tickets please." There was a porter standing over me, and fumbling hastily for my ticket, I asked him where we had got to.

"Reading," was the answer, so I paid the excess on my ticket and dashed out of the carriage.

My worst fears were realised; they had left the train, but where? The guard could give me no information. There was nothing for it but to curse my stars and get back as fast as I could.

This, I found, could not be for an hour, so I wandered into Reading, fuming. The place had no attractions for me, even the thought of biscuits was without charm. On my way back to the station I was startled by a huge slap on the back. It was the last straw, my temper could hold out no longer. I turned round, prepared to curse bitterly, and found my assailant to be none other than my dear old friend Brown.

Brown and I, while at school, had been the closest of chums, and when he went on to Oxford, we had always continued our friendship by meeting in the vacs.

Latterly, our correspondence had flagged; excepting his ordination, I knew nothing of him since he left Oxford, now four years ago. It turned out he was going by the same train as myself.

So as soon as we were off, we at once entered into details of what had happened since our last meeting. He, it appeared, was just married, and had a good living near Slough, which had come to him through the influence of his father-in-law.

"You used to beat me hollow," he said, "at falling in love, hence I am much surprised that I am the first to turn married man. What is your latest adventure in the falling-in-love line?"

In the fulness of my heart I there and then told him all that weary afternoon's exploits, with many raptures about her divine beauty.

He laughed consumedly, far more I thought than the humour of the story merited. Finally he apologised, and, still gasping, explained that he knew the young lady perfectly well from my description—in fact, would be glad to introduce me any time.

The train then stopped at Slough, where Brown was to get out, but before he did so, I had overwhelmed him with thanks, and accepted an invitation to come and dine on Tuesday, there to meet my charmer.

I fear I did some mad things in that empty compartment, and what old Joe, my fisherman, thought of me the next day, I can only dimly conjecture. Coming down from one of my loftiest air castles, I happened to remark that I didn't seem to be catching much.

"No," he replied, "we arn't a-catching much. You sez you's a-fishing for roach, but if any gentleman was to arsk me, why, I should say as how you was fishing for perch. Lor bless me, there he goes again."

Though aware of this (from Joe) withering sarcasm, I am afraid I did not improve much, my day-dreams were far too sweet.

Fishing is the best method of doing nothing, and enjoying it, I am acquainted with; that is, real fishing, from a punt or from the bank in a quiet place; none of your break-neck scrambling after salmon or trout. But let me hasten to the end.

In this way I managed to pass the Sunday and Monday. On Tuesday I hastened to town, selected my most approved suit, and made a most careful toilet. At six that evening I was ringing the bell of the parsonage near Slough.

I was shown into a room, the servant telling me that Mr. Brown would be down in a moment. As I entered, she muttered something, lost to me, for there was the beauty standing by the fire. As I advanced, I heard Brown's step behind me.

"Here you are, old man," he exclaimed; "let me introduce you—Mr. Smith—my wife."

A. D. H.

Digitized by Google

THE LEGEND OF THE FORGET-ME-NOT.

ONCE upon a time, as the story-tellers say, there stood on the borders of Northumberland a great castle. Its grim towers, built as they were upon a rocky eminence, commanded the country side for miles around. About the base of the fortalice the deep waters of an unusually wide moat lapped and rippled under the strong breeze, which swept down upon it from the Cheviots.

Sakers and culverins pointed threateningly from its grey battlements. From its topmost turrets and weather-stained walls, armed sentinels kept watch and ward—arquebus, or long bow in hand—for at the period of which we write, the latter weapon was still in use—turning their fierce eyes towards the Scottish borders, the debatable land, which lay almost at their feet.

Bitter experience of burnt hamlets—harried fields—the fruits of northern forays—should have taught them vigilance; but the most watchful sentinel is liable to sleep at his post, the most experienced warrior to be caught some day, off his guard.

At the moment that our story opens, the garrison of the fortalice we are describing, was suffering for such indiscretion.

In the darkness of the preceding night, a band of their most hated enemies—the wild tribesmen of Douglasdale—had stolen down upon them, out of the border mists, and when the morning broke, the only traces of their visit had been a column of smoke rising from their herdsmen's cottages, and a view of empty pasture lands, which, the previous evening, had been dotted with a herd of their fattest beeves.

As a result of this predatory visit, the courtyard of the castle—one of the dependencies of the Northumbrian Piercys—resounded with the clash of armour, the stamp, stamp of iron hoofs, the jingle of spurred heels, and the hoarse voices of command.

An expedition, hastily assembled, was on the point of setting forth in pursuit of the marauders. Armed to the teeth with sword and spear, arquebus and long bow—the soldiers in jackets of stout bulls' hide and leathern caps, protected with bands of iron—the young knight, the second in command, in complete armour of glittering steel—they issued, one by one, from the armoury, and each taking his place at his horse's head, silently waited the command to mount.

But the minutes passed and the order came not. The young officer ever and anon glanced at the dial, noting with evident impatience the shadow, which marked the hour, gradually stealing towards noon.

"Where is Sir Guy? Has any among ye seen aught of our leader?" he exclaimed at last.

The soldiers addressed looked at each other knowingly while many a smile—though speedily repressed—played around their bearded lips.

One at length spoke:

"Methinks I saw the knight making for the Castle garden awhile since," he said.

"Ha!" ejaculated the young man significantly to his squire. "Then the reason is not far to seek. When the war-trumpet sounds the call to arms, naught would make a Piercy dally, but a woman's smile. Yet methinks this one is worth the winning though," he added thoughtfully, "and we must een cool our heels in waiting and give the Douglas men another half hour's grace. It will be that ere we shall put foot to stirrup, I ween!"

And who was this maiden whose smile could keep a scion of the Piercy's at her side when he should, in duty bound, have been spurring at top speed in the direction of Annandale?

Let us—using the privilege of the story-teller, and dividing time and space with a stroke of the pen—follow without.

Issuing through the raised portcullis, drawn up ready for the expected passage of the waiting troops, and passing through the narrow space intervening between the drawbridge, as yet unlowered, and the rough hewn walls, we continue along the base of the castle, on a level with the moat, till we reach a fairly broad space, covered with banks of yellow marigolds, sweet-smelling gilly-flowers, and a very tangle of blooming rose-bushes, and clinging honey-suckle—the castle garden,

Let us peer among the mass of eglantine, through the tall stems of multi-coloured hollyhocks, which hid an angle in the walls from a curious view of the warders who guarded the drawbridge.

There we shall find them both—Annabel and Guy de Piercy—of the same name yet not of the same parentage. She is seated on a huge moss-grown stone, probably from its shape and splintered appearance dislodged from the walls above—hurled perhaps from the battlements upon the head of some unfortunate wight below.

The white fingers of one hand are toying idly with the gold fringe of her girdle. The other lies in her lap, scarcely whiter and more delicate than the spotless robe, whose simplicity seems to emphasise the graceful contour of the form it is intended to hide.

He is stretched upon the greensward at her side, his ardent gaze turned admiringly on her face, which she keeps half averted, whether from a coyness, or a desire to tease, he is plainly doubtful.

It is a pretty picture that we gaze upon, from the security of our floral screen. In the foreground are the waters of the moat, glistening in the sunshine, the narrow

Digitized by Google

stretch of grass-grown terrace, the patches of lurid-coloured flowers, the fairy-like form of the girl, with her tresses of nut-brown, flowing unconfined upon her shoulders, the martial figure of the young knight, encased in glittering steel, his plumed helmet lying at his side. While in the background, dark and forbidding, are the rugged, time-stained walls of the old keep.

But having gazed our fill, let us listen—using still the privilege we have usurped—to what is taking place.

The knight is speaking, his spurred heels digging nervously into the soft turf upon which they rest, bearing evidence that he is not so much at ease, as his attitude would convey.

"Sweet coz, it is high time for me to go," he is saying for the twentieth time during the quarter of an hour they have lingered there, making no attempt to rise nevertheless. "Thy father, my good uncle—Sir John—brooks no delay, and ere sundown we must be well o'er the Northern border."

"Then I say again why dally, cousin Guy?" she replied with a taunting laugh. "Thy troops stand ready armed and impatient, in the courtyard within, and only require the presence of their halting leader to set forth."

The spurred heels make a more vicious lunge at the unoffending turf which flies right and left in miniature showers, and glancing down, she proceeds:

"Methinks, Sir Knight, those spurs of thine will have to be put to better use full soon, than in digging pits in my poor garden."

"A truce to thy gibes, Annabel!" he cries impatiently, "If I tarry here thou knowest the reason full well. 'T is to have thy answer."

She heaves a sigh of mocking deprecation.

"Then I fear thou wilt tarry long, sweet sir, and my father's beeves be salted down and in the pickle tub, ere those long limbs of thine grip thy courser's sides," and eluding the hand with which he endeavours to detain her, she leaps quickly to her feet and poises herself lightly as a bird on the parapet which guarded the moat.

He is not slow to follow, and the beauty of the girl he gazes upon, conquering his vexation, he goes on:

"Annabel! Annabel! Remember that I love thee. Aye, all the better for thy teasing ways, thou sweet witch!"

"So does many another gallant, if soft looks, heavy sighs, love verses, and many a golden guinea spent in Jongleur's songs, under the Castle walls, are tokens," she says coolly.

His teeth sink savagely into his lower lip, while his clenched hand steals round till it rests upon the hilt of his dagger.

"Too true, I know it well! But let them ogle and send love verses, spend their guineas in love charms, play the troubadour under thy casement, what they will. I care not! But"—menacingly—"the gay springald who wins thee had better have bearded the Black Douglas at his own gate, than have robbed Guy de Piercy of the woman he seeks to make his bride."

His answer—in keeping with the fierce spirit of the times—evidently pleases the border maid, for notwithstanding the glint of mischief which still lingers in her hazel eyes, she says softly, laying her hand upon his mailed arm:

"Thou wouldst do doughty deeds for my sake, Guy, wouldst thou not?"

He starts like a mettled war-horse under the spur.

"Methinks it is o'er late in the day to ask that,"—reproachfully—"Has there been a tilting match these five years past, at which I have not proclaimed thy beauty 'gainst all comers? Aye, and maintained it at my spear point too. Give me thy scarf!" he goes on, making an impetuous movement to snatch from her shoulder the strip of scarlet silk, which lends the only touch of colour to her attire. "Give me thy scarf, I say, and ere to-morrow morn, it shall be tied to my lance, and carried as my pennon, to the very gates of Castle Douglas."

"And thy head perhaps would remain to grace those same gates, as the penalty of thy frowardness," she cries, laughing still, and keeping him at arm's length, "while my father would lose one of his best knights."

"What matter!" he answers gloomily. "There are others as fitting, to take Guy de Piercy's place!"

"I doubt it not, Sir Modesty!" she says, "but my father may think otherwise. Besides, he loves not such feats, and would blame me sore that I had sent thee on such an errand, more especially before thou hadst brought back his stolen cattle. But"—with a glance coaxing him once more into good humour—"there is a simpler and less dangerous way to win my favour."

"How?" he asks.

"See!" pointing to a tiny blue flower, growing on the farther side of the moat. "Fetch me hither that floweret, and, who knows? I may be tempted to grant thee the boon thou askest."

She glances down at the muddy waters, then turns her face aside, to conceal the mischievous smile which dimples it.

"Methinks the task thou hast set me is an easy one, sweet coz!" he cries joyously. "What ho, there, warder! Lower the drawbridge! Quick! Lower away!"

But the wind, sweeping down from the opposite direction, the warders hear nothing, and chat on unconcernedly, within the grille.

He is hastening towards the gateway to repeat his commands, when she stops him with a gesture.

"Nay, nay, not so fast, Sir Knight. Thy task is not so simple as the gathering of yon floweret, dry-shod. Neither would I wish it to be carried to my father's ears, that the captain of his riders is dallying in the garden, whispering love speeches to his daughter, when he should be shouting war cries at his foes. Thou must perforce wet thy jacket, bold sir, or wait my answer till some future time, when, who knows? fickle maid as thou hast often called me, I may have changed my mind."

"Then thy mind is made up at last?" he exclaims eagerly.

"Do my behest first, and ask thy guerdon after," she replies.

The knight tugs his moustache ruefully, looking from his spotlessly polished armour to the stagnant waters at their feet.

"By my halidom! That paltry blossom is scarcely worth the rusting of my war gear, to say nothing that 'tis no fitting dress for swimming. Prithee, choose some other task for thy true knight, lady mine."

The petulant maiden's face flushes.

"I meant that thou shouldst doff thy armour, ere thou leapt into the stream. But it matters not. Keep both thy mailed coat and leathern jerkin dry! 'Twas but an idle fancy. 'Tis a paltry blossom as thou sayest. Yet"—with a touch of scorn—"methinks 'twould have been more knightly of thee if thou hadst not said so, seeing that I had chosen it as a token of thy love."

Tossing her pretty head, the pampered maid takes a hasty step toward the gates, when the sound of a heavy plunge arrests her steps. The knight, stung by her

Digitized by Google

words and regardless of the heavy weight of his mail, has leapt headlong into the black waters of the moat.

Remorseful and alarmed for his safety, she returns to the water's edge, but the sight of her lover, swimming slowly it is true, but sturdily towards the opposite bank reassures her.

An expression changing from gratification to mirth, then to something more tender, beams in her eyes. She watches him reach the other side, sees him pluck the frail blossom growing out of the soft mud at the water's edge; then after an ineffectual attempt to secure a foothold, or obtain a rest for his tired arms, turn and swim, very slowly now, towards the point where she stands awaiting him.

That the weight of his armour makes the task no easy one she also sees, but that he is distressed—nay, in imminent danger—she does not realise. To the swimmer it is different. He knows the truth, and despair is at his heart.

His blood is pumping through his veins, each stroke of his wearied limbs he thinks must be his last. Yet, brave knight as he is, he keeps a smiling face turned towards the maiden, whose own, wreathed in smiles, instead of drawing nearer, seems to the exhausted man, to be receding from him.

The effort is too great to be long sustained. He makes a bungling stroke, his mouth and nostrils sink below the surface, he gives a gurgling cry, and only by a desperate effort, keeps himself afloat.

At this moment, the sound of a trumpet call from the courtyard within peals over the waters.

The maiden turns her head in the direction of the sound, so remains ignorant yet of his peril.

"Haste thee! Haste thee! Thou sluggard!" she cries, "Hearest thou not the trumpet blast? Thy troop is growing impatient, and listen!"—as sounds of clanking chains and creaking pulleys break upon their ears—"they are lowering the drawbridge! In a moment thy riders will be pricking across. Would'st thou have them discover thee swimming like a tadpole, i' the moat?"

Neither the trumpet blast nor the maiden's banter can give strength to his wearied limbs, still doggedly he swims on—silently, too, for his bursting lungs will not permit the double effort.

If he speaks he must stop, and when he stops he knows full well, that he will sink like a stone.

Anxious that he shall not expose himself to the ridicule of his followers, and growing vexed at his seeming perverseness:

"Come! Come! Give me the floweret!" she cries, "give it me, ere thy troopers come, or count my favour lost!"

With a last expiring effort, he raises himself breast high out of the water, and hurls the fragile blossom towards her. It falls almost at her feet. As she stoops and plucks it, a whisper, soft as a sigh, falls upon her ears, from the dark waters:

"Forget-me-not! Love! Forget-me-not!"

Alarmed, she starts to her feet, and gazes down into the black flood with distended eyes, but only her own face is reflected there. Nought breaks the unruffled surface of the moat, but a rapidly widening ring of water. It is followed by a bubble which bursts and disappears—then all is still. Nothing betrays that a brave knight sleeps his last sleep below. Nothing—not even the maiden, at whose bidding he had leapt to his death.

When the troop files across the drawbridge, and forms up on the plain beyond, she makes no motion, gives no sign, standing immovable as a statue, with wide-open, meaningless eyes.

When they come to ask her, whither he has gone, and why he tarries, she starts for a moment as if unable to comprehend. Then she again and again presses a tiny blue flower to her white lips, and murmurs vacantly:

"Forget-me-not! Forget-me-not!"

Hubert Bartlett.

Digitized by Google

CHIVERS'

DELICIOUS! WHOLESOME! REFRESHING!

FLAVOURED WITH RIPE FRUIT JUICES.

DR. GORDON STABLES, R.N.: "No home is complete without these pure and excellent Jellies, which add to our health and luxury."

MEDICAL PRESS: "Chivers' Jellies are to be commended for the delicacy of their flavour, and for their absolute purity."

GRANVILLE H. SHARPE, F.C.S.: "Of the highest standard of purity and excellence."

FREE SAMPLE on receipt of post-card. S. CHIVERS and SONS, Histon, Cambridge.

JELLIES.

Neuralgia Positively Cured!

Free Test Offered.

The annexed cut presents in the prominent white lines the nerves most liable to attacks of Neuralgia. Sufferers will know only too well the pain tracks, and will be glad to know of a Simple and Sure Remedy. The proprietors will send Free two sample Zox Powders to any reader of *Short Stories* sending stamped envelope to ZOX CO., 11 HATTON GARDEN, LONDON, E.C.

DRUNKENNESS

CURED. This can be done with or without patient's knowledge. Send me a stamp and I will tell you how. (Send no money.) Address, in confidence, Mrs. C. H. (Room 8), 195 Oxford Street, London, W.

NOSE

MACHINES. LEES BAY. S. S. Dept., South Castle St, Liverpool, is a specialist on Ugly and Red Noses. Send stamp for particulars of his patent scientific Nose Improvers. Red Nose Cure, medically approved, **3/9.** Outstanding Ear Machines **11/6.**

TOO STOUT.

I was for years; by chance I came across a simple home remedy that reduced me from 17st. to 10st. 12lbs., and I will willingly send particulars **free** to any sufferer enclosing stamp. Mrs. L. E. FELL, 195 Oxford Street, London, W.

VIE D'OR FOR THE HAIR.

THE AMERICAN TREATMENT.

Vie d'Or puts 10 years on the life of the hair.

SOLE AGENT:

GUSTAV ROSSELLI, 4 New Park Street, Park Lane, LEEDS.

Price **2/9** post free.

HAVE YOU ECZEMA?

Or anything the matter with your skin? If you have, do send to the Antexema Co., 83 Castle Road, London, N.W., naming this paper, and enclosing one stamp for postage for a free trial sample of "Antexema."

This wonderful outward remedy has been the means of curing a very large number of cases of Eczema and Skin Diseases. The secret of its successful action is told in a little book called "Skin Troubles," which is sent free with each trial sample.

Hear what a nurse says about "Antexema." Nurse E. F. Brown, of 3 Ullswater Road West Norwood, writes: "I am a nurse and have used your "Antexema" for some time and recommend it to my patients. All who have tried it are equally pleased with the results."

USE "ANTEXEMA."

We wish to urge all readers of this paper who suffer in any way from skin trouble to give this standard Skin Remedy a trial. There is no need to spend anything beyond postage until its efficacy has been proved.

"Antexema" is sold by chemists and stores (please avoid substitutes), or will be sent per return and packed free from observation for 1/3 or 2/9 by the ANTEXEMA CO., 83 Castle Road, London, N.W.

SEND FOR

DR. EVANS'S (U.S.A.)

Pamphlet on Nervous Diseases of All Kinds

THIS PAMPHLET describes all the symptoms which arise from Diseases of the NERVOUS SYSTEM. It is up-to-date, having been compiled after years of labour and experience in the Treatment of these Maladies. It is complete, practical, and can be readily understood and acted upon. It gives pure and simple advice to sufferers. Send stamped addressed envelope to GEORGE WRIGHT, Esq., Colne House, REMBRANDT ROAD, LEE, LONDON, S.E. (*Name this Paper.*)

A WOMAN'S HATRED

of **Debt** is only equalled by her abhorrence of unpunctuality and Disorder. H. SAMUEL'S **Sound System of Direct Supply** for **Cash,** and the unvarying excellence of

H. SAMUEL'S UP-TO-DATE WATCHES

have won approval from all classes, the Purchaser receiving the GREATEST POSSIBLE VALUE for money.

A MONTH'S FREE TRIAL

is allowed with every article; thus fullest opportunity is afforded of thoroughly testing the goods. Every purchaser receives one of H. SAMUEL'S

HANDSOME BONUS GIFTS.

Ten Lists of Presents to select from are enclosed in **H. SAMUEL'S CATALOGUE,** containing over 3,000 beautiful illustrations and descriptions of H. SAMUEL'S Specialities, Wonderful Bargains in Gold and Silver Watches, Jewellery of all descriptions, Diamonds, Plate, Cutlery, &c., all supplied at **Wholesale Prices.**

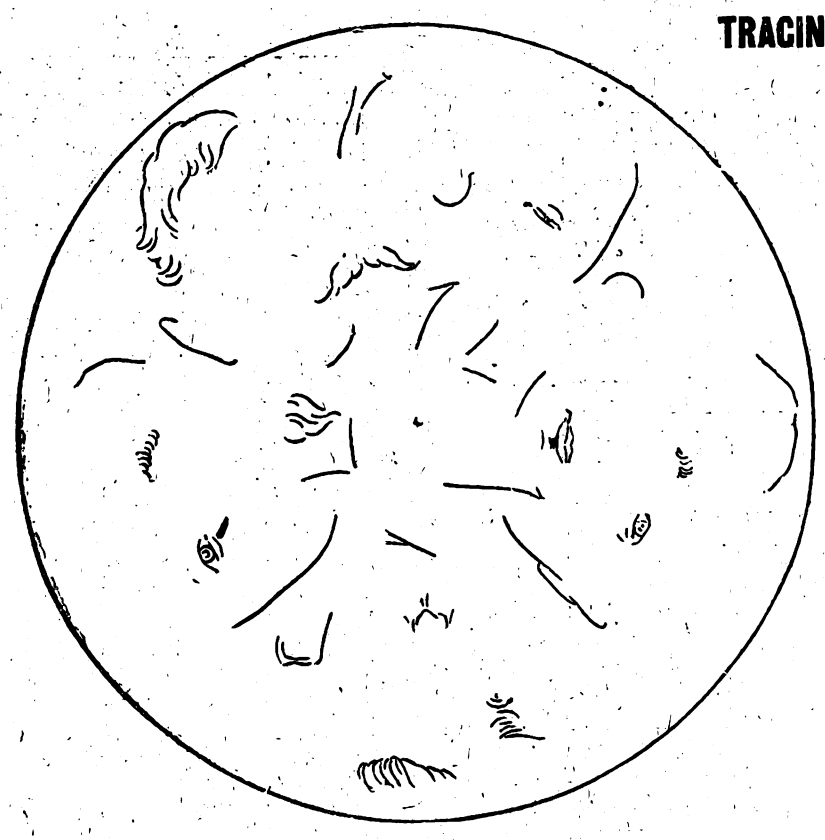
H. SAMUEL'S LADY'S ACME WATCH

Contains Special Inventions protected by Her Majesty's Royal Letters Patent, and obtainable only in H. SAMUEL'S Watches. Fine three-quarter Jewelled Plate Lever Movement, Richly Decorated Dial (plain, if preferred), and Highly engraved Case. Warranted for FIVE YEARS, and sent **BONUS FREE GIFT** on receipt of **25/-.**

H. SAMUEL (DEPT. 29), 95, 97, 99, 101, 33, 89 & 121 MARKET ST., MANCHESTER.

Digitized by Google

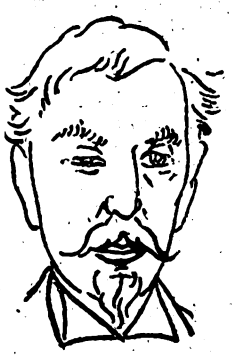
TRACING FACES COMPETITION.



Here we have a circle containing a number o lines. All you have to do is to take a strip of tracing paper about four inches long by two and a half inches wide, stick a pin through one end of it, and through the centre of the circle (indicated by the cross).

Trace one of the lines. Then shift your paper round until you find another line to meet it—an ear, or a pair of eyes, or a moustache.

When you have finished, the result should make the portrait of a well-known person. Any number of faces can be made, but there is only one correct face in each circle.



One of the faces you can make.

First Prize, £2. 2nd to 10th Prizes, a Six-Shilling Novel.

The first prize will go to the reader from whom we receive the correct solution. In the event of a tie, the prize will be awarded to the sender of the neatest solution. The Editor's decision is final, and competitors must enter on that understanding.

All attempts to reach this office by Monday, August 13th.

NOTICE.—Paste your piece of tracing paper on half a sheet of note paper, affix your name and address, and post in an envelope marked "Gymnasium."

RESULT OF BRAIN GYMNASIUM.

Nos. 163 to 168.

THE prize of £2 has been awarded this week to Mrs. Emily West, 173 Upper Richmond Road, Putney, S.W., whose solution was the first correct one dealt with.

A copy of "The Hermits of Gray's Inn," by G. B. Burgin, has been sent to:

J. D. Champion, Liskeard.
Mrs. McCoy, Ormskirk.
C. H. Beech, Hr. Broughton.
J. B. Johnson, Birkenhead.
James Braidwood, Edinburgh.
Mrs. Grist, Bayswater, W.
W. Joy Lavers, Mutley.
A. Edwards, Clerkenwell Green.
H. Chadwick, Brixton.
M. W. Daws, Hull.

NOTE.—In Puzzle No. 171 two R's too many were given in the question.

SOLUTIONS TO PUZZLES.

Nos. 169 to 174.

No. 169. *Revolutionary, Electrocutionary, Unquestionably.*

No. 170. *Lace, Face, Mace, Dace, Pace.*

No. 171.
P e A r.
A w R y.
D i E t. PAARDEBERG.
B e E r.
R a G e.

No. 172.
STAR
TARE
AREA
READING
IDEA
NEAT
GATE

No. 173.
K ettle
I ndia
T ram
C ologne
H ornpipe
E landslaagte
N arcissus
E nigma
R ake
KITCHENER.

No. 174. METROPOLIS. 1, Stem; 2, Pool; 3, Trim; 4, Sole; 5, Lip; 6, Rose.

SHORT STORIES ADVERTISEMENT RATES.

Single column, per inch, per insertion	£0 10 0
Double " "	1 0 0
Full page inside, facing page of matter, either white paper or 2nd or 3rd page of cover, or back page, per insertion	10 0 0
Half-page " " "	5 0 0
Quarter-page " " "	2 10 0
Eighth-page " " "	1 5 0
Front page, whole " "	12 10 0
" half	6 5 0

Printed and Published by C. ARTHUR PEARSON LTD., at Pearson's Weekly Buildings, Henrietta Street, London, W.C.

Digitized by Google

KEATING'S POWDER

KILLS BUGS FLEAS MOTHS BEETLES

TINS 3d 6d & 1s
THE NEW BELLOWS 9d

DO YOU KNOW -

That with Every Copy of this week's

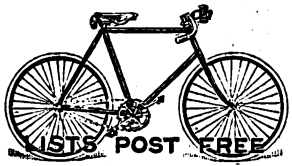
HOME ✲ NOTES

A COMPLETE NOVELETTE OF 16 Pages,
ENTITLED
"PLAYING THE GAME,"
IS
GIVEN AWAY?

HOME NOTES is the best and daintiest of ladies' weeklies. You should order a copy at once.

ONE PENNY.

JUNO CYCLES FOR LADIES AND GENTS
FREE OR FIXED WHEELS.
THE VERY BEST.
Carriage Paid.
Discount for Cash.



LISTS POST FREE

Monthly
£8 10s. ... 14/2
£10 10s. ... 17/6
£12 ... 20/-
£12 12s. ... 21/-
£14 14s. ... 24/5
£15 15s. ... 26/3

Road Racer ... £10 0s. 16s. 8d. Mon h'y. Light Roadster, £10 10s. 17s. 6d. Monthly. Write for New Season's List of JUNO Cycles and Accessories, over 100 pages, sent post free. Scorcher Brake, 1/-; Standard Cyclometer, 10,000 miles, 1/10
METROPOLITAN MACHINISTS CO. Ltd.
Juno Cycle School & Works, 75, 76, Bishopsgate Street, Without, E.C., and Piccadilly Circus, London, W.

WHY BE FAT?

When a lady, who has discovered a simple means of Self-Cure will be happy to send particulars of same to any sufferer from this distressing complaint. Free on receipt of stamped addressed envelope. ADDRESS:

Mrs. TREVOR WELLS,
63 HIGH HOLBORN, LONDON, W.C.

BAD FEET.

SUFFERERS from this DISTRESSING COMPLAINT should send for trial tin of "PHELO." Immediate relief guaranteed, and *all unpleasant smells prevented.* By post, 1/6. THE CITY DRUG CO., 76 Finsbury Pavement, London, E.C.

HAIR DESTROYED.

Send me an envelope (stamped and addressed) and I will tell you how to remove all superfluous hair **free of charge.** (Send no money.) Address, in confidence, Miss E. V. (Room 3), 193 Oxford Street, London, W.

A FREE GIFT.

Ladies and Gentlemen can greatly increase their incomes by **POULTRY BREEDING**, thus converting 1d. Eggs into 1s. Chickens. To encourage this industry we intend supplying each applicant during the next 28 days with one of our **40-Egg Incubators.**
Write for **Free Gift Form** to Room X4, POULTRY BREED-R-' APPLIANCE CO., SOUTHEND-ON-SEA.

A SUM of from 12s. to 25s. per week can be earned in spare hours or evenings by either sex everywhere.—Send addressed envelope for particulars to Box 24, Eclipse Works, 89 Aldersgate Street, E.C.

A MAGNIFICENT COMPLEXION GUARANTEED

By the free use of LILLIE POWDER. It nourishes, heals, soothes, and brings Health and Beauty.

Prepared from the original recipe invented by Mrs. Langtry, under the strict supervision of Her Majesty's Perruquier, Mr. W. Clarkson.

Order it of your Chemist and refuse all substitutes, as they may be injurious.

Three Tints: Blanche Naturelle, and Rachel. Of all Chemists, Hairdressers, Stores, &c.

THE LILLIE SYNDICATE,
3 Henrietta Street, London, W.C.

DEVONSHIRE CREAM

(Really Genuine.) In Patent Air-tight Tins. ½-lb., 1/4; 1-lb., 2/4; 2-lb., 4/-, including Tin and Postage.

Mrs. Conyers,
MORCHARD BISHOP, DEVON.

KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR

KAPUTINE

SAFE REMEDY CURES

HEADACHE and NEURALGIA IMMEDIATELY,

And is sold by all leading Chemists in Packets of 18 Doses, 1s.

To ANYONE HAVING THE LEAST DIFFICULTY, it will be sent post free for 12 Stamps by "KAPUTINE Ltd.," Huddersfield; or, on receipt of a stamped addressed envelope, A. M. Kaputine, Huddersfield, you will receive a free sample.

The fact that "KAPUTINE" is recommended by many leading Medical Men, and is used in National Hospitals and Infirmaries proves that it is THE, THE recognised SAFE REMEDY FOR HEADACHES.

Refuse Substitutes and demand "KAPUTINE," the Safe Remedy. There is no substitute "LIKE IT"; nothing "AS GOOD"; nothing "SIMILAR."

KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR

Digitized by Google

Professor Boyd Laynard's Great Work:

"SECRETS of BEAUTY, HEALTH, and LONG LIFE."

Published by HAMMOND, HAMMOND, and CO., 19, 21, and 23 Ludgate Hill, London.

The publishers have much pleasure in announcing the issue of the popular edition of Professor BOYD LAYNARD'S great work, "SECRETS OF BEAUTY, HEALTH, AND LONG LIFE."

This remarkable handbook to the three subjects embraced in the title has been a long period in preparation by the author—being, in fact, the labour of many years of diligent research and earnest investigation. The work is arranged in TWO BOOKS, FIFTEEN PARTS, and 127 CHAPTERS, the whole of which (in the popular edition now offered to the public) is bound in ONE VOLUME.

The book, although published at Two Shillings, will, if ordered direct from the publishers, be forwarded, carriage paid, to all readers of this paper at the low discount price of

ONE SHILLING AND SIXPENCE.

This is to secure for it a place in every home, by bringing it within the reach of all.

Amongst the numerous subjects dealt with in Professor Boyd Laynard's Work, the following are but a few (a complete syllabus, showing the contents of the whole of the 127 chapters, enumerating upwards of 500 subjects and divisions of subjects, can be had free on application to the publishers) :—

Analysis of beauty—Beauty a possible attainment—The way we make our own faces—Secrets of face transformation—Changeableness of beauty and its causes—Metaphysical secrets of keeping young and preserving a youthful appearance—Wonders of the skin—Relation of the skin to beauty—Effects of mental emotions upon the skin—Bad complexions and their causes—Diet that spoils and diet that improves the complexion—General care of the complexion—Construction, growth, and wonders of the hair—Why hair falls out, and its remedy—Premature greyness: its causes and prevention—General care of the hair—Superficial hairs—Wrinkles, and how to treat them—Freckles, tan, and blackheads—Oily skin, dry skin, and loose skin—Undesirable noses and their transformation—Protruding ears and their treatment—Offensive breath—Anatomy of the teeth—Why teeth decay—General care of the teeth—Tallness, and how to attain it—Round shoulders, and how to cure them—How to acquire a full chest—Perfect form and figure: their proper proportions—Thinness, and its treatment—Excessive stoutness—Care of the hands—Care of the feet—Physiognomy; or, the art of reading character from the face—Mental influence upon health—Power of the mind over the body—Influence of the mind in curing diseases—How the mind can induce disease—How violent passions injure health—Laughter as a medicine—Wonders of digestion—Relative value to our bodies of the principal articles of food—Fruits and vegetables as medicine: their various influences upon the physical system—Health-preserving diet, and its consistency—Diet favourable to mental exertion and intellectual culture—Influence of various foods upon our passions and propensities—Some perilous articles of food—Light, and its influence upon health—Exercise and its relations to health—Baths and bathing: their influence upon health—The way we breathe, and how it affects our health—The marriage state, and its influence upon health—100 professions, trades and occupations: their respective influences upon health and long life—Sleep, and its relation to health—Conditions for healthy sleep—Insomnia—The eyes, and how to preserve them—The ears and hearing: how to prevent deafness—The voice: its cultivation and preservation—Memory, and how to improve it—Stammering, and how to cure it—Prevention of disease—Colds: their nature, prevention and treatment—Indigestion—Constipation—Neuralgia, Rheumatism—Nervousness—headaches—That rebellious organ, the liver—Blushing: its physiology and treatment—Rules of life for attaining longevity—Things that shorten life—Things that prolong life—How to live to a hundred—Premature old age and its causes—Short biographies of 30 modern centenarians, whose ages range from 115 to 185 years—Attainment of long life under physical disabilities.

The Publishers desire to make it quite clear that the WHOLE of Professor Boyd Laynard's work on the "Secrets of Beauty, Health, and Long Life," complete in 127 chapters, is forwarded carriage paid for the sum named.

REMITTANCES MAY BE MADE EITHER IN POSTAL ORDERS OR STAMPS TO

ORDER FORM. To be cut out.

To HAMMOND, HAMMOND & Co.,

19, 21, and 23 LUDGATE HILL, LONDON, E.C.

Please forward me Professor Boyd Laynard's complete work, "SECRETS OF BEAUTY, HEALTH, AND LONG LIFE" (carriage paid), for which I enclose the sum of

ONE SHILLING AND SIXPENCE

*Name*_____

*Address*_____

Advertisements should be sent to "Short Stories" Advertisement Department, Henrietta Street, London, W.C.

Digitized by Google

BEGIN OUR NEW SERIAL TO-DAY.

SHORT STORIES
A WEEKLY MAGAZINE FOR HOME AND TRAIN

No. 606. FOR WEEK ENDING AUGUST 11TH, 1900. [ONE PENNY.

REASONS WHY

YOU SHOULD DRINK THE DELECTABLE

NON-INTOXICATING BEER

MADE FROM

Good for the HEALTH,
Good for the POCKET,
Good for the OLD,
Good for the YOUNG,
Good for EVERYBODY,
Good for YOU!
TRY IT!
SOLD EVERYWHERE

Good for the HEALTH,
Good for the POCKET,
Good for the OLD,
Good for the YOUNG,
Good for EVERYBODY,
Good for YOU!
TRY IT!
SOLD EVERYWHERE

A 6d. BOTTLE MAKES 8 GALLONS OF

WHOLESOME, PALATABLE BEER!!

Try also MASON'S COFFEE ESSENCE (Sample sent free) and
MASON'S WINE ESSENCES (Sample Bottle free for 9 Stamps).

NEWBALL & MASON, Nottingham.

AGENTS WANTED.

Advertisements should be sent to "Short Stories" Advertisement Department, Henrietta Street, London, WC.

"HAIR LIKE AN ENGLISH WOMAN."

That is the generally expressed desire of a foreigner. To have hair like an English woman. Hair is a woman's chief adornment, but hair to be nice must have nice treatment. Hair must be stimulated to live.

Continual brushing does this, and nothing else does it as effectually. Our grandmothers, and even our mothers, knew this so well that hair brushing was one of the most important features of their toilet. Half an hour at night and half an hour in the morning were thought none too long a time to devote to this. If this attention cannot be given, recourse must be had to a stimulant, and as a stimulant for the hair there is none so safe and so effective as the discovery of Mr. Geo. R. Sims, called by him "TATCHO," which is the Romany word for "genuine."

GEO. R. SIMS' HAIR RENEWER "TATCHO."

"TATCHO" is a brilliant spirituous liquor, the colour of whisky, free from all grease. A sprinkle of a few drops on the scalp and five minutes with the brush daily works marvels with every head of hair, but more especially with those that have not received their quantum of care.

If you value your appearance—and who does not?—get a bottle of "TATCHO" to-day. The result will surprise you and be intensely gratifying.

"TATCHO" will stop the hair falling, and will make it beautiful in texture and double in volume.

"TATCHO" gives vitality to the hair at once, and after a few days of treatment its youthful brightness; and what is more, this vitality and brightness may be retained.

Mrs. BROWN POTTER, whose beautiful hair is the envy of her sex, uses nothing but "TATCHO."

Geo. R. Sims' Hair Renewer, "Tatcho," is obtainable of all perfumers, 2/9 & 5/- per Bottle; or can be had direct in plain wrapper on sending 2/11 or 5/3.

ADDRESS

The Geo. R. Sims Co.,

81b Great Queen St., London, W.C.

SAMPLE TRIAL BOTTLES 1/6 TO-DAY.

Sent post free in plain package, twenty-one stamps.

TO THE QUEEN PURVEYORS

CROSSE & BLACKWELL'S

GREEN PEA. GRAVY. JULIENNE. MULLIGATAWNY. TOMATO. HOUSEHOLD. CRESSY. &c.

SOUP TABLETS

OF ALL GROCERS ETC. THROUGHOUT THE WORLD

DRUNKENNESS

CURED. This can be done with or without patient's knowledge. Send me a stamp and I will tell you how. (Send no money.) Address, in confidence, Mrs. C. H. (Room 8), 195 Oxford Street London, W.

SULPHOLINE LOTION,

For clearing the skin from Spots, Blemishes, Redness, Roughness, giving a Beautiful Complexion and pleasing appearance.

SHILLING BOTTLES.

A SUM of from 12s. to 25s. per week can be earned in spare hours or evenings by either sex everywhere.—Send addressed envelope for particulars to Box 24, Eclipse Works, 89 Aldersgate Street, E.C.

WHY BE FAT?

When a lady, who has discovered a simple means of Self-Cure will be happy to send particulars of same to any sufferer from this distressing complaint. Free on receipt of stamped addressed envelope. ADDRESS:

Mrs. TREVOR WELLS,

63 *HIGH HOLBORN, LONDON, W.C.*

HAIR DESTROYED.

Send me an envelope (stamped and addressed) and I will tell you how to remove all superfluous hair **free of charge.** (Send no money.) Address, in confidence, Miss E. V. (Room 3), 195 Oxford Street, London, W.

ESTABLISHED 1851.

BIRKBECK BANK

Southampton Buildings, Chancery Lane, London.

2% on CURRENT ACCOUNTS, on the minimum monthly balances when not drawn below £100.

The BIRKBECK ALMANACK, with full particulars, post free. FRANCIS RAVENSCROFT, *Manager.*

Advertisements should be sent to "Short Stories" Advertisement Department, Henrietta Street, London, W.C.

Digitized by Google

A SHOT IN THE DARK.

A Tale of the Veld.

"IS that all you have to say to me, Prusy?"

The girl was leaning over the low stone wall of the cattle kraal, her eyes fixed upon a cloud of dust which was moving slowly across the great treeless expanse of waterless waste, on the edge of which the Brandon homestead was situated.

The sun was dropping to the west, and the Brandon stock was returning to the pens after a day on the veld. Prusy Brandon rested her arms on the wall and looked out over the bare, brown, hummocky plain.

But in the picture at which Prusy was gazing, with an absorption so intense that she seemed utterly oblivious of the companion by her side, neither westering sun, nor rugged veld, neither distant height, nor lowing herd found any place. Her eye was filled with the vision of a white-painted gate set in a hedge of flaming red cactus.

At the gate stood a man and a maid. The man's head was half hidden under the rim of the broad-brimmed hat the girl was wearing, and he was talking rapidly in low earnest tones.

The gate led from the horse-paddock into the fruit-garden; and the cool, scent-laden breeze of evening, rustled musically among the leaves of the pear-tree overhead, while the man, who held the girl's hand imprisoned in his strong, firm clasp, continued to pour into her willing ear the story which he had ridden thirty miles to tell. And though her cheek had flushed, and her eye had kindled, as the hot, passionate words

All rights reserved.]

Digitized by Google

had rushed tumultuously from her lips, she had let him return without an answer. Now, as she stood there gazing dreamily across the veld, Prusy Brandon knew that Frank Bartols had taken her heart back to Amersdorp.

"Is that all you have to say to me, Prusy?"

The repetition of the question in tones that betrayed both sullenness and irritation, accompanied by the laying

Oblivious of the companion by her side.

of a rude hand upon her shoulder, brought the girl back from the flower-scented orchard to the pungent-smelling cattle-kraal with a shock that jarred every nerve and fibre.

She turned and confronted the speaker.

"No, Jacob," said the girl, shaking off the hand, and drawing a quick, deep breath. "No, it is not all. I have told you before, as I have told you to-day, that I cannot honestly hold out to you any hope of being able to give you any other reply than the one I have given you already. But since——"

"You may change your mind," urged the man. "All women——"

"I shall not change my mind," returned the girl quietly.

"You've done it before, Prusy."

The girl looked him full in the face. There was a challenge in her eye.

He dropped his instantly.

"I say you've done it before," he repeated doggedly, "and may do it again—when you're tired of that——"

"How dare you?" she cried, stamping her foot.

"Anyhow, you were glad enough to see me till Frank Bartols came to live over at Amesdorp," sneered the man, devouring her wolfish eyes.

"I should be glad to see you now, Jacob; on the old terms. But I'm afraid that's——" she hesitated, "—— impossible," snopped Jacob, completing the sentence for her. "Well, I'm glad you recognise the position, if you refuse to accept the responsibility. Did you really suppose that that ridiculous brother-and-sister arrangement could continue? It was all very well whilst we remained children, but——"

"We shall not mend matters by discussing them, Jacob. Better leave them to time."

"Time!" he exclaimed, a curious gleam coming into his eyes. "Yes, I believe you're right, Prusy. Time is my best ally. Old Uncle Steve's half breed will find himself short in his reckoning on the question of time."

The girl drew back a space and surveyed him contemptuously. He shifted uneasily under the withering glance which she bent upon him. The man gave a laugh and forced himself to look at her.

The steady disdainful gaze of her scornful eyes seemed to shrivel his soul.

He turned away, and throwing himself across the low stone wall began to whistle.

"What are you waiting for, Jacob Maartens?" asked the girl, in a low impressive voice.

"For the end of the story you set out to tell," returned the man, a strongly cynical inflection in his tone. "It ought to be interesting; since upon it will depend the circumstances under which our next meeting will probably take place," and he recommenced the performance which her question had interrupted.

The girl did not speak. She remained very still. Her breath came in quick short gasps. The moment was tense with emotion. She was not ignorant of the feeling which existed amongst a large section of the Dutch population. Could Jacob really have intended to convey a threat? Her whole frame quivered.

Colonial-born, of English parentage, educated at Cape Town and brought up on the veld, Prusy was refined in manner but fearless in spirit. For Jacob to suppose that he could move her by a threat was an insult to her birth and an affront to her breeding. It showed also how little he understood her after all.

His words, she guessed, could only refer to the movement against the Englanders which had been going on now more or less openly all over the place for months. Her father had said only yesterday that it would come to a fight; and the District Magistrate from Newcastle, who was on a visit, had advised him to send the women-folk into Natal. But Ned Brandon had lived half his life amongst the Dutchmen. He counted many friends among the farmers round Normanton; and though he had sometimes wondered how things might go if a stranger who knew not Joseph were set over them, he had consoled himself with the reflection that at the worst the border was only forty miles away; and thereupon had determined to hold on to the last.

With the rumours which from time to time had reached her ears, Prusy had not concerned herself much. The veld was her home, and the children of the Boer families had been her playmates, as the son and grandson of her nearest Dutch neighbours were now her lovers. The talk of the transport riders, of the fossickers, and others who came and went, did not greatly affect Prusy. That was her father's business.

Digitized by Google

But the words of Jacob Maartens had a nasty ring about them. They sounded sinister and menacing.

Her hand clenched and her bosom heaved. She couldn't trust herself to speak. She must tell him how she despised him if she opened her lips.

Ned Brandon on his way to the sheep pens for the evening count-in, shouted a greeting to Maartens as he passed; but Jacob was very slow about responding. Ned opined there was a quarrel; and remembering his own courting days, whistled his favourite collie to heel and passed on.

"Are you ashamed or afraid to finish?" growled Maartens at last, provoked beyond endurance by the girl's silence. "Because if you've nothing more to say to me, I've something to say to you; but I'd rather you had your say first."

"You are angry with me Jacob, because it is not in my power to do as you wish."

"Not in your power? That's a lie to begin with," broke in the man vehemently.

He struck the wall with his fist, while a dull red glow stole into his face.

"You can send him away if you've a mind to. But it's Jacob Maartens who's to trek, and Frank Bartols who's to stay. You've made it up between you.

"Tell the truth, missy; and you'd rather see Maartens stretched out by the rooineks, than hear that Bartols had been scratched by a thorn-brake.

"Well, maybe it's yourself will have to trek, sweetheart; but I can't promise that Mynheer Franz will be escort. He——"

"Stop! stop! You've said enough, Jacob," cried the girl. "I will hear no more," and she turned to leave the spot, but Maartens seized her by the wrists.

"Are you mad?" she hissed, struggling to be free.

"Yes, I think I must be," he answered between his teeth. "It's Prusy Brandon's work. 'Tis she has driven me over the border, and roused the devil that lurks in every man's heart."

"You will make me hate you, Jacob."

He laughed.

"Hate me? Ha! Ha! Wait, *myn lieb*, wait. I won't ask you to finish your story. I know it. But hear mine. You have killed him."

He paused.

"You understand?—the man who has taken the place that should be mine."

She clutched at the wall for support.

"Frank Bartols is dead. Prusy Brandon has killed him."

She gave a low cry. He stifled an oath and hurried on.

"Bartols is a spy—a traitor; an enemy to his country. The *Schweinhund* that he is—he had an English mother. He was in their cursed country when his father died. Better had old Stephen let him stay there. The man is no Africander. He is a *verdammt Engelschman*, and a spy.

"He has been carrying news to the rooineks in Natal; but, *Himmel!* he will carry no more. I have only been waiting for this to denounce him.

"To-morrow, your lover, Frank Bartols, will be arrested.

"A week hence, every Africander from the Cape to the Limpopo, will be on the march; and we shall sweep every *verdammt* Englisher into the sea.

"I came here to-day, Fräulein, simple Jacob Maartens, ready to offer my protection in return for your promise. But to-morrow, I shall be Field-Cornet Maartens, and my first duty will be to warn Baas Brandon that he is suspected of harbouring traitors and that his farm is confiscated to the State.

"As for that Judas," he added significantly, "You will never call Frank Bartols, husband, Missy."

She stood up and faced him.

"You can go, Jacob. There is nothing more to say. Father will deal with the matter you speak of when it is put before him."

She spoke in hard, level tones. Her eye glittered, but her voice was firm and her pulse steady.

He glowered at her sullenly.

"Then you will let Frank Bartols go to his death without a pang?"

"Jacob!"

He started.

There was a note in her voice that he had never heard in it before.

"Have you no pity? Why do you not leave me?"

"You love him?"

She flung up her hand.

He thought she was about to strike him and recoiled.

"Coward!" she panted.

"And you will let him die."

"Brute!"

"What will it profit you? You refuse me; but you sacrifice him. Take me, and you give him a chance to die honourably in the future, instead of shamefully ——"

"Go! go before I kill you," she cried, advancing upon him, her bosom heaving and her nostrils a-quiver. "I hate you Jacob Maartens, I *hate* you; and remember,

"You will make me hate you, Jacob."

Digitized by Google

that for any evil that befalls Frank Bartols I will hold you to account."

He glared at her for a moment with uncomprehending eyes; then he lowered his gaze and turned away.

* * * * *

"Steady, Jenny! steady, good horse."

The sound of her mistress's voice, and the caressing hand laid upon the mare's neck had their effect. With a low whinny the intelligent creature presently settled down again into a long, lolloping stride.

She had swerved suddenly from the track at the Tower Rock, just after entering the five mile poort about mid-distance between Normanton and Amesdorp.

There was a good sprinkle of stars overhead, but the throat of the gully was narrow, and the heavy masses of rock which overhung the track for the first mile or two made the going in places as dark as a tunnel.

"Wonder what could have made her shy?" thought Prusy. "She ought to know every inch of the ground, every ragged rock and naked boulder. Must have smelt something, I expect—Kaffirs, likely, trekking into Swaziland till the trouble here's over. There's been a lot of natives on the move this fortnight past."

The mare kept on down the poort at a steady, even pace, knocking sparks out of the scattered flints as she spurned them with her flying heels.

There was more light now, for the defile broadened out at the Amesdorp end, and already the open veld could be dimly seen stretching away under the winking stars.

"Old Uncle Steve will think me daft; and Frank ——"

What was that?

She pulled up her mount so suddenly that the mare was almost thrown on her haunches.

Prusy knew the sound too well to be in doubt, but the question rose involuntarily to her lips.

It was the crack of a rifle—of two rifles, fired simultaneously, away up towards the further end of the long gully from which she was just emerging.

Her mind went back to the Tower Rock and the shying horse; and in a moment she found herself trembling at some unknown danger mercifully escaped. But intuitively she felt that, whatever the peril, it was

It was a shot in the dark, but it went home.

Frank who was threatened; and calling upon "Jenny" for a spurt, the mare gave a snort and went away across the veld like the scurrying wind.

Away across the veld, like the scurrying wind.

Prusy had said not a word in the house about the interview with Maartens. Brandon had shown some surprise at not seeing Jacob at supper; but had excused him in his own mind on the score of the "tiff"; while openly setting it down to the bad news from Pretoria.

"Oom Paul, I hear, has made up his mind for a fight; so I expect Jacob's a bit shy of sitting down with us, wife," had been Ned's observation on finding Maartens was absent; and thereafter the talk had run mostly on the chances of conflict, and the fortune of war.

When the family retired, Prusy had gone quietly to the stable, and saddling "Jenny," had started on her long night ride to Amesdorp. The revelation of Maartens, she was convinced, was nothing but a diabolical plot to remove a rival; which the threatened outbreak of hostilities rendered feasible. Her object therefore was to warn Bartols, and at the same time to tell him, without prudery or reserve, what a week ago he had tried in vain to wring from her unwilling lips—that he was the man, the only man, who held in his keeping her fresh young heart. That confession she owed him.

A Brandon girl, with a revolver in her holster, she was not likely to be afraid of anything she might meet on the veld or in the kloofs. But that rifle shot in the

Digitized by Google

dead middle of the night had made her tremble. It awakened such an infinity of possibilities.

When she reached Amesdorp Frank Bartols had left, to join his commando at Standerton.

* * * * *

There was a wounded half-breed found in the Long Poort next morning with a Mauser rifle lying by his side; and scarce a dozen yards away lay the dead body of Jacob Maartens of Maartenspruit.

The injured man was brought into Normanton, and thanks to his Kaffir blood lived long enough to tell the tale.

He was half-brother to Maartens, who on the old Baas's death had hounded Setabo off the homestead; and not long since had done him a foul injury, and Setabo had sworn to be revenged if he had to wait years for it.

The mines, where he had been employed, being shut down in view of the near approach of war, he was trekking for Embesterk in Swaziland, when a longing seized him to go and have a look at the old homestead at Maartenspruit. He went, was recognized, and beaten off the place by Maartens and two Boeren armed with *sjamboks*.

At Helder's Farm he stole a rifle, and was on his way back to watch for Jacob when by good chance he met him last night on the veld.

Maartens was talking to somebody in the dark—to somebody that Setabo couldn't see, talking a lot, and wandering about in a silly sort of fashion. He didn't ride straight on, but kept pulling up his horse and looking all round, as if uncertain of his road.

"I crept up as near as I could," said the man, "hoping to get in a shot. I knew I should have only chance for one; and if I missed—well, Jacob was a dead shot. But he seemed crazed with the fancy that someone was dodging him, for he wheeled his horse right round, time and agen; his mouth full of strange threats, and shook his fist at the dark.

"After a bit he took to laughing. 'Peared he'd a notion that somebody was going to ride over from Norm'ton to Amesdorp in the dark, and it amused him. 'He'd wait for them,' he said, 'in the Long Poort; and they'd ride together—but not to Amesdorp; no, to—' and then he burst into such a queer laugh that I hated him worse than ever. So I just trekked off to the Tower Rock, meaning to give him what I'd got in the Mauser when he came by. Hardly had I reached the spot however, when I heard the sound of hoofs. Somebody was coming—Maartens?

"Stepping out of my hiding place, I saw the long skirt of a woman sweep past me in the dark.

"Then I heard the thud of other hoofs in the distance and I got ready for Jacob.

"That flying figure had brought old memories to mind. Had I been possessed of a dozen lives I would have given them all for his.

"Well, I didn't have to wait many minutes. Down the poort he came reviling his luck, and I got in my shot; but he was able to return it, and I shan't be long after.

"Yet I have this satisfaction Baas. He lived long enough to know who had sent him to the Evil One, and I spared him not to the last.

"It was a shot in the dark, but it went home; and now Setabo is ready to follow, whither the blackhearted Dutchman has gone.

"Long live the Great White Queen!"

H. HUNTER.

Digitized by Google

An Australian Recluse.

Two of Mr. Robinson's bullocks had broken from the paddock at Toonarbin Run, during the night, and Ralph Robinson, their owner's nephew, and one of the stock-keepers, had started out in search of them on horseback, with a couple of collie dogs loping along in the rear.

Australian scenery is grandly impressive always. Particularly so at early sunrise, when nature is shaking off the night's slumber. Toonarbin Range was aglow with golden light, peak upon peak rising skyward as far as the eye could reach.

The missing bullocks were seen about noon in company with a herd of half-wild cattle. Jenkins, the stock-keeper, flourished his stock-whip in their direction.

"Stay you here, Mr. Ralph," he said hurriedly, "while I cut the two strays out from the herd—you head them if they turn away from the run," and off he galloped.

It was many a long day before Ralph saw him again. Instead of breaking, the herd plunged forward *en masse*, the bullocks in the midst. Cattle and keeper disappeared in a cloud of dust. One of the collies followed at the heels of the stockman's horse. The other remained behind with Ralph. This collie suddenly started a big kangaroo—a "boomer," or man kangaroo, as the colonists say—from the under scrub.

Before Ralph could pull his holster pistol, the boomer was out of sight in a little grove of oak at the right.

Forgetting drover and bullocks, Ralph urged his horse forward in pursuit, guided by the wild barking of the collie, and an occasional glimpse of the mouse-coloured animal making tremendous bounds through the scrub, which was broken by patches of clear up and in places. Kangaroos had become scarce around Toonarbin Run, and Ralph Robinson was an enthusiastic huntsman.

Absorbed in the ardour of the chase, Ralph did not think of the danger of losing himself in the bush. On and still on, when, suddenly emerging from the thick growth, the banks of a tortuous creek appeared before him.

In the shallow part of the stream stood the boomer at bay. Not being able to use its hind foot, armed with its long, sharp-pointed claw, the huge beast, almost as large as an average sized man, had laid hold of the poor collie and thrust it under water, despite the dog's best efforts at self-preservation.

Springing from his saddle, Ralph balanced the holster pistol across the bend of his left arm, and fired with correct aim. The big animal fell with a splash, shot through the heart. With infinite difficulty Ralph dragged the boomer ashore while the half-drowned collie sat panting on the bank. Then the young stockman began for the first time to look about him.

He was surrounded by virgin forest, whose silence was only broken by the babble of the creek flowing over some stony obstructions, and the chatter of occasional flocks of parrots flying high over the everglade. It was noon by the sun, and having heedlessly left his pocket-compass behind, Ralph, like the eloquent orator, "knew no north, no south, no east, no west." Even the peculiar-shaped, snow-clad crests of the Toonarbin Range seemed to have changed their individuality. In fact, Ralph was lost.

But he was a plucky young fellow, who had lived from boyhood on his uncle's stock farm in the wildest portion of the Warragara district. Twice before had he been similarly placed, and after hours of wandering, made his way back. The first thing he did was to cut off the boomer's immense tail, not as a trophy, but as a choice tit-bit for a roast. This he secured behind the saddle, and, whistling to the collie, led his horse up from the banks of the creek, where he stood for a moment trying to guess at the points of the compass.

A slight rustling in the long grass behind him, and a short, quick bark from the sheep-dog, caused Ralph to turn his head quickly, at the same time involuntarily stretching out one hand in the direction of his holster pistol.

Quicker than a flash, his right wrist was clutched and held in a vice-like grip. At the same moment a laughing, ebony-hued face, showing far more of intelligence than is seen in the features of the average Australian native, was brought within range of his astonished vision.

Now Ralph was by no means a weakling; yet, though his laughing captor seemed little more than a boy, he was astonished to find that he could not release his wrist from the wiry black fingers until the latter relaxed of their own accord.

"No use, white fellow! Mayfu *cobung matong* (very strong)!" said the black, good-naturedly.

He wore a sort of sheepskin coat without arms, and short leather breeches—nothing else—and Ralph saw at a glance that the stranger was unlike any of the natives employed in and about the stock farm.

"Who are you?" he asked, bluntly.

"Mayfu," was the brief response.

And Mayfu professed entire ignorance of the locality, his people—so he said, with pantomimic gesture—living further away to the north, in the Wallagiera, or Valley of the Mountain of Fire.

Digitized by Google

One peculiarity Ralph noticed: that while Mayfu used at times the singular dialect of the Australian black, he could speak a fairly good "pidgin English."

Thus, as a little later Ralph produced some cold "damper," with a view to lunch, while Mayfu started a fire, the latter exclaimed, in reference to the tail of the boomer he had begun to skin:

"Baal flying doe this one, mine think it," meaning that the kangaroo must have been of uncommon size, while the next breath he asked, with a sharp glance in Ralph's face: "What matter, white fellow? You look like sick." For all at once Ralph had felt a strange dizziness and weakness come over him, not unlike that which is a prelude to the fever of the Australian lowlands. His appetite suddenly left him; the cold damper and roast boomer tail became alike repugnant.

"I *am* sick," he said, wearily, and lay down on the purple heath as he spoke.

Mayfu unstrapped the blanket from behind Ralph's saddle, and arranged it for a pillow. He then fastened the horse with a picket rope, and getting water from the creek, bathed the sick man's burning temples.

It was midsummer, and the air, even as nightfall came on, was mild and balmy.

Too dizzy and confused to think, or even care, Ralph lay in a half-waking drowse, hearing the thousand voices of night in an Australian forest, seeing the fireflies blazing through the air, and conscious that Mayfu squatted beside him, and seemed never to close his eyes in slumber. At early dawn the black took the tin "billy" from behind Ralph's saddle, and disappeared. Half-an-hour later he returned. The billy was half full of glossy green leaves having a peculiar aromatic smell. These Mayfu steeped in water over the fire.

"Drink, my master," he said authoritatively, holding the tin to the white youth's parched lips while he supported his head. The draught seemed to give him a sort of unnatural physical strength, though Ralph himself, so nearly as he knows, was half-delirious when, a little later, Mayfu helped him into his saddle.

What followed was like the wild fantasies of a confused dream. Half supported on his horse by Mayfu's strong arm, Ralph was indistinctly conscious of hours—it might have been days—of continuous ongoing, through great defiles and wooded plains, over grass-clad hills, and in primeval forests. Then the way led upward, among immense elevations of volcanic origin. Lava and pumice were crushed by the horse's feet.

Up and still up among the eternal snows; yet strange as it may seem, Ralph seemed neither conscious of cold, hunger, loss of sleep, or fatigue. From time to time Mayfu gave him to drink from a hollow gourd of the infusion he had prepared.

When the light of reason dawned again in Ralph's mind, he was lying on a couch of fragrant grass. Above his head was a bark roof; the sides of the smoke-stained interior were of plain slabs driven deep in the earth. Through the open doorway and between the trunks of great fern trees he caught a glimpse of mountain slopes, covered with dense verdure rising on every side.

Near him, on a pile of kangaroo skins, sat a girl, seemingly a few years younger than himself. And in all his dreams Ralph had never seen anything half so beautiful. Her skin was dazzlingly fair, her eyes dark and lustrous, and her hair, intensely black and silky, fell over the folds of a simple dress of calico in a wonderful cloud.

No, he was not dreaming. For close beside her was Nero, the collie dog, who, as his master stretched out his wasted hand, licked it, whining a joyful recognition.

"Where am I?" Ralph feebly asked; "and please—who are you?"

"In the Valley of Wallagiera," was the quiet reply; "and I am Valetta; my father is the chief man of our settlement."

But it was not till two or three days afterwards, when Ralph, strengthened by savoury broths, was able to sit outside in the cooling shade, that he learnt from Valetta, who had constituted herself his nurse, more particulars as to the Wallagiera settlement.

It would seem that nearly two hundred years before, some Europeans had been shipwrecked on the west coast of the island continent. They had penetrated far inland, where they were taken prisoners by some of the Garri tribes. On condition that their lives should be spared, all but four had taken native wives.

Their descendants, a hundred years later, had little or no trace of native blood, and were socially ostracized by the Garris on that account. Banded together, they penetrated the interior, hitherto untrodden by man.

With them was a missionary, who had wandered from the coast to the Garri country, where he had been but ill-received. The little community finally reached the Valley of Wallagiera, where they located permanently.

Ralph was not lacking in ambition, nor was he weary of the world. But a stronger motive than either I have mentioned prevented his return to civilization.

Valetta was the most beautiful girl he had ever seen, and as good as she was beautiful. Ralph had no one in the world belonging to him excepting his Uncle George, who had a family of his own.

* * * * *

Nearly ten years later, an athletic, bronzed, full-bearded young man of thirty rode into the yard of Mr. George Robinson's extensive stock farm in the Warragara district just at sundown.

The helper who came forward to take his horse was an elderly man, with a peculiarly shaped blue scar across his nose. The stranger glanced inquiringly in his face.

"Well, Dick Jenkins," he said, quietly, "did you cut out the bullocks you and I went in search of from Uncle George's stock farm, nine or ten years ago?"

Old Dick started, whistled, and uttered a great exclamation, which brought half the household out on the stoop.

"Well, durn my cabbage tree if it ain't Mr. Ralph!" he shouted.

And it was. Yet no persuasion or pleadings on the part of Mr. and Mrs. Robinson, availed to keep Ralph with them beyond the one night.

"My wife and children await my coming with anxious hearts, and Mayfu, my servant man, will hardly sleep till I come back to the Valley of Wallagiera," he said, in answer to all solicitation to stay longer. An impulse to look once more upon civilization had seized the recluse for so many years, and he had obeyed it. But his only longing—the impulse gratified—was to return.

"Yes, I am perfectly happy," he said at parting. "My wife is the most beautiful and best woman in the world, and my children are like her. Our wants are simple, and we never go beyond the valley for them. Farewell,"

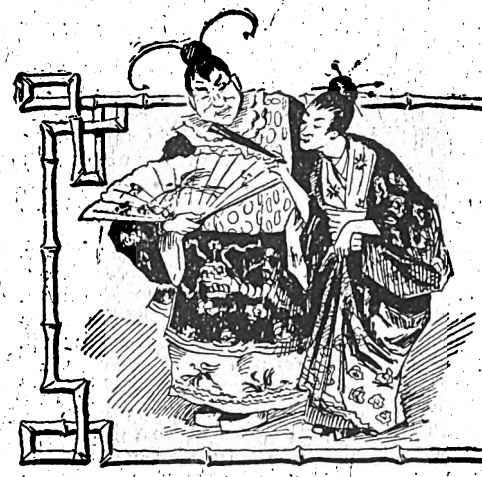
Nor would Ralph suffer anyone to accompany him on his return.

"So far as we can prevent it, we want no one to enter Wallagiera Valley," he told them.

And to this day it is not known that any have.

But Ralph will never again return to civilization. Why should he, indeed? W. S. L.

Digitized by Google



Mr. Bowser's Tribulations.

XVIII.—HE TAKES A COUNTRY HOUSE FOR THE SUMMER

"AND what do you think now?" shouted Mr. Bowser as he entered the hall the other evening and gave his hat a wave or two round his head before hanging it up.

"Have you bought a—a cow?" asked Mrs. Bowser as she recalled that he had spoken of new milk cows at the breakfast table.

"No cows! No spring tonics! No fire escapes! Rejoice, my dear woman, rejoice, and call me the best husband in the world while I give you an old fashioned hug!"

Mr. Bowser had taken a lease of a house in the country. It was a country house out in the country, and seven different doctors had told him that a month of agricultural air, with climbing trees, sliding down haystacks, and jumping fences would eradicate the rheumatism from his system, and bring back the flush of health to his wife's cheeks.

The house was furnished, and they were to go out the next afternoon with their cook and take full possession and begin to receive benefits.

"But why don't you go alone and see the farm and come back and tell me what you think of it?" protested Mrs. Bowser.

"Call me the best husband in the world while I give you an old-fashioned hug."

"Because I have already signed a lease for two months," he replied. "It's two hours' journey in the train, and it'll be a romantic little jaunt for us both. It's a mile from the station, and as we saunter along we'll pick daisies and run after rabbits and be young again."

She was dubious and he enthusiastic, and the result was that they were set down at the station nearest the farmhouse at six o'clock the next evening.

There were no daisies along the highway as they walked. They did not see any rabbits. There was one old crow flying about overhead, and a good many mudholes underfoot, and with all his enthusiasm Mr. Bowser couldn't work up any romance. By and by they reached the house, and as they stood at the gate he said:

"Now, then, this is the place, and we'll walk in. Isn't it a gem of a farm?"

"I don't see the gem exactly!" replied Mrs. Bowser as she looked about. "This can't be the house."

"Why, certainly it is."

"But there is no verandah, no blinds, no lawn, no flowers! The house seems never to have been painted, and, you see, most of the glass is broken. I never saw a more dreary place."

"I believe it's been used for a lunatic asylum!" added the cook.

"Now, don't begin to find fault!" protested Mr. Bowser. What can you expect of a farmhouse? We came out here for our health, not to find a palace. In two days I'll make everything shine like a new pin. Just observe that sunset, will you! By George, but how pure this air is! Why, I feel a year younger already!"

"Where are the trees?" asked Mrs. Bowser as she waded through the grass and weeds and sat down on the front steps of the house.

"Trees! Why, there's one, and—well, all doctors agree that trees round a house are unhealthy. We didn't come out here to get ill, but to get well. However, I have no doubt we can buy all the trees we want. Just look at that glorious sky!"

"I'm looking at the ground and fences and that old shed of a barn!" she sighed.

"You said we were to have cows and sheep and pigs and fowls. Where are they?"

"Yes, where are they?" added the cook as she listened for the clucking of hens.

"There's the cow right down there," replied Mr. Bowser as he pointed to a brindled skeleton looking at them over a fence. "As for the others, they'll be driven over to-morrow probably. I suppose I ought to go and milk the cow this evening, but as I'm rather tired she can wait. You just come inside if you want to see how cozy we are going to be this summer."

He unlocked the door, and they found whitewashed walls, rusty furniture and cobwebs galore. The place hadn't the cheerfulness of a hospital nor the conveniences of a canal-barge.

Digitized by Google

The cook reported a foot of water in the cellar and the kitchen worse than a stable, and Mrs. Bowser sat down on a knockkneed chair and wept, or had started to, when Mr. Bowser angrily exclaimed:

"Now, then, what's the matter with you? What's wrong with this house? What's all this boohooing about?"

"I—I can't live in such a place!" she sobbed.

"Oh, you can't! Can't live in the house where numerous scions of the aristocracy have passed their summers, eh! This is my reward for planning a nice little surprise! Haven't you got sense enough to see that two days' work will change all this—make a little palace of the place? I didn't expect to find things spick and span, but you might just give me a chance."

Mrs. Bowser realised that tears would be of no avail after things had gone so far as they had, and she wiped them away and tried to look more hopeful. Mr. Bowser wandered about outside until the cook had managed to get a bite to eat out of the provisions they had brought with them, and darkness had fallen upon the land when he said:

"You just chirp up and see how things will be to-morrow. Ah, but what's that?"

"It's a cricket singing," replied Mrs. Bowser.

"That's it—a regular, genuine cricket, alive and kicking, and none of your make believes to amuse children! When did we ever hear a cricket sing in town? By George, but that's a lullaby and no mistake! Think of it, Mrs. Bowser—genuine crickets to sing us to sleep in our own house!"

"Y-yes," she answered as she looked round with a sinking heart.

"And listen to that! There goes the song of the meadow lark to welcome us to our new home! If that isn't romantic, then I'd like to know what is! He is so glad we've come that he can't wait."

"Do meadow larks sing at eight o'clock at night?" she asked, knowing the sound to be the hoot of an owl in a tree beside the old barn.

"Not always—not unless they have special reason for it, as in this case," he wisely replied. "This bird probably saw us when we arrived, and, knowing that you'd feel a little lonely he remained awake to carol his song. Ah, Mrs. Bowser, give me the country above all other parts of earth! I can see an improvement in your looks already. Wait three days—a week—and then you'll bless me for what I have done."

"There goes the song of the meadow lark to welcome us to our new home."

Mrs. Bowser was ready to "bless" him then and there, but she held her peace and said she was tired and wanted to go to bed.

"And awake in the dewy morn to hear the robins and blackbirds and nightingales singing their souls away!" he cried out with a forced laugh as the owl uttered a hoot that lifted his hair. "I wonder where the cook is?"

"She's out on the doorstep crying, and I shan't blame her if she leaves us the first thing in the morning."

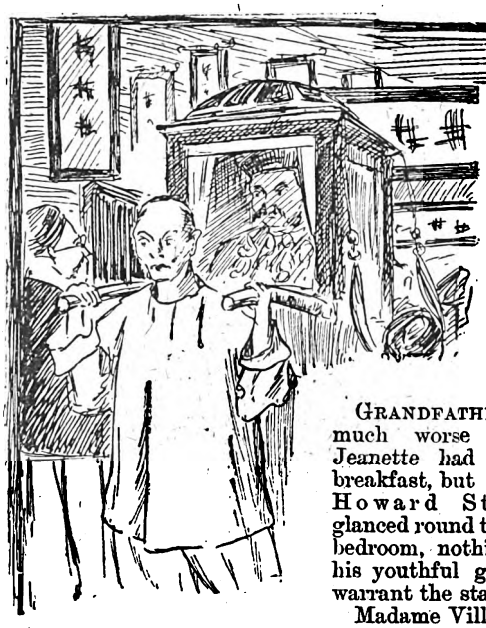
"She won't leave, and you'll wake up to laugh over the tears you've shed to-night. By George, but hear that rook, will you? I say, now, but there are people in town who'd give any amount to hear that song!"

"Don't you know a frog from a rook?" indignantly demanded Mrs. Bowser. "You'll hear 'em singing all night, and there'll be bats and owls and polecats to keep 'em company. If I'm found dead in the morning, you needn't bother about taking the remains home and holding a funeral. Just dump me into a swamp and tell the folks that I died of too much summer health!"

M. QUAD.

[Next Week: "His Night Adventures at His Country House."]

Digitized by Google



THE LOST FLAG.

GRANDFATHER was much worse to-day, Jeanette had said, at breakfast, but as little Howard Stanley glanced round the white bedroom, nothing met his youthful glance to warrant the statement.

Madame Villette was in the big chair by the bedside as usual, counting her beads.

From time to time she glanced wonderingly at the bed on which Grandfather lay, then turned away with a little whimper of senile amusement.

"One hundred and two years old," she mumbled, "One hundred and two years old. *Mon Dieu*, 'tis a great age—a great age for a man. To think he was a man grown when I was born, and I shall be eighty-two this coming Christmas. But then as I always tell Jeanette, he never will die till he gets the lost flag. Besides," as if summing up to herself the full secret of Grandfather's longevity, "he fought with the great Emperor—*Mon Dieu!* he fought with the great Emperor."

Aye! he fought with the great Emperor, this scarcely-breathing relic of a bygone age—fought and suffered for the honour of the little Corsican with the big high forehead, and impenetrable grey eyes.

Often did the English boy steal into the quiet room and listen almost fearfully to the ancient dame, for ever crooning the monotonous refrain.

"——great age. *Ma foi!* a great age for a man. But then he fought with the great Emperor. *Mon Dieu!* he fought with the great Emperor."

After which, she would invariably turn with awed amazement, pathetic in its senility, towards the great four-post bed, on which lay the barely animated remains of the man who, at Waterloo, had led the — Chasseurs when they died, almost to a man, for the glory of France.

Gaunt and great, its outline showing sharply along the line of white sheet, lay what was now barely more than the skeleton of the man, who in his day had carried many times the standard of the 10th Chasseurs to victory, and finally led the last great charge of his regiment at Waterloo.

Only the occasional flicker of the eyelids, or the shrivelled-up lips, eternally murmuring, "The flag! The flag!" betokened existence.

To the little English boy, staying with his mother at the Old Breton Farmhouse, "Grandfather" was a subject of awe—a grim sign-post marking the grave of a dead era.

He was so old—so very old, and beneath those yellow eyelids, rarely uplifted, were eyes that had once looked on so many peoples and places, and had seen the great battles and rich harvests of death, that had gone to the shaping-out of Napoleon's great road of conquest.

And those withered skinny hands lying on the counterpane, that looked like the shrivelled up claws in the mummy cases Howard had so often seen in the British Museum, had, once upon a time, gripped and swung the big sabre that hung by the clock in the hall, and killed so many men—how many?—the English schoolboy often wondered with awe.

On the romantic and sensitively constructed mind of the English schoolboy, all these associations exercised a powerful effect, and as he crept into the room on this hot August day, and looked at the thing on the bed, he experienced a vague feeling of dread.

The blind was drawn over the one big window, but not low enough to exclude a narrow streak of the sunlight which lay across the floor like a golden rod.

The boy vaguely felt it to be out of place! it seemed strangely incongruous, in that room so full of the tragedy of human existence.

Madame Villette ceased her mumblings and looked up as he entered.

"Come in, little boy." she whispered, "he," nodding towards the bed, "is very low to-day, But there, little one, one hundred and two is a powerful age. Holy Mother! Yes, 'tis a powerful age for a man, but he fought with the great Emperor too. *Mon Dieu!* he fought with the great Emperor."

The lips of the weird figure on the bed twisted themselves together as if to speak, otherwise the old man's form betrayed no existence.

"—— Emperor; The flag!" came a husky whisper at length, which to the English boy sounded like a whisper from a tomb.

"The flag! The flag!"

The last two words died away in a faint whistling moan. Madame Villette nodded comprehensively.

"Aye!" she muttered, "the flag, the flag, 'tis ever 'the flag, the flag.' He has been like that all day. 'The flag, the flag.' He can't die," she continued solemnly, "till he finds the flag. I always tell Jeanette so, but she merely shrugs her shoulders and laughs, and says he will die when his time comes, flag or no flag. Ah! 'tis ever the way of the young, to laugh at their elders. But

Digitized by Google

you'll see, little boy, you'll see he will never die, till he holds the flag in his hand once more."

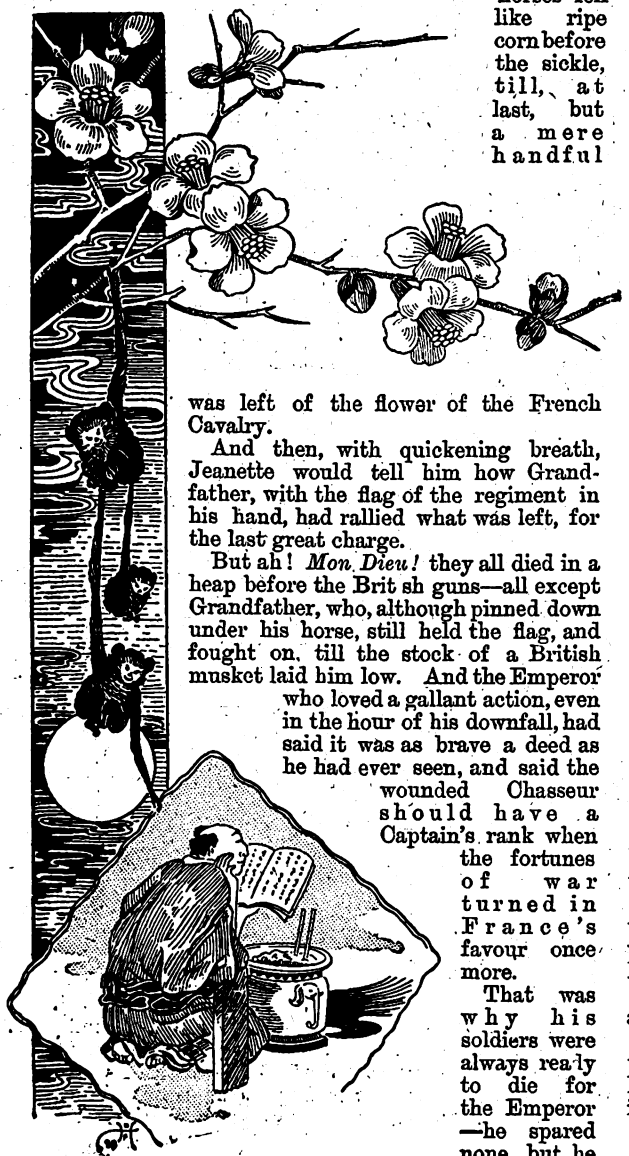
Often had Howard sat in the long, low kitchen, of an evening, and listened to the story of the lost flag.

Jeanette, Madame's middle-aged daughter, who looked after the farm, and took in English boarders during the summer months, had told him all about it many times.

How, at Waterloo, when the tide of victory was ebbing away, at last, from the feet of the great Emperor, the brave French soldiers threw themselves aga n and again against the grim British squares, only to be beaten back, vainly, or to die gloriously.

And none had fought more bravely than Grandfather's old regiment, the 10th Chasseurs.

Again and again had they hurled themselves right on to the British bayonets—and their brave horses fell like ripe corn before the sickle, till, at last, but a mere handful



was left of the flower of the French Cavalry.

And then, with quickening breath, Jeanette would tell him how Grandfather, with the flag of the regiment in his hand, had rallied what was left, for the last great charge.

But ah! *Mon Dieu!* they all died in a heap before the Brit sh guns—all except Grandfather, who, although pinned down under his horse, still held the flag, and fought on, till the stock of a British musket laid him low. And the Emperor who loved a gallant action, even in the hour of his downfall, had said it was as brave a deed as he had ever seen, and said the wounded Chasseur should have a Captain's rank when the fortunes of war turned in France's favour once more.

That was why his soldiers were always ready to die for the Emperor—he spared none, but he never forgot those who served him well. But Napoleon, as everybody knows, died far away from France, and when Grandfather recovered from the blow which the British soldier had given him, he had lost all memory for anything but the captured flag.

Of course Jeanette was not born then, but Madame, her mother, was never tired of telling the story! How they had brought him back to the old farmhouse, and sat him in the gre t chimney nook, where he cried like a little child, all through the warm summer days for the flag he had lost.

And so it had been throughout all those weary long years, till he took to his bed, where he did not cry quite so often

But it was all so sad—so very, very sad.

And then Jeanette, with the big tears standing in her eyes, would suddenly quiet down, ashamed that her enthusiasm should have outweighed her religious principles.

"Ah! but war is such a cruel thing," she would wind up, "and there is no more bad blood between the French and the British now. We are friends! Pray to the Holy Mother, *petite*, that we may always remain friends, for war is such a cruel thing, *Mon Dieu!* such a cruel thing."

And to-day as the English boy stood in the room with the great four-post bed in the corner, he thought of the story Jeanette had so often told—of Grandfather and the lost flag. And, as if in echo to his thoughts, the shrivelled up lips which had fallen back into the toothless mouth once more whispered like the echo from the world of dead things "The flag! The flag!"

The pitiful cry brought the tears into the boy's eyes.

Grandfather wanted a flag *so* badly. Why couldn't they have given him one—any sort would do—surely he was too old and feeble to discern the difference, and perhaps it would calm the awful yearning, which pierced the sensitive boy's heart like a knife.

Any kind of flag, would—

Then an idea suddenly flashed across the boy's mind—something, he wondered why, had never occurred to him before.

Flags!

Why, there were two or three in the old chest which his mother had brought away from Rome, when Uncle Herbert died.

Uncle Herbert had been an antiquarian and had spent his time an l money in searching Europe for relics of the past, till a length, one day at Rome, he, himself, had been relegated to the regions of the past tense, by an attack of typhoid.

The iron-bound chest had constituted his mother's share in the eccentric old man's will.

Relics, however, exercised no attraction for her, but a question of sentiment towards the testator constrained her to keep the old trunk, and so it had accompanied them as far as France on their way back to England.

"Grandfather wanted a flag *so* badly, and perhaps," thought Howard, "he would rest and go to sleep, if he were given one of the old ragged banners in Uncle Herbert's chest.

"He could 'make believe' it was really the lost flag, and the result would be just the same."

Thoroughly imbued with the idea, Howard, without a word to Madame Villette, crept out of the room, and hurried towards the room where the worm-eaten chest lay in company with the other luggage.

It stood in a corner and as usual, was unlocked.

Inside were piled up all sorts of odds and ends—

Digitized by Google

drinking cups of battered metal—fantastic looking, brass-mounted firearms and Italian daggers with many a grim and silent story hanging on their rusty blades.

With feverish haste, the boy removed the heterogeneous mass that lay on top and after much tugging arrived at what he sought.

They lay almost at the bottom.

Three old standards, frayed and torn and more than half-eaten away with mildew—mere bits of rags adhering to broken hafts.

One of them had once been a tricolor.

There were three scraps of red, white, and blue, still clinging to the worm-eaten pole, and on top was the one-time golden eagle of France.

Howard held it in his hand wonderingly.

It was a flag, such as this, that Grandfather had fought for so bravely, and would willingly have given up his life to save.

Just three scraps of colour and a golden eagle, why——

Then suddenly the boy's soliloquy stopped, as his eyes caught sight of some words roughly cut on the handle.

They were in English.

"Flag of the 10th Chasseurs,"
taken at Waterloo,
by
xxNxx

Evidently there had been a name of some sort originally attached, presumably that of the British soldier who had captured the flag, but the wood was grievously battered and worn, the above words alone being decipherable.

But to the shrewd little English school-boy their meaning was at once perfectly obvious.

This time-worn relic, which he held in his hand, was really Grandfather's "lost flag!"

In his wanderings, Uncle Herbert had picked it up somewhere, and now by a strange twist of Fate which oftentimes evinces more method than we nineteenth century sceptics are willing to conceive, it had come back to the man whose life had been one long wait, for that which he had lost.

"The lost flag of the 10th Chasseurs!"

Madame Villette was quite right, after all. She had said Grandfather would never rest till the flag had been found again.

And now that it had been found, he must have it, at once.

Thrilling with excitement the boy hurried back to the white bedroom.

Except for the drowsy ticking of the clock on the mantelpiece, the room was quite still.

Madame Villette, tired of saying her rosary, had fallen asleep.

The form on the bed lay immovable, but the wrinkled eyelids moved slightly on the boy's entrance.

"The flag! The flag!" came the whistling moan, once more, through the parchment-like lips.

"Here, M'sieu," said the English boy, softly, as he stepped forward. "Here!" and he laid it on the bed.

Then Howard saw what he had never seen before, the great black eyes of Grandfather, wide open.

For a moment they remained fixed on the battered flag, then the claw-like hand crept forward tremblingly, and grasped it.

The old man held it against his breast tightly for some moments, muttering:

"The flag, the flag—at last!"

His weird eyes frightened the boy, and the latter glanced round apprehensively in a vague desire for assistance.

But the streak of sunlight still lay on the floor, and Madame slept on peacefully.

With a long-drawn sigh of satisfaction Grandfather essayed to raise himself in the bed.

His great black eyes wandered round the room and fixed themselves for a moment on the boy, who shrank back in horror, then they wandered towards the window.

"There—there," he cried, quite clearly, "there is the Emperor, and—and the horses. See—see the swords glistening, and the horses prancing as they form up for the last charge. They only await the flag and—me. And now I am going—going. Hark! to the galloping hoofs. Ah! my comrades the Chasseurs, I join you—I join you—*Vive—Vive—l'Empereur!*"

* * * * *

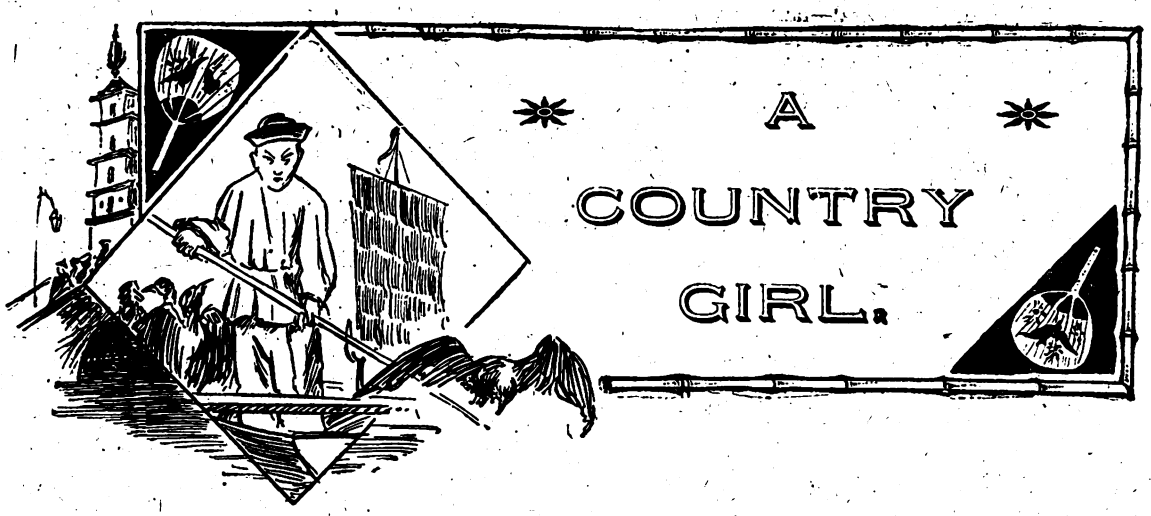
The slant of sunlight still lay on the floor, as Madame Villette awoke, mumbling drowsily.

Jeanette was placing a big wooden crucifix between two lighted candles that stood by the bedside. Over by the door-way the little English boy stood, crying softly.

But Grandfather had joined the Emperor.

NOLAN OF CASTLENOCK.

Digitized by Google



"I *must* go now, dear. Dear old dad will be tired of waiting for me in the trap—but I feel that I *can't* leave you."

It was a simple leave-taking between boy and girl lovers; it might have made a superficial observer smile, but it was intensely real to those two.

She had waited for him in the little flower garden at the back of the house—the little garden in which they had played as children and had plighted their troth; he had walked straight through the house to the spot where he knew he would find her, and, standing by the rustic seat, tightly clasped in a fond embrace, they had tried to say good-bye.

All the words of comfort, encouragement and anticipation of future happiness which each one had been trying to utter, failed completely, and they could only stand together, silent and vaguely trying to keep back the tears which would come to their eyes and obscure the last look of the loved one.

Good-bye! The hateful word would not come; it was replaced by a kiss, a long, passionate kiss, and then Bert left her and ran through the house without saying farewell to her mother, and half groped his way into the trap which was to take him to the station, whence he would journey to the far-off city. And Jenny sank on the seat in the garden and wept as if her heart would break.

Herbert Jordan and Jenny Bruce had loved each other almost from babyhood; as children they had been almost inseparable, and the neighbours had jestingly called them man and wife so often that it had come to be commonly understood that they were destined for each other. Herbert was always Jenny's champion, and it was quite natural that, as they approached maturity, the stronger passion should take the place of childish affection.

There was no doubt that the two young people loved with the whole force of their being; the prospective union had not been pleasing to Herbert's father, but he recognised the depth of this love and had yielded to what he considered the inevitable.

Bert had surprised and gratified his father by developing a taste for study. In that little out-of-the-way village, six miles from a railway station, isolated by bad roads and so much apart from the outer world that it seemed to be forgotten, it was difficult to progress beyond the education of the village school; but the carpenter enlisted the services of the school-master on behalf of his son, and, as the boy was one of the few who can learn from books quite as well as from a master, books were obtained for him.

The boy showed a liking for such subjects as might come under the head of "doctoring," and when Mr. Jordan discovered this, he determined to scrape every penny in order that his son might become a member of the medical profession.

The idea pleased the boy himself; he pictured the time when he would establish himself as a doctor, in a neighbouring village—it must be a neighbouring village for his native place was so inaccessible—and Jenny would be "the doctor's wife." How delighted the young people were at the thought.

Jenny was just as enthusiastic as Bert himself, and listened to his plans and to his long talks on the subjects of his studies with as much pleasure as if she understood all about them, instead of not being able to comprehend more than a mere fragment here and there.

And when she was "the doctor's wife" she would help him—oh! how she would help him! She did not exactly know in what way she could be of service, but that was a detail which she did not stop to consider.

Her mother should give up the little shop which she had kept on since the father's death, and Mr. Jordan would give up his small carpenter's business and "dealing," and they would all live together in "the doctor's house."

And now Bert had gone away to be coached for the Arts examination, which he was sure to pass; and then he would enter as a medical student and in five years he would be a qualified practitioner!

He would have to live very quietly and study hard, for his father could only send him just enough money to keep him going. It was rather rough on dad, but it would all be paid back when Herbert came home with M.R.C.S. or L.R.C.P., or both, at the end of his name.

* * * * *

Bertie Jordan sat in his modest den with his forehead puckered into a decided frown. On the table in front of

Digitized by Google

him lay an open letter at which he had been staring for several minutes.

Four and a half years had passed since he had left home, and all had gone well with his plans. He was beginning his fifth year as a medical student, and as a result of capability and hard work, he had earned a reputation among his fellow students and his teachers, who regarded him as a man who would "do something" in the future.

He had not been home during the whole of that time; the return journey cost a fair amount, and the plain truth was that he could not afford it.

He had regularly received the stated allowance from his father, but that was all too small for a medical student. Had he not been lucky enough to do a good turn to a fellow student, he might have been forced to give up, as a poor medical student does not have a very pleasant time. But it certainly had been a lucky day for him when he fished Harry Baynes out of the river; the Baynes were well-to-do and Bert Jordan had been introduced into circles which he had at one time regarded as unattainable.

Harry always insisted upon paying when they were out together, and this enabled Bert to make a better appearance than he could otherwise have done.

The letter in front of him vexed him; he felt angry, yet—Why did she write to him like that? If she had the much-lauded woman's wit she would have guessed; Gracie Baynes and the other girls he met so often would certainly have guessed and would have not found it necessary to write and ask. Could Jenny not understand that things were different now, without forcing him to tell her so?

He took up the letter and read one paragraph again, although he knew it by heart.

"Bertie dear, why do you not write more often? Your letters have been longer and longer between, and it is now three months, *three months*, since I had a word from you. I look for a letter every morning, and every day I am disappointed. Letters seem to come for everybody but me. Then I thought that you were waiting for my birthday, but yesterday went by and there was no letter, and this morning again there is none. Bertie dear, are you ill? *Do* write and tell me."

There were traces of tears on the paper, and the writing was less firm than usual. Bertie shifted uneasily on his chair and became more angry.

"Any sensible girl would understand what was meant when a fellow didn't write, but Jenny is so simple, so——" He was about to say "so loving and trustful," but he crushed the words back.

For a brief space his mind went back to the old home, to the flower garden, the rustic seat and the leave-taking. He thought of the faithful friend of his childhood and early youth, the sweetheart of later days who had encouraged him and urged him on—the gentle, loving girl, so good. Good! Yes, that simple word summed up her whole character.

The look of vexation, which had disappeared for a moment, came back to Jordan's face in an intensified form. He strode about the room with his hands in his pockets and his head bent,

"That's all very well," he muttered savagely, "but things are different. We are not in the least fitted for each other now, and she ought to be able to see that. How on earth can she expect me to give up the chance of marrying Grace or one of the other girls, when marriage with any one of them would make me for life? She doesn't know anything about it, I admit, but as I have said, she ought to guess."

He went back to his table, unlocked a drawer and took a photo from it. It was a picture of Jenny, sent by her twelve months previously.

It was not a pretty face, and the style of dress and the mode of doing up the hair were decidedly "countrified," but it would not have been difficult to picture the original as a healthy, lovable woman who would give her life in the service of the man she loved. Even in the inanimate photograph there was something about the face which proved how devoted the woman would be. The sight of the photograph occasioned a momentary struggle within the man who was gazing at it.

"She is a dear little girl and would make a sweet wife. The portrait doesn't show you the tender expression in those soft eyes; it doesn't convey any notion of the kiss those lips can give or the way that girl can make you sit up and feel ashamed of yourself with just an expression when you have done anything not quite in order, or how she can stiffen you when your courage is drooping and make you feel that you could get through any difficulty."

He held the photograph at arms length, and between it and his eyes there came the vision of "the girls" he met at the parties given by the Baynes.

"Yes, it's the plain truth; she's gawkish. There's no getting away from it. We are not in the least fitted for one another now; she would be just out of it as my wife and would be as unhappy as she once thought she would be happy. She isn't a patch on any of the others, and I mustn't allow sentiment to interfere. We thought we were fond of each other, but that was only boy and girl love. People soon get over that sort of thing; *I* have, and so will she—if she hasn't already. She is lonely in that shop now her mother is dead, and that's what makes her look for a letter; it isn't love. Yes that's it. She ought to marry and have a man to look after the little business. I'll write to-night and explain it to her. Let me see. This is Thursday evening, so she won't get the letter till Saturday morning; but I'll write at once and get it over."

"It's all right!" he heard a voice say downstairs. "I know the way and it's only me!"

It was the voice of Harry Baynes and he was evidently mounting the stairs two and three at a time. Bert seized the letter and crumpled the missive and photograph into his left hand and crammed them into his pocket just as his friend made an unceremonious entry.

Young Baynes only stayed about three minutes, merely long enough to make an arrangement for the following evening. After his departure Bert sat down resolutely at his table and wrote the letter.

Saturday morning was usually a busy time at the little shop of which Jenny Bruce was now proprietress, and several customers were surprised that Jenny was not to be seen. After knocking on the counter three or four times, each one went away with the intention of calling again later. And while they were thus waiting for Jenny, she was lying unconscious near the little rustic seat in the garden, her right hand tightly clutching a letter—a letter which which had caused her the greatest joy when it was handed to her, for the address was in a handwriting which she had longed for three months to see.

* * * * *

It was a lovely afternoon, eighteen months later, when Herbert Jordan alighted from the train at the little country railway station and set out on a six-mile walk to

Digitized by Google

his native village. He preferred to walk, and for the same reason—that his home coming should be as little observed as possible—he had not told his father by which train he should come.

Everything looked much the same as it had six years before; there had been very little change here, but what an alteration had taken place in his own life! He had passed his examinations with honours, he was about to fill the position of assistant to a medical gentleman of repute—thanks to the good offices of his friend and the elder Mr. Baynes—and it was tacitly understood that he was to marry Grace Baynes in due course, although the formal engagement had not been announced.

His father was taking tea when Bert entered, and the greeting between father and son was hearty and affecting. Old Jordan made his boy sit down without ado at the table to partake of refreshments.

"I had two cups and saucers, and plates set o' purpose, boy," said the old man, as he dumped two thick slices of bread and butter on the plate and swashed some tea into the cup. "There! You ain't had a tea like that since ye left home, I'll warrant! They don't give you good stuff like that in towns and cities, I know. Now you just go on with your tea, and you can tell me all about yourself while you're eating and drinking."

Herbert laughed heartily, and did as his father wished; he was hungry and thirsty, and able to dispose of the good stuff without difficulty.

By the time they had finished the meal, Herbert had given his father an outline of what he had done and what he proposed and hoped to do.

"Did ye see any of the people as ye came along?" asked Mr. Jordan after a pause.

His manner indicated that he wished to lead up to some subject and Herbert guessed what it was.

"I saw three of our people, dad," he answered, "but I fancy they did not recognise me. How is Jenny Bruce?" he asked, boldly.

Old Jordan started; he had reached the desired subject more quickly than he had expected.

"She's mortal bad," he returned with a shake of the head and dropping his eyes. "The work of that shop is a great deal too hard for her. She began to droop like, a matter o' two years or so ago, and after a few months she drooped still more. Fretting and the hard work have done it, I think."

"Is she very ill?"

"Yes, my boy, she is," said the old man solemnly. "The doctor told me this morning she wouldn't live only a few hours."

"I knew the work was too hard for her," said Herbert uneasily. "She ought to have married one of these young fellows, and I told her so."

"Yes, my boy," half muttered Jordan. "I know you did. She showed me your letter. She didn't want to, but I guessed as something had gone wrong and I managed to make her let me have sight of it. Bertie, you made a mistake!"

"What do you mean, dad?" demanded Herbert, much disturbed by his father's tone. There was something between his father and Jenny which he could not understand. "Phew! It's stifling here, come to the door."

"I'll ask ye to excuse me, Bertie. My leg is rather bad to-day."

"Your leg? What is the matter with it?"

"I had an accident nigh on three years ago, my boy, and I ain't been much good since. Only just been able to tiffle about just enough to keep myself going. I—oh!" Jordan stopped short, as if he had said more than he intended.

"Accident! Only been able to earn enough to keep yourself!" Herbert's face grew livid as he spoke; he stared at his father for a few seconds, but the old man kept his eyes on the ground, while his cheeks flushed. "Father!" gasped Herbert in a hoarse voice. "How did you get the money that you sent me—the money that has enabled me to reach my present position? You never said anything to me! Where did it come from if you could not earn it?"

"Jenny gave it to me!"

Herbert reeled and sank into the chair opposite to his father's.

"She wouldn't let me tell you; and even when you threw her over, she kept on giving it me, so as you might have your wish. She said that when a woman loved a man as she loved you, she loved him always and would give her very life to help him. Oh! Bertie, I think she has done it! She might have given up the shop and earned her own living easily, but she braved all the hard work—for you!"

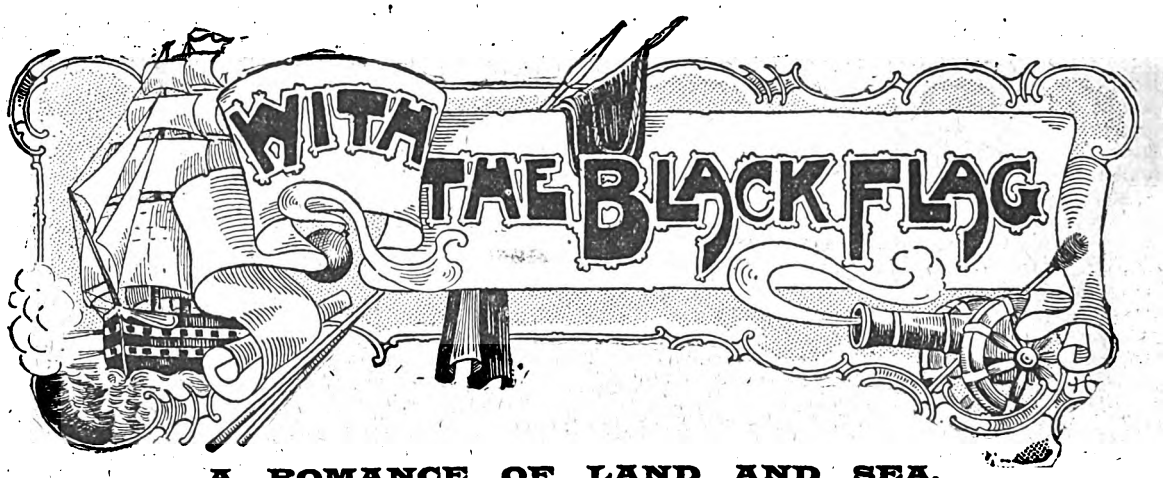
The two watchers by the side of the dying woman raised their hands warningly as a man pushed open the door and entered the room.

The noise was but slight, yet Jenny heard it and turned her eyes in that direction. Immediately a joyous expression came into them, a smile appeared on her lips and she half raised her hands in welcome; then the thin arms dropped helplessly, but the joyful expression remained in the eyes and the smile still hovered on her lips.

The rays of the setting sun fell on a motionless figure on the bed and on the weeping man kneeling by the bedside, while the two watchers looked on stolidly at a scene whose inner meaning was hidden from them.

GEO. DAY.

Digitized by Google



A ROMANCE OF LAND AND SEA.

By William Westall.

Author of "With the Red Eagle," "The Phantom City," "Nigel Fortescue," etc., etc.

SUMMARY.

Major Wyvenhoe leaves England on the *Campanella* with a detachment of troops, raised by Major Barnish, to help the Venezuelans in their struggle for liberty. Major Barnish is accompanied on the vessel by his wife. At Cork a detachment of Irishmen is taken on board together with General Molyneux, who is connected with the Venezuelan Army, his secretary and chaplain. When the vessel has been out a few days Major Barnish meets with a fatal accident, and on that same day a mutiny breaks out among the troops, but it is speedily quelled.

Shortly after this Venezuela is reached, and as Captain Cautley does not know the coast well a pilot has to be obtained, and it is found that Conroy, one of the chief mutineers, is able to act as such, and the course of the ship is intrusted to him.

Just before reaching Pampatar the *Santa Marta*, a Spanish sloop, is captured after a sharp skirmish, and put in the charge of a prize crew. On arrival at Pampatar Major Wyvenhoe and Captain Cautley are received by the Governor, General Arismendez, and his second in command, General Urdenetta. A banquet takes place in the evening, at which all the British officers are present, and when they return to the *Campanella* they find that the *Santa Marta*, which was anchored close by, has gone.

CHAPTER VII.

Arismendez' Story.

We spent a long time and a great deal of energy in cruising where the sloop had been in the hope of discovering where she was, as well as making excursions in various directions on the off chance of her having, for some inscrutable reason, shifted her anchorage. Then realising that it was all in vain, that she was gone beyond recovery, we returned sobered and disconsolate, to the *Campanella*.

Cautley raged like a whirlwind.

"This comes of humanity, of sparing life, and doing people a good turn," he exclaimed bitterly. "I gave them the boats and they have taken the ship, after mastering the crew and, I have no doubt, cutting all their throats. Fifteen good men and true gone to their last account, and all my fault. Did anybody ever hear of treachery so base? The poor fellows, knowing that I had given the Spaniards leave to go would be off their guard; most of them, I daresay, were below, and half the anchor watch asleep. They would be easily surprised. And yet Don Tadeo spoke of his gratitude, and protested that if opportunity offered, he would behave to us as we behaved to him. I know one thing; if ever I have the chance, I shall behave to him as he has behaved to me, and the next time I hear of a Spaniard talk about gratitude, I shall know that he means treachery. We should have sent half a company of your soldiers to stand by until the Spaniards were out of the ship. My mind misgave me when the governor insisted on us all going to the banquet. It was not wise to leave the brig in sole charge of the boatswain, and the sloop in sole charge of a quartermaster. It is worse than if we had never taken her; instead of gaining distinction we have made ourselves a laughing stock. And what will General Arismendez say?"

I sympathised with the skipper in his anger against Don Tadeo, since though it is quite legitimate for prisoners to retake a captured ship if they can, no man of honour would have taken advantage of such an opportunity as we had foolishly placed at his disposal. But this fact did not acquit us of blame, and Cautley, as being more especially responsible for the sloop's safety, felt the humiliation more keenly than anybody else, and I was very sorry for him.

When we went on board the *Campanella* he told the astonished boatswain what had happened, and rated him roundly for his carelessness in not missing the ship.

"When did her lights go out?" he asked him.

The boatswain could not tell, and on further inquiry it turned out that he had been too much occupied otherwise to take notice of the *Santa Marta*.

While the officers had been feasting ashore, the men had been drinking on board, and got quite beyond the poor fellow's control. When he remonstrated they laughed, and when he knocked one or two of them down the others threatened to throw him overboard, and altogether he had a very rough time.

The skipper wanted to know where the men got their drink.

"From a shore boat that came alongside and sold them as much rum as they liked, which was a good deal," answered the boatswain.

"When was that?"

"About an hour after you left and a bit before Conroy went away—in another boat."

"Where did he go?"

"He said he was going ashore."

"And has he returned?"

"No, sir."

The skipper and I exchanged glances.

"I know what you are thinking," he said, taking me aside. "You are thinking, as I think, that Conroy is the prime mover in this affair. He is much more likely to have conceived and carried it out than that stupid, stuck-up Don.

Digitized by Google

My fault again. I made an enemy of him and he wanted his revenge."

"Don't be absurd, my dear fellow," quoth I. "Revenge may have been one of Conroy's motives, but you may be sure that he has joined the Spaniards in order to better himself, and would have done so even if you had given him a berth. When he heard that we were gone and that the Spaniards were going he saw his opportunity, went straight to the Don, offered his services, made his proposals, and no doubt stipulated for a handsome reward."

"Very likely for a command. Well, if we meet let him look out, that is all," said the skipper savagely. "My goodness, when I think of Don Tadeo's treachery and those poor fellows slaughtered like sheep I feel as if I could hang every Spaniard I meet. And there is no chance of overhauling them, was not from the first. The run is only twenty miles, and as the sloop sails well and the wind is fair half-an-hour's start was all they needed. They had two or three hours, and by this time are probably under the guns of Fort Arroya. It is a grievous disappointment and humiliation, and I shall never forgive myself, but there is no use crying over spilt milk. Let us say no more about it, only you will have to tell Arismendez. I cannot, my Spanish is not good enough."

Which was quite true and a very good reason for making his report through an interpreter, but not for imposing a disagreeable duty on me, as I told him, proposing at the same time that we should see the Governor together. To this Cautley agreed, though with evident reluctance, for though never backward to blame himself he could not bear to be blamed by anybody else.

So early next morning we went to Government House and informed General Arismendez of the sloop's escape and the way in which, as we thought, it had been effected. He neither found fault nor seemed surprised, though he smiled one of his grimmest smiles.

"You don't know the Spaniards as I know them," he said. "If you had told me what you were about I should have put you on your guard. Of course they have killed all your men. They are cruel by nature and return evil for good on principle. I am sorry the ship is lost, she would have been very useful, but as she has not been formally taken into our navy there will be no need for an inquiry. Misfortunes will happen sometimes, only I hope you won't give quarter any more. If you had either killed Don Tadeo and his men, or let me deal with them, you would have had nothing to reproach yourselves with."

"I beg your pardon, Señor General, but as we promised them their lives we should have had a great deal to reproach ourselves with," I returned. "I am sorry the sloop is lost, but we would rather lose ten sloops, Captain Cautley and I, and our lives, to boot, than break our pledged word."

"You are men of honour, and keep your word. I am a man of honour and have sworn that every Spaniard who falls into my hands shall die. That vow has been kept; even when the life of one dearer to me than my own was at stake I refused to break it. I am half Indian in blood and South American born. Think of the hundreds of thousands of my ancestors whom in past times they reduced to slavery and put to death. But it is not for their forefathers' sins that I give them no quarter, it is for what they have done since this war began, for what they are doing now. From the first they refused to exchange prisoners, and slaughtered with indiscriminate ferocity not only male non-combatants but women and children. See!"

General Arismendez took from his cabinet a newspaper and a letter.

"Read this passage," he said. "It occurs in a dispatch from a royalist general to the King, and is of frequent occurrence, with slight variations, in royalist dispatches."

The passage ran thus:

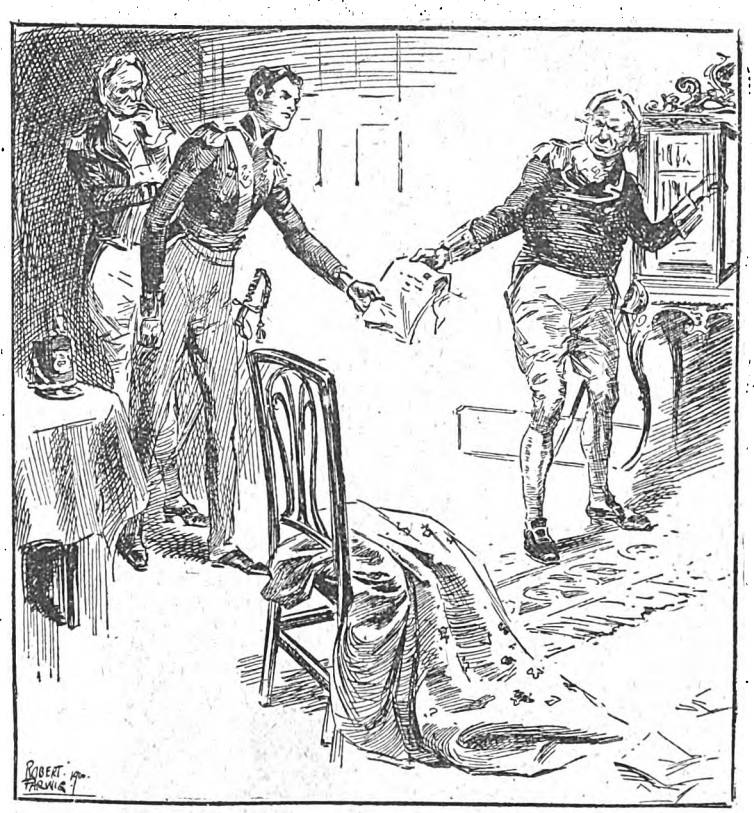
"The pueblo (village) of Pillar, with all its inhabitants, has disappeared from the face of the earth."

"This letter," continued the general, "was intercepted by Captain Chitty, a countryman of yours, who holds a command in our navy. As you see, it is addressed to King Ferdinand by General Morillo, and tells of the taking of Santa-Fé-de-Bogota. I would call your particular attention to this paragraph: 'Every person of either sex who could read and write was put to death. By thus cutting off all who were in any way educated I hoped to suppress the spirit of revolution.'

"And the massacres were carried out with every refinement of cruelty, some of the victims were shot, others hanged, husbands were put to death in the presence of their wives, wives in the presence of their husbands, young girls and boys, even little children, in the presence of their parents. Many of the gibbets on which the bodies were chained together in clusters are still standing and if you go to Santa Fé you may see them. It was then that we proclaimed *guerra a la muerta* (war to the death) and adopted the black flag as its emblem, under which we have since fought and under which you will fight."

"It means no quarter?"

"Yes, that which our enemies refuse to us, we refuse to them. And I think, Major Wyvenhoe, you will admit that

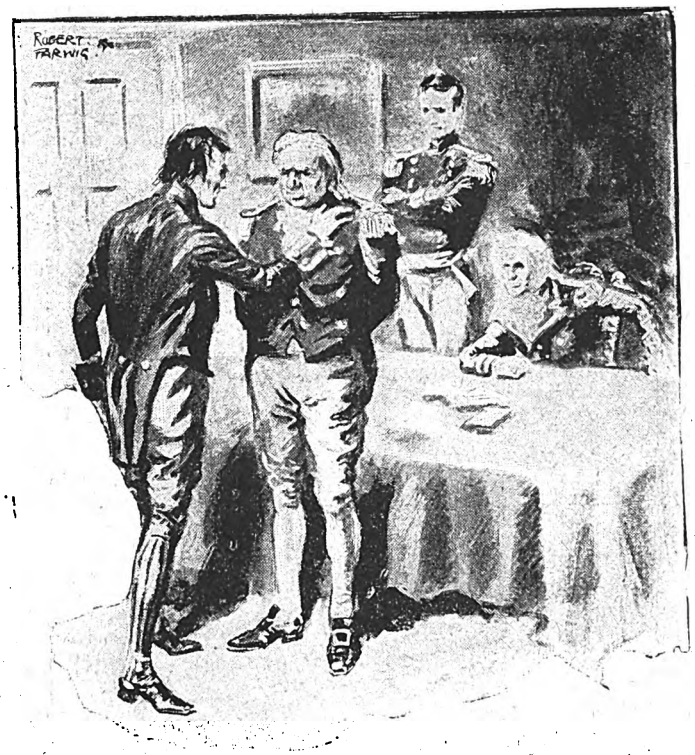


General Arismendez took from his cabinet a newspaper and a letter.

Digitized by Google

we cannot, if we would, do otherwise, and that we are fully justified by the laws of war. The republic is poor, we have not the means of maintaining all the prisoners who come into our hands, and to release them would be equivalent to recruiting for our enemies. Besides, was it not returning good for evil?"

This, as a general proposition was undeniable, and I had no difficulty in agreeing with it, but being unable to



"Why won't you let me kill him, father?" demanded Ramon passionately.

approve of reprisal, yet not caring to argue the question with my superior officer and my host I evaded it by inquiring whether his remark that he had kept his vow, even when the life of one dearer to him than his own was at stake, had been suggested by some recent incident.

"Well, it occurred two years ago, if you call that recent,' and if you would like to hear and will give me your attention a few minutes I will tell you the story."

On which I thanked the general for his courtesy and said that Cautley and myself would very much like to hear the story.

"Good! You shall hear it. But first of all I must tell you that two years ago General Morillo landed here with 17,000 of the best troops of Spain, not a Creole amongst them, fortified the heights of Pampatar and prepared to attack Juan Griego, the possession of which would make him master of Margarita. But the only way thither, over the otherwise impassable mountains which stretch right across the island, is a rough road, made by the natives, which at its highest point runs through a gorge and crosses a torrent by a draw-bridge so narrow that it can be traversed only in single file.

"At the time of the invasion we had no organised force and only three hundred muskets. But we seized the bridge and withstood every attempt made by Morillo to dislodge us. Again and again we drove the invaders back with heavy loss. We got arms from the Main, recruits came in almost daily, and after a while I was able to take the offensive.

"Meanwhile, Morillo avenged his failures by wholesale slaughter. Everybody suspected of sympathising with the patriots was put to death, their bodies gibbeted, or their severed limbs impaled on stakes and nailed on trees.

"The officer most conspicuous in this work was Colonel Gomez, of General Morillo's staff, and I swore that he should not leave the island alive.

"But instead of helping the Spaniards these horrors kindled so fierce a spirit of resistance that we were joined by nearly every man in the island. Even women, maddened by the cruel deaths of those dear to them, fought in our ranks, and were often our keenest and most trustworthy scouts.

"Morillo's army melted away. Hardly a day passed on which we did not surprise and destroy an escort, a picket, or a detachment. There are only a few places in the island where cavalry can be used or infantry deployed, places which, of course, we avoided. And the European troops proved much less formidable than you might think. They were not acclimatised, they died of dysentery and black vomit, they lost their way and got entangled among the prickly-pear trees, we let them have no rest by day, and the zancudos and other insect pests let them have no rest by night, and so, little by little, we got the upper hand.

"And then, when all seemed to be going on well, I had a great misfortune. My wife, while bathing in a secluded pool, was surprised and carried off by Spaniards. When I heard of it I was wild with grief and rage, and took immediate measures either to rescue her, if she were still alive, or avenge her if she had been put to death, as I feared was only too likely.

"Calling as many of my men together as were in the neighbourhood I followed up the Spaniards and attacked their rearguard, without, however, rescuing my wife, who had been taken to General Morillo's headquarters. But we took nearly two hundred prisoners, and, greatest prize of all, Colonel Gomez.

"All but him had been disposed of when a boy prisoner—flags of truce were respected on neither side—brought a letter from General Morillo offering to exchange my wife for the Colonel, to which I replied that dear to me as was my wife my country was still dearer, and that before the bearer of my answer set out on his return the monster whose hands had been so often imbued in innocent blood would be dead. Then, in presence of the messenger, my son Ramon, with a single stroke of his *machete*, severed the Colonel's head from his body.

"'Now go and tell General Morillo what you have seen,' I told the messenger, and he went."

"And what became of poor Señora Arismendez?" I asked.

"On receiving my message Morillo gave orders for her to be put to death, but when she was brought out for execution some of his officers, moved by her tears and her condition, for she was in delicate health, interceded for her, and she was sent to Cadiz and there imprisoned; but, after a few days detention, she escaped by the connivance of friends, and, disguised as a seaman, took passage in a merchant ship bound for the West Indies, which somewhere about the Azores was captured by a Venezuelan privateer. When her captain knew whom he had rescued he made for Margarita, and not long afterwards landed Señora Arismendez at Pampatar, to my unspeakable surprise and joy."

"A strange story yet true," observed General Urdenetta, who, together with another caballero much younger than himself, had entered the room while the Governor was telling his tale. "You will admire our friend's iron resolution and inflexible patriotism as greatly as I do, though I

Digitized by Google

shall never be able to emulate his example. If I had to choose between killing a Spaniard and losing my wife I am afraid I should be weak enough to prefer my wife."

This was said more lightly and with a pleasant smile, yet to me it seemed more like a sneer than a compliment. But Arismendez pretended to take it as a compliment, saying that he felt sure that the Señor General would act as he had acted, and was as devoted to their common country as himself, and then introduced the young subaltern as his son Ramon, with whom we shook hands, though it went against the grain.

"It was you who killed Colonel Gomez?" I asked.

"I had that honour, señor," he answered proudly.

"Captain Ramon is one of our most promising young officers and a brilliant swordsman," put in Urdeneta with his courtly smile. "I suppose he has made more Spaniards shorter by the head than any other man in Margarita. *Hasta ahora, señores,* (until we meet again, gentlemen.)" And after making a bow which included us all the general went his way.

"Why won't you let me kill him, father?" demanded Ramon passionately.

"Kill Urdenetta! Why, I should like to know?"

"Why? Don't you see that he is laughing at us? I cannot abide his smooth tongue and treacherous smile. He is as false as Satan and will do us an ill turn if he can."

"I should be sorry to think so, Ramon, and it would be going rather far to kill a man because you don't like his smile. There may be many people who don't like your smile, or mine. Kill as many Spaniards as you like, but I will have no killing of patriots. Moreover, raising your hand against your general would be mutiny, and (sternly) you know how I punish mutineers."

On this the young fellow rose from his chair and saluted, and then, muttering what sounded like a fierce imprecation, quitted the room.

"Ramon is a brave soldier and a devoted patriot, but rather hot-tempered as you see, and he does not like Urdenetta. Neither, to tell the truth, do I; but for various reasons it would be impolitic to quarrel with him," observed the Governor, and then, after arranging for disembarking the troops, we took our leave.

"I don't know what your opinion may be, but it strikes me that we have got into very queer company," quoth Cautley, when we were outside. "Are they all ruffians, do you think?"

"Gad, it almost seems so and a good match for the Spaniards; but we have been too short a time in the country to pass judgment."

"True, and, do you know, I rather like Arismendez, though he did have that colonel's head chopped off instead of exchanging him for his wife. There is no nonsense about the old fellow; he is straightforward, and according to his lights a man of honour. Anyhow, he is a better sort than Urdenetta."

"I quite agree with you. Unless I am greatly mistaken, Urdenetta is a sneak, and I daresay quite as cruel as the Governor; and it is hardly fair to judge these people by European standards. What can you expect from half-educated men like Arismendez—Spanish with a touch of the tar-brush on one side and of Indian on the other—brutalised by Spanish rule, and provoked to ferocious reprisals by wholesale slaughter. For that the royalists refuse quarter to the patriots there can be no question. Don Tadeo admitted it, and then that letter and those dispatches, I am sure they are genuine. They square with what we heard before we started, though I could not believe it, and there was a good deal in Arismendez' remark that war is not returning good for evil."

"For all that, two wrongs don't make one right, and I know of nothing more wrong than killing in cold blood men whose only offence is doing their duty, and who plead for mercy."

"Oh, I am not going to defend the practice, only before we condemn people we should try to put ourselves in their place. I don't know how it feels to be a Venezuelan rebel, but I am afraid that if the French were to invade England, give no quarter and slaughter women and children, such of them as fell into our hands would not receive mercy."

"I am sure they would not, and quite right, too," returned the skipper with amusing inconsistency, but his heart was ever sounder that his logic. "All the same I shall neither refuse quarter nor kill nor order prisoners to be killed, let the consequences be what they may."

"Neither shall I, rather will I resign my commission, or, if it should come to that, lose my life."

"But it cannot come to that."

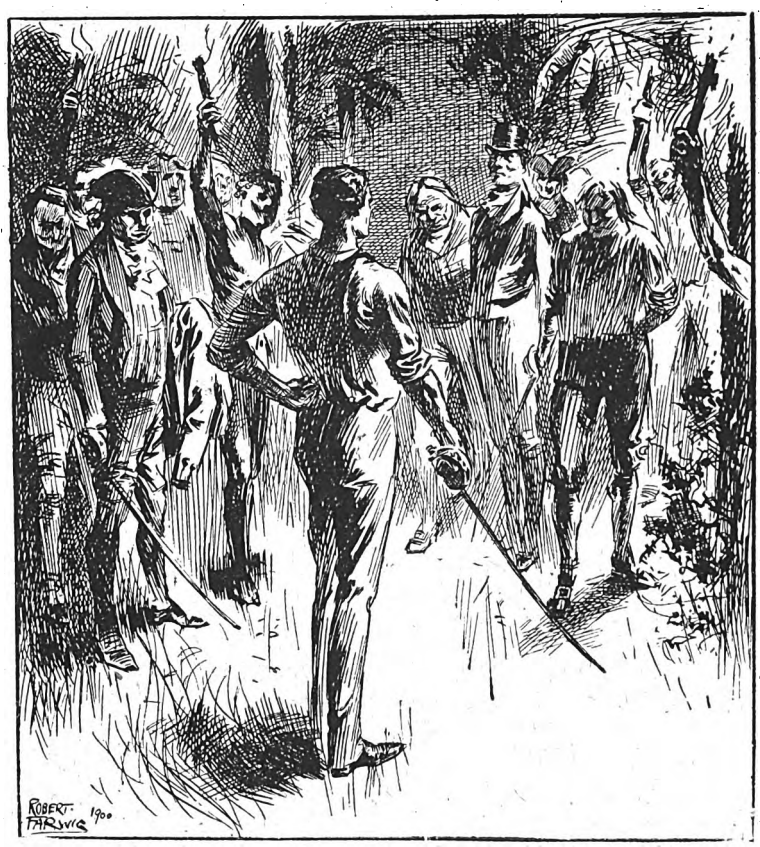
"I am not so sure. Suppose that I, being ordered to take command of a firing party and shoot a batch of prisoners, were to refuse, as I certainly should, what would happen? These 'patriots' don't seem to stand on much ceremony and I doubt whether they have more than one punishment either for mutiny or disobedience. You heard the Governor threaten his son with death if he meddled with Urdenetta. At any rate I did."

"Hadn't we better throw it up then? Though I should be very sorry, for I think we are in for a stirring time, hard knocks and lots of prize-money."

Miss Sidonia sat with me under the verandah.

Digitized by Google

"It is too soon to talk about throwing it up. I must see more of the country and the people, and something of the war, before I do anything of that sort. It will be time enough to act when the occasion arises, I daresay we shall pull through, and if we don't, there will be an end, and nobody can live for ever. Were soldiering free from hazard it would be as tame as rabbit shooting."



The fight was just beginning when General Arismendez broke into the ring.

"All the same, I mean to live as long as I can," said Cautley laughing. "But it is time we went aboard. Everything is ready for landing the troops, and the sooner they are ashore the better I shall be pleased. Rations are getting scarce and the ship needs a thorough overhauling. What sort of quarters are these people giving you?"

"Poor, but as they are the best they have we must e'en be content."

While the men were being landed I made several trips between the ship and the shore, and as the last batch was being dispatched and the skipper and I were pacing the quarter-deck, we espied a small, single-masted boat coming from the south and, as might seem, making for Pampatar.

"What sort of a craft is that?" I asked him.

"A launch as sure as I am a sinner," he exclaimed after inspecting her through his glass. "A launch on the larboard tack. Now they are putting her on the starboard tack, coming this way beyond a doubt. What the dickens can it mean?"

"It means that they have business in Margarita, I suppose."

"Bah! Don't I tell you she is a launch?"

"You did, though I fail to see what difference it makes, a boat's a boat for all that."

"And a launch is a man-of-war's boat, and if that launch has not belonged or does not belong to a Spanish man-of-war, I never saw one."

"But the Spaniards would not dare——"

"To try to cut us out you mean. Of course they would not; anyhow with one boat. But what can those fellows be after, they come on as though they had nothing to fear, and there's a lot of them. I shall be able to count them in a minute and perhaps make out what they are. One, two, three, four—fifteen, and not a Spaniard amongst them. I do believe—yes, they are our own men, the poor fellows we thought we should never see again. Hurrah!" shouted the captain, waving his hat.

The cheer was repeated by all who were within hearing, taken up by the crew and answered by the men in the launch.

"Hurrah!" cried Cautley again. "I was never better pleased in my life. All there, and seemingly not much the worse. But how the dickens did they manage it I wonder! Getting away in the sloop's launch in broad daylight, I never knew the like."

A few minutes later the mystery was solved, the launch ran under our quarter, lowered her sail and made fast, and the next moment the men were on deck. The crew, frantic with delight, nearly mobbed them, shaking their hands, patting them on the back, and plying them with questions innumerable. So soon as order was restored, which took a little time, the quartermaster made his report.

It was as we had thought; the prize crew had been surprised and overpowered. Shortly after sunset Conroy came on board and had a long talk with Don Tadeo, and about nine o'clock the Spaniards began their preparations for departure, and, as might appear, were going to lower the boats when the attack was made and the Englishmen being all over the ship, unarmed, outnumbered, and taken unawares, were made prisoners to a man, fast bound and put below wondering why the Spaniards had not killed them out of hand, and expecting immediate death.

But nothing happened till dawn, when they had a visit from Don Tadeo and Conroy, who said they were free and might return to Pampatar in the sloop's launch, and that the captain spared their lives and restored them to liberty in consideration of the generosity with which Captain Cautley had treated the crew of the *Santa Marta* and himself.

"But this is quite an exception," added Conroy roughly, "and Don Tadeo desires me to say that if any of you are captured while fighting under the rebel flag you will be either scragged or shot without ceremony."

Then the Britishers, being freed from their bonds and going on deck, found the launch alongside and were soon under weigh for Margarita.

Before they left the ship Don Tadeo gave the quartermaster a letter which he charged him to deliver to Captain Cautley.

It ran as follows:

"Senor Capitan,—We are quits; as you treated me so I treat you. Do me the favour to present my compliments to your friend, Major Wyvenhoe, and say that I have an account to settle with him for the insulting comparison which he made between loyal cabarellos and Creole scum—

Digitized by Google

and that, opportunity offering, I shall expect the satisfaction which I am sure he will not refuse.

"TADEO MOROY FALCON."

"That sounds like a challenge, the don is spoiling for a fight," said Cautley laughing.

"Well if an opportunity offers he shall not be baulked. Anyhow, Don Tadeo is a gallant gentleman and has been as good as his word."

"I suppose so; all the same, I am not quite sure about our being quits," rejoined the skipper dubiously, "for though he has surrendered the men he keeps the ship."

"You took it and he stole away with it, so you are still quits."

"And very mean of him it was to steal away with it confound him. However, the fault was mine, I should not have given him the chance. Yes, Don Tadeo has behaved well, a jolly sight better than I expected. I shall begin to think that these Spaniards are not so bad as they are painted. Hello! Here is something on the other side," said Cautley, to whom I had returned the letter after translating it. "In English, too! Just listen to this:

"Mr. Captain Cautley,—Dear sir,—It would have been worth your while to give me a berth, more so than you think. I have gone over to the Spaniards. No more of your dirty English and Irish for me. Yours to command,

"GEORGE CONROY."

"Did you ever know the like? 'Dear sir,' indeed! Hang the fellow. 'No more of your dirty English and Irish for me.' What is he, a Scot?"

"No, he calls himself a Manxman. I expect the ruffian thinks that his having gone over to the Spaniards will strike terror into us all."

"At any rate, he gives us warning, which is very kind, though on his part foolish. 'More worth while than you think,' means more than meets the eye."

"That's his bounce. What can he do? However, I am not going to be caught napping again, and if you can let fifty or sixty of your men come on board every night and remain till daylight I shall be obliged. They need not always be the same men."

"Certainly, send boats to the jetty every evening at sunset and the men shall be there."

Several days passed, occupied chiefly in drills, inspections and parades, also the contingent was formally mustered into the service of the Venezuelan Republic, but as to what we were to do or whither go I could not obtain information. General Arismendez was waiting for orders from the Government, which meant Don Simon Bolivar, the Supreme Chief, as he styled himself and liked to be called. This was tiresome, for Margarita is so dreary a place that a little of it goes a long way. The *Campanella* still rode at her anchor, greatly to the skipper's annoyance, who, like the rest of us, wanted to be actively employed.

Hence we heard with great satisfaction that the governor and his lady proposed to give a ball in our honour, since, though dancing is not campaigning, it is active employment and good fun, and in South America, as we presently discovered, may be very exciting and end in a fight.

The guests were numerous but rather mixed, and in all shades, from white to black and from saffron to sallow, and as uniforms were *de rigueur* and the ladies delighted in bright colours, the scene, albeit a little peculiar, was bright and picturesque.

Señora Arismendez, a fine handsome woman, her husband's second wife, made a capital hostess, and she and her husband introduced us to nearly every girl in the room, among others to the belle of the ball, Señorita Sidonia, a young lady of almost pure Spanish blood, with large Arab-like eyes, an oval face, and a delicate olive-tinted complexion. She was moreover tall and shapely, as graceful as a fawn, a beautiful dancer, a sprightly partner and an arrant coquette.

Ramon Arismendez was looking on when his stepmother introduced us, and I gathered from the scowl that gathered on his bull fighter's face that he was one of the señorita's victims, and regarded me as a possible rival. But Miss Sidonia only nodded to him, and laughing mischievously gave me all the dances I asked for and between whiles promenaded with me round the ball room, or sat smoking with me under the verandah. She even gave me a little cigar which she had already pressed between her coral lips, the greatest compliment a señorita can pay to a caballero.

If her intention was to provoke young Arismendez, she succeeded to admiration. I never looked at him that he did not threaten me with his eyes, and once when we met he laid his hand on my arm and in a fierce whisper said:

"If you don't discontinue your attentions to the Señorita Sidonia I will treat you as I treated Colonel Gomez."

"Not unless I am bound and unarmed, as he was. Butchering a helpless man is no proof either of courage or address," I answered and passed on, leaving Don Ramon speechless with rage.

Five minutes afterwards I was again dancing with Señorita Sidonia.

At three o'clock the ball was nearly over, most of the guests were gone and the skipper and myself were on the point of departure, when a young fellow in uniform touched me on the shoulder and said that he had come on behalf of Señor Capitan Arismendez to demand satisfaction for the insulting observation which I no doubt remembered having made to him.

"Certainly," I replied, "when and where?"

"Here—behind the house—and now."

"Good, please lead on. Come along Cautley, I am in for a duel and you will have to act as my second. I will explain afterwards."

The young fellow conducted me to a palm grove about a hundred yards from the house where we found at least a dozen men, presumably friends of Don Ramon, and nearly as many half naked negroes holding aloft blazing torches.

No time was wasted on preliminaries. Nothing had been said about weapons, but as it seemed to be taken for granted that we were to fight with swords I made no objection, for though I did not consider myself a brilliant swordsman I could fence passably well, quite as well as I could shoot.

Ramon's second measured two sabres, of which he gave me my choice. After doffing my coat and waistcoat I took one at random and my adversary and I stepped into the ring, which had been formed by the torch bearers and spectators, all of whom were in gala attire.

We crossed swords, and the fight was just beginning when loud exclamations were heard and General Arismendez, pushing aside all who stood in his way, broke into the ring.

"What is this?" he demanded angrily. "A duel here and now. Major Wyvenhoe, Ramon, I am astonished. If you want to kill anybody, kill Spaniards, not each other. Who is the challenger? What is the cause of dispute? A woman, of course."

"I am the challenger; Major Wyvenhoe—" began Ramon and there ended, the remainder of his explanation, if he made it, being drowned in the roar of three cannon shots from Fort Ciudad, fired almost simultaneously.

"Alarm guns! The Spaniards are upon us," exclaimed the general. "Major Wyvenhoe, assemble your men. Ramon, Garcia, Sapvador, to your posts, rouse the people and prepare to resist the invaders to the death!"

(To be continued.)

Digitized by Google

SHORT STORIES ABOUT COWS AND BULLS.

We devote, every week, two pages of *Short Stories* to pithy, humourous anecdotes similar to those which appear in these columns. A prize of £1 1s. will be sent to the reader who submits the best storyette this week, and a copy of "My Dear Sir," by Harry B. Vogel, to each of those whose attempts are used. The anecdotes may be either original or selected; in the latter case the source *must* be stated. The prize of One Guinea offered for the best Storyette in this competition has been won this week by Mr. Frank Ward, 95 Beechwood Road, Hillsborough, Sheffield. Attempts for this week's prize must deal with STORIES ABOUT THE SEASIDE, and must reach the Storyette Editor, *Short Stories* Office, Henrietta Street, Strand, London, W.C., by Monday, August 13th. Post-cards only, please.

Evident.

SOME time ago some cows were being taken by a cargo boat from Belfast to Liverpool. The passa e was a very stormy one, and at last the capta'n gave orders for all cows to be thrown overboard to lighten th ship, whose upper deck was flood d to su h an alarming extent that the animals were tossed about in all directions.

When the gale had somewhat subsided, the crew were puzzled at seeing some of the drovers hanging by their hands on the upper rails of the cattle boxes, keeping their feet clear of the deck, and apparently taking turns as each became exhausted and dropped.

Asking one of them why he was so engaged, he replied:

"Shure, can't yer see it's to lighten the ship?"

F. W.

The Bull Wouldn't Understand.

IN a certain town a farmer kept a large number of bulls, amongst them a mad one. Lord Blank was in the habit of crossing the field in which these bulls were kept, and one morning as he was walking across the field as usual he saw the mad bull running towards him.

The nobleman soon took to his heels, and just escaped being gored.

Much enraged, he went to the owner of the bull and demanded the meaning of the outrage. The farmer, not knowing the nobleman, told him, not over politely, that it was no fault of his.

The nobleman instantly said:

"You do not know who I am; I'm Lord Blank," to which the farmer replied:

"Well, go and tell the bull so," and shutting the door, he went in without another word. H. H. F.

The Cow was More Important.

A WOMAN went into an apothecary's shop the other day with two prescriptions, one for her husband and the other for her cow.

She inquired what was the price of them, and the apothecary replied it was so much for the man and so much for the cow.

The woman, finding she had not money enough, reflected for a moment, and said:

"At all events, give me the medicine for the cow; I can send for my husband's to-morrow."

E. P.

Tired of Being Polite.

A GENTLEMAN was one day coming out of a shop in Glasgow, and in crossing the road accidentally ran up against a cow which was being driven past.

In the confusion of the moment the absent-minded gentleman politely raised his hat and exclaimed:

"I beg your pardon, madam!"

Walking through the town in the afternoon he happened to stumble against a lady acquaintance of his who was walking in the opposite direction. In sudden recollection of his former adventure he called out in a tone by no means fraught with the former politeness:

"Is that you again, you brute?"

J. W. W.

The Wrong Kind of Soil.

MINISTER: "How is it, Jenkins, you cannot make your cows pay? Simpson down the lane has only got the same number, yet he seems to do very well."

Jenkins: "Well, yer see, sir, I ain't got the right kind of soil, and——"

Minister: "But what has the soil got to do with it?"

Jenkins: "It's like this, sir. Simpson's farm stands on chalky ground, and then, agen, yer see, he's nearer the pump than I be, and it all tells."

J. G.

Guessed Exactly the Same.

AT the late Birmingham Christmas Fat Cattle Show, two men were gazing with undisguised admiration at an exceedingly fine, fat beast.

"I wonder what his weight might be?" observed the city man, without any pretentions or knowledge of cattle and the like.

"Oh, it's easy to guess pretty nigh it," said the farmer-looking man who evidently regarded his companion with some contempt.

"Ah, well," responded the city man, "I think I can guess just as near as you can."

"Can you, indeed?" said the farmer. "Then I tell you that I'll bet you a sovereign that you can't?"

"Done! How much do you say?"

"A hundred and twenty-two stone."

"Well," said the city man, "I'll say a hundred and twenty-two stone, too. And I've won."

"What do you mean?" asked the farmer.

"Well, I said I'd guess as near as you, and I've done so—I've guessed exactly the same."

The bystanders with one accord took the city man's part, and the farmer reluctantly paid. C. R. F.

Digitized by Google

A Bull in a Cricket Field.

While staying at a little village I was playing cricket with some local players, when our game was rudely interrupted by a savage bull, which, breaking through the hedge, came charging right into our cricket ground, scattering us in all directions.

We had resigned ourselves to the loss of our afternoon's pleasure, when a stranger, who had been looking on with an amused smile, offered to shift the bull from the field. We gladly accepted his offer, wondering the while how he was going to perform the feat.

He took a cricket ball, and taking careful aim, threw it with all his might at the bull, hitting it right between the eyes. I never saw a more astonished animal in all my life than that bull. It jumped into the air, but no sooner had it reached the ground again than our friend, seizing a bat, and giving vent to a fearful shriek, hit the beast once more. The way that bull turned tail and fled, closely followed by its pursuer, who every now and then gave another unearthly shriek followed by a terrific blow from the bat, was a sight.

When we tried to thank the stranger he cut us short with the remark that he hadn't been twenty years a stockman in Australia without learning a little about bulls.

R. F.

Too Risky.

A butcher, who had the misfortune to be cross-eyed, was going to kill a bull, so, calling the boy he employed, he told him to hold the beast by a rope fastened to his head, while he dealt the blow.

The boy, who was a son of the Emerald Isle, seemed rather fidgety about his task, and said:

"If yer plaze, sir, would yer moind informin' me if ye are going to strike where yer lookin'?"

"Of course," said the butcher sharply.

"Well, then," replied the boy, "ye can hold the bull yerself, fer shure Oi'm not going to, fer ye be lookin' straight at me. Shure if yer strikes where yer looks the old bull must live till the noo boy cums."

W. L.

The Bull and the Government Papers.

Some members of the Ordnance Survey were touring in the south of Scotland.

In the prosecution of their calling they entered a field belonging to a crusty old farmer. Seeing the strangers after some manœuvres he could not understand, the farmer approached.

"What are ye wantin' in the field?" he cried.

"Oh, we have a right to go anywhere," returned one of the company. "We are surveying, and here are our Government papers."

"Paper here or paper there," returned the farmer, "oot ye gang oot o' my field."

"No, we shan't," returned the man, "and you are rendering yourself liable to prosecution for interrupting us."

The farmer said no more, but went over to his shed opening into the field and let out a vicious bull.

The bull no sooner saw the red coats than he went for them in full career. The surveyors snatched up their theodolite and flew for their lives, while the old farmer in great glee yelled after them:

"What are ye runnin' for? Can ye no show the bull yer Government papers?"

C. F.

DO YOU WANT A PORTRAIT ENLARGED?

At the special request of a large number of readers we propose to repeat the offer made some time ago:

We will give a beautiful **INDIA INK and CRAYON PORTRAIT**, size 15×12, mounted on plate sunk mount, 24×19, to anyone who will bring or send us 7s. and a Coupon from the

ILLUSTRATED WEEKLY NEWS.

These portraits are of the finest artistic merit. They are quite permanent, being finished by the Air Brush with Indelible India Ink, making them more permanent than any of the old styles of portraits, and they will last a lifetime.

They would cost you, if obtained through an artist, many times as much.

Have you Father, Mother, Sister, Brother, or Child's Photograph which you wish Enlarged?

Perhaps some dear one has passed away whose likeness is now faded, and could be preserved before it is too late.

Special Offers to Relatives of Soldiers and Sailors.

Doubtless there are amongst our readers many thousands who have relatives at the front—brothers, or husbands, or fathers, or sons. Doubtless some of these brave fellows will never return to the old home. Perhaps you have a photograph of your husband, or your brother, or your son, which you want to preserve for years to come, and yet you have not the means to pay two or three guineas to have this done in the ordinary way. We, therefore, shall make a reduction of a shilling on every photograph of a Soldier or Sailor sent to us.

You will certainly get a genuine bargain by availing yourself of this offer. The enlargements can be made from any photograph, large or small, tin-types, or any kind of glass picture, provided the print is legible. All the enlargements are of the head and shoulders only.

What to Do.

Write your name and address plainly in ink on the coupon to be found in the current number of the

ILLUSTRATED WEEKLY NEWS.

Write your name and address plainly in ink on the back of the portrait you are sending us. Get a postal order for 7s. (if the photograph be that of a soldier or sailor get a 6s. postal order). Place all these in an envelope, or make a securely packed parcel of them, and address it to the PORTRAIT EDITOR, *Pearson's Weekly*, Henrietta Street, London, W.C. The money and coupon must accompany each order, otherwise your photograph will be returned to you.

Any number of enlargements can be made from one photograph.

A Reduction of Threepence

on each photograph, when the order is for two or more, will be made, but a coupon must be sent for each enlargement required.

This offer will remain open until Saturday, August 25th, and orders will be treated in rotation. The sooner you send the sooner you will get your photograph.

A sample enlargement is on view at these offices. Next week we will publish other addresses where the enlargements may be seen.

Digitized by Google

A CHINESE BRIDE.

A LUCKY SHOWER.

WHEN I was about fourteen years old my father, who had been a widower since my birth, took for his second wife the widow of an old friend, Captain Spinner. My father was quite an elderly man already, and the widow was nearly his own age. The terms of his offer were these:

"Mrs. Spinner, I have a fine old house with no one to keep it. You are the best housekeeper I know, and have no house to keep. You have hard times, I know. So have I, in another way. Think it over."

You see, it was not a romantic wooing. As for the widow—a portly woman with a high colour, who refused to let her hair grow grey so long as there were dyes to be obtained, she replied frankly:

"Oh, I don't want to think long over it. It's too good an offer. But I never do anything without consulting the captain."

As Captain Skinner had now been dead ten years, this might have startled a new acquaintance, but my father knew what it meant very well, and said:

"Very well, ma'am."

Then Mrs. Spinner brought forth a little triangular table and sent her compliments to Mr. Maddler, and would he spare her an hour.

Mr. Maddler came at once. He was a remarkable youth of the neighbourhood, in whose presence tables danced and raps were heard—not a professional medium, Mrs. Spinner used to say with a sigh, "they came too expensive for her," but a gifted amateur. Under his long white fingers the table danced about beautifully and these words were spelled out.

"Ship ahoy, my hearty! Shiver my timbers if I could choose a better mate for my late consort. Take her, with my blessing!"

Now, Captain Spinner had never said, "shiver my timbers," or called my father "my hearty," in life. But no one's attention was called to that fact, and the result was that Mrs. Spinner became Mrs. Hardman very shortly, and fulfilled my father's highest expectations.

She looked very well in the rich black silks and satins she could now afford to wear, made us very comfortable petted us as if we were babies, and kept the house in apple-pie order.

In return my father made no objection to a seance in the library every Friday, where we heard the three-legged table dancing away at a great rate.

Mr. Maddler always attended these meetings, but my father did not ask him at other times. He was a mere youth in those days, but I did not like him either, so he gained no foothold in the house.

On the whole we were very happy for four years, and my father had slowly grown very fond of his Jane Eliza—whom he had married because she was a good housekeeper—when death stepped in and struck him a fatal blow.

* * * * *

When he died I thought at first that I should never be myself again, but at eighteen one is elastic. As for my stepmother, she mourned in the deepest crape, and cried a great deal.

Then a change came o'er the spirit of her dream. I detected a curious alteration in her manner, and startled into curiosity, looked for its cause, and found it in Mr. Maddler. That young man now our constant visitor, was evidently paying his addresses to my step-mother, who was well on the way to sixty.

I liked her, for she had been so kind to me. I detested Maddler, who seemed a very sneaking and contemptible person. I had read the papers sufficiently to know that such unions generally ended very badly for the lady in the case.

As my father had made his will I had only a sufficient sum for my expenses until I came of age, and my stepmother could do what she pleased during her life-time.

Poor father never dreamed that his second wife would marry again, and had wished us to make our home together and be as mother and son.

I had never doubted the wisdom of the will before, but now I saw that once married to Maddler my stepmother would soon be induced to place everything in his hands.

I determined to speak plainly to her, and I did.

She was confused, and simpered a little, but confessed I was not wrong.

"For goodness' sake, consider what you are doing, mother!" I cried. "Can't you see the man's motive?"

"He adores me," she said.

"Do you believe that?" I cried.

She simpered again.

"He is young enough to be your grandson," I said.

"Not quite," she replied. "But, at all events, years make no difference. The spirits that hover about me, Mr. Maddler says, and so does his particular friend, Mr. Tucker, preserve my youth by making me inhale flower essences in my sleep. Really, I woke up the other night with the smell of lavender all about me. They say I don't look thirty, Mr. Maddler and Mr. Tucker do."

"You don't believe all that, do you?" I asked.

"Well, yes, I do," replied my stepmother. "And then Mr. Maddler is wildly in love with me."

"It's all nonsence," said I, with the brutal candor of youth. "You look every day your age. I'm a young man, and I assure you that though any one could respect

Digitized by Google

and admire you as—a mother or an aunt, you know you're entirely past falling in love with. Why, your common sense must tell you that. And the table-tappings Maddler does with his fingers. I don't say all of them do, but he does. He is a rascal and all he wants is your money."

My stepmother could not for some time find breath to speak in reply to this. At last she said contemptuously:

"Money; oh, yes, that is what you think of! I should have been careful of your interests if you had behaved decently, but now—" she paused, and added, "the sooner we part the better."

The end of this was that the next day I took lodgings near the college.

In a month I heard that the day had been fixed for my stepmother's wedding. She had insisted on waiting a year and one week after the date of her widowhood before she changed her name.

Maddler went about smirking, arm in arm with his great friend, Mr. Tucker. From his spruce appearance I fancied that my stepmother had already been generous to him.

And so my father's money was to pass from me, for I should refuse to enter into any legal conflict, and the foolish woman who had been so good to me once, would end her days miserably.

The week of my stepmother's freedom had arrived, and she had blossomed out in colours suited to her idea of her well-preserved beauty, and wore costumes unsuitable to any but a girl in her early teens.

One day I saw her coming up the street thus attired, and stood still to look at her.

In past days my stepmother had had a certain dignity about her presence that became her age. Now she reminded me of the clown in the circus, dressed in female attire, and pretending to flirt with the ring-master. Her very high heels and very short skirts had much to do with it, the cut of her gown more.

It was the time when the "Dolly Varden" costumes had just been introduced. She wore one of flowered foulard—brightest pink. The jaunty hat had roses in it. We had been members of one household, and she still bore my father's name. A sense of shame crept over me and I was about to turn away when a heavy shower came suddenly upon us.

The elderly butterfly had only a white parasol, with pink fringe, with which to protect herself from the wild torrents of rain. Raising this she began to run. Her high heels betrayed her and she slipped, fell flat, and lay upon the path evidently unable to rise.

I was not brute enough to leave her thus. Hastening to her aid I found that she had sprained her ankle and broken her parasol, crushed her bonnet, and ripped the stitches that festooned the "pannier" of the costume. She was weeping bitterly and was a pitiable object.

It still poured; she was unable to walk; but shelter was close at hand. Under the shed of a carriage-maker was an old omnibus which was waiting its turn for repairs. Into this I helped my stepmother, piled cushions under her ankle, pulled down the blinds and made her as comfortable as possible.

"As soon as it stops pouring I'll get a cab and take you home," I said.

"You're very kind," she answered. "Oh! I'm in such pain, and if any one should see me!"

"I'll take care of that," I said; and as the rain began to drive in at the door I closed it. The next moment two men came running into the shed.

"Whew!" cried one of them, "we're lucky—high and dry after all, Tucker!"

"You're a lucky fellow, anyhow, Maddler," answered his companion. "Good to know a sort of mascot."

"Oh, dear! it is Mr. Maddler!" whispered my stepmother. "And such a sight as I am."

"Keep quiet, and he won't guess that you are here," I said, and silence reigned within the stage—but not without, Tucker was fond of talking.

"How is the widder?" he queried.

"Fat as ever," replied Maddler. "The sacrifice is near at hand now. Well, I fancy she'll be easy to manage; I was afraid of the cub."

"Meaning Tom Hardman!" queried Tucker.

"Of course," said Maddler. "But a quarrel between the two freed me from him. The old man never dreamt Mrs. Hardman would marry again, and everything is left just the way that suits me. Between my fascinations and the raps I can make the old lady do just what I please. How do you suppose I managed now for cash?"

"Don't know," said Tucker.

"The spirits advised her to give me a certain sum. I say, 'No no; pray, don't.' I declare that I'd rather not take it. The table insists, bangs frightfully; there are knocks everywhere. She draws a cheque, I put it in my pocket, kiss her hand, call her an angel."

"Can you keep it up though?" asked Tucker.

"No need after I've got the ring on her finger and her signature to a paper or two. I think she'll let me have my own way, and if so, all right; she'll get good treatment, but if she kicks I'll show her who is master," replied Maddler. "I shan't see much of her anyhow, after the knot is tied. We'll have jolly times, you and I. I don't desert old friends. You've helped me ever so much with the old woman."

"It's stopped raining," said Tucker.

"So it has," said Maddler. "Come along."

We were alone again, my stepmother and I. I looked at her, she was white as a ghost.

"I do feel so ill, Tom!" she said.

Poor woman! between pain and shame and anger and the sudden murder of her vanity, she was in a wretched state and I felt very, very sorry for her.

I did my best for her. I interviewed the carriage-maker, got him to allow me to put two horses to the omnibus, and so convey the sufferer home. Having been put to bed and the doctor sent for, I waited to see if I could be of any use, but it was not until twilight fell that my step-mother sent for me.

"Better?" I asked, kindly, as I entered the room.

"Yes, Tom," she answered, quite in her old way, "and very thankful. I think good spirits—your poor pa maybe—made me fall down, and sent you to put me in that old 'bus, just to save me from the awful fate I was rushing into."

"Certainly it happened providentially," I said.

"I see what a goose I've been," she continued, "and how honestly you spoke, though very plainly, that time when I was so vexed, Tom. I see it as you did, now, and thank goodness it's not too late. Tom, won't you come back and be my son again? I seem to need taking care of."

For answer I kissed her, but I did not think my whole duty done to my stepmother until I had kicked Mr. Maddler down the steps, which I did promptly the next time he called.

R. A. M.

Digitized by Google

A MISERABLE SINNER.

If there was one person who thoroughly applauded the prospect of war with South Africa it was Thornton Frere, Captain in the—th Fusiliers and a fine soldier into the bargain. For the war had given him a wife.

It had come about in this way.

The engagement between the gallant captain of forty-five and pretty Ruth Waring, aged twenty-two, had been hanging fire for over a year, and though it was perfectly plain to everyone that the soldierly-looking man was head over ears in love with the girl, she hung back, and it was not until the war was declared that things came to a climax, and from being hurriedly engaged they were even more hurriedly married.

There had been a short honeymoon lasting a few days and then the husband was called away to join his regiment, leaving his bride to go back to her mother and spend the next few months in weary waiting.

When the parting words came to be said it was the bitterest moment in Captain Frere's life, for under the blunt and somewhat homely exterior of the soldier, he owned a heart as tender as a woman's.

Love, coming late in life as it had done, seemed to have gathered strength and force in all the years it had been lying dormant, and it was a feeling almost akin to worship that the great, strong-hearted man felt for his wife.

It was one Tuesday night towards the end of November that the Fusiliers and one of the mounted Batteries had orders to march at once through the enemy's lines and take up a position ready for the following morning, when they were to attack and turn the enemy's left flank in order that the main army might catch them.

The night was pitch dark when the two regiments filed slowly out of camp. The men were forbidden to speak, or on any account to strike a match. Everyone moved as quietly as possible, even the mules seemed to tread softly.

All went well for about six miles; the men, hardened by their late experience into utter indifference to their present danger, were trudging along cursing under their breath at the inforced silence, when, without a moment's warning, hundreds of Boer horsemen seemed to spring out of the ground itself.

Taken by surprise, but realizing they had been led into a trap by the guide, a scene almost bordering on panic ensued, made worse by the inability of the soldiers to distinguish friends from foes owing to the darkness that enveloped them.

Luckily for Captain Frere, he was spared all memory of what happened, for he lay stunned by a heavy blow on the head from the butt-end of a rifle, and it was not until the sky began to lighten in the far east with the coming dawn that he returned to consciousness, to find himself lying in a dry ditch, almost covered with brushwood, where he had fallen.

Getting up with difficulty, for his limbs were stiff and cramped, he crawled to a rising in the uneven ground, and although it was still dark he managed to discern the bodies of several men lying on the grass.

Gazing about him he noticed on his left a plantation of trees. Feeling giddy from the blow on his head he made his way over to their shelter, and scrambling through the bushes, almost fell headlong over the body of a man that was stretched full length on the ground.

At first Frere thought he was dead, but in another moment the man had opened his eyes.

"Where am I?" he said in a dazed voice. Then glancing at the Captain's uniform he added: "Thank Heaven, you're English."

There was a puzzled expression on his face, as though he were struggling to recollect something, Suddenly his face brightened.

"I remember it all now! You are one of the chaps that got cut up last night?"

Frere nodded. "How did you manage to get here?" he asked, noticing the man wore ordinary civilian's dress.

"I volunteered to take some dispatches through the enemy's lines. They let me come because I knew every inch of the country round about here. I should have got through all right if it hadn't been for those brutes lying in hiding for you. I came right on them and got a bullet in my shoulder before I could get away. I managed to crawl here and must have fainted. When I came to, there was a fight going on. Some of your fellows got away, but they took most of them prisoners. Then the Boers went round and collected up the prisoners. It was awful lying here helpless."

Frere's face looked black and he muttered a curses under his breath. But the man beside him was wounded, and needed attention.

"Let me have a look at your wound."

He knelt down and bending over the younger man, endeavoured to find out the extent of his injury.

In removing his coat an unopened letter addressed, in an unmistakably feminine handwriting, to "Charles Cleaver, Esq," fell from the inside pocket.

The wounded man picked it up.

"This has been following me for over a month. I only got it just before starting yesterday. Fancy reading it here!"—and he gave a feeble attempt at a laugh.

Frere was busy examining the wound.

"The Boers have not done for you this time," he exclaimed cheerfully. "You've lost a lot of blood, but it's not dangerous."

"I'm glad of that," said Cleaver, in a relieved voice, "for I don't want to peg out yet," and he tore open his letter with a significant smile.

Captain Frere lifted his head and listened. His quick ears had caught the sound of horse's hoofs on the veld. Cautiously parting the bushes he looked through. Not twenty yards away stood a small Boer pony, contentedly munching the long grass.

It was the work of a moment to catch the animal, in fact, it offered no resistance, and tethering it securely to a neighbouring tree, Frere hurried back.

"What a stroke of luck!" he exclaimed. "A pony, and riderless, too!"

But a glance at his companion told him something was wrong. He lay back, his face ghastly white, his eyes closed. He had fainted.

Frere's eyes fell on the opened letter. He seemed to take the situation in at a glance.

Digitized by Google

"Poor chap!" he muttered compassionately, as he raised the young man's head on his knee and endeavoured to force a little brandy from his own flask between the tightly-clenched teeth: "that letter brought bad news."

Presently his efforts were rewarded and Charles Cleaver opened his eyes.

Frere laid his head back gently. "How do you feel?" he inquired.

"I'm all right now," the wounded man replied huskily, and then relapsed into silence, staring stonily before him.

Frere noticed how drawn and haggard his face looked. In the last few minutes he seemed to have aged years.

"Look here, you chap," he said at length, after waiting in vain for his companion to break the silence: "every minute we lose now is precious. If we are going to try and get away we had better make a start at once. It will be daylight in an hour and a half. While you dropped off just then I managed to secure a Boer pony. He'll do for one of us—unfortunately the animal is too small for both. Don't give up, man," as the wounded man made an impatient movement with his hand, "there is hope for us yet."

Cleaver turned his eyes on the speaker's face, and the hopeless expression in them disconcerted Frere.

"That fellow has had a nasty shock," he mused to himself.

"I can't ride," Cleaver said, "my back is too painful. You take the pony, sir, and make for camp—I shall stop here."

"Bosh!" said the Captain, "I shall do nothing of the kind. Do you suppose I am going to leave you and go off, young man? Why, it would be simply suicidal in your state."

But Cleaver refused to move or be moved.

"I shall stay where I am," he persisted, doggedly.

Captain Frere tried all his persuasive powers, but to no good.

Charles Cleaver was obstinate.

"Then there is nothing to be done but for both of us to sit here and see what the day brings forth," and the Captain took a seat beside his wounded companion, hoping that his latest plan of action would bring him to his senses.

And he was not disappointed.

"I can't allow this, sir, really I can't," protested Cleaver earnestly. "Because I insist on staying here it is no reason why you should. You have friends, no doubt, who are watching the papers every morning for news of you. I have nobody. That is why I don't care. If I had something to live for it would be different—it was different before I had that letter. You don't know what it is to lose the only soul in the world that has made your life worth living."

"No, I don't know, but I can understand if it is a woman," Frere replied in a low voice, for he was thinking of Ruth. Then turning to his companion he laid his hand on his arm. "Death," he said gently, and, his, was a wonderfully soothing voice, "comes to all of us."

"It isn't death," cried Cleaver, lifting himself up on his elbow, and looking at Frere with blazing eyes. "She has married, I tell you—married!"

There was a long, uncomfortable silence. Presently Cleaver began to speak.

"I came to this wretched country four years ago. I had no money, or we should have been married. Her people were poor, and I had nothing but an old name and an estate mortgaged up to the hilt. Then they had an invalid sister to keep."

Frere felt a rising interest, for Ruth's little sister was a cripple.

"I've worked day and night, slaved far more than any Kaffir—I got a farm at last, and I was just beginning to make a good thing out of it when the war broke out. And now she is married—sacrificed herself to save her family from starving—you might read me what she says, sir, I don't think I got through it all."

Frere picked up the letter. There was something strangely familiar about the handwriting!

"Dearest Charlie," it ran. "This is the last time I shall ever address you in the old way, for to-morrow I am to be married. You must try and not be angry with me, dear, for he has asked me over and over again, and there was nothing else to be done. Last month mother heard that all the little that remained of her money was gone. It meant starvation, for though I could have made enough to keep myself, there was mother and the children to think of, and the boys ought to be going to a good school now. Charlie, you must try and not hate him, for he has been so kind to all of us, and he knows nothing about you. Mother would never let me tell him—and when he asked me again to marry him and said he was under orders to go to South Africa, I had not the heart to tell him I was engaged to you. Don't judge me too harshly, for you don't know what it is to marry a man I can never love. I feel I am wronging one of the best and kindest friends

The soldierly-looking man was head over ears in love with the girl.

Digitized by Google

The two men clasped hands.

I ever had when my heart can never be his, for I love you, Charlie, and you only! Your broken-hearted ——"

"I can't read the signature—it's blotted," broke off the Captain, "but she does not tell you the man's name."

"I know who he is—a captain of the Fusiliers, and old enough to be her father," said Cleaver, bitterly.

A spasm of pain crossed Frere's face, he snatched at the letter, and tried to decipher the signature.

"And his name?" he asked quietly, without looking up.

"Thornton Frere."

Five—ten minutes passed and neither man moved. Frere sat bolt upright, with stern, set features. Suddenly his face relaxed; a smile lit up and transformed it, making it appear almost handsome.

"Yes," he said slowly, and there was nothing in his calm, even voice to rouse Cleaver's suspicion—"it's a facer, but not such a facer as you think. I knew Frere well—he was my greatest chum in the regiment—" he paused, as though the words would not come out, "and he died from his wounds received two days ago in a skirmish."

In the few moments of silence after he had learnt the awful truth Frere had decided what to do. His idol had been smashed, dragged ruthlessly from the pedestal he had placed it on; broken so that no human hands could piece it together again. He knew how Ruth had never loved him—it was but the reflection of his own love he had read in her eyes. And yet he felt no anger at the knowledge, only pity, a great pity that surged up in his heart and blotted out every other feeling. For his had been the fault, not hers; he could see the folly of his marriage now. What was there about him for a young girl to love—he, greyhaired and old beyond his years? Cleaver was both young and good-looking. Ah, he understood it all now—and yet he had been so ridiculously happy.

"Dead!" gasped Cleaver, aghast.

"There is no doubt about it, for I helped to bury him. There is nothing in your way now—you can marry his widow—she will be rich, for he left her all his money. What you had better do is to get on that pony, ride for all you're worth, and deliver those dispatches. I'll lie here in hiding until you can send some men to bury the poor chaps who fell last night. But there is only one stipulation I make, and that is, that you don't risk your life any more, but get back to England and take care of Frere's widow. Before he died he left her as a sacred charge to me, but in face of that letter and what you've told me I think I am right in passing that duty over to you. Frere was a peculiar chap, but I feel sure he would wish it, for her happiness was everything to him. Come, is it a bargain?"

Cleaver seemed quite overcome. "You are very good," he said brokenly. "If ever I get home and we're married, she shall never have cause to repent it, or you either, sir. But your news about her husband has knocked me over—so soon, poor chap," he said feelingly.

"Yes, poor chap," echoed the elder man as he stared out across the veld with unseeing eyes. "But she made him very happy, and he died happy, too, perfectly happy," he added with conviction.

"I'm glad of that, it will comfort Ruth. But I can't go alone, sir. You would not leave me, remember."

"That was different. You are under orders to deliver those dispatches, and besides I'm not wounded."

Frere was right—the dispatches were important.

"Then I'll go, sir."

Half lifting, half carrying him, Frere managed to get Cleaver into the saddle.

His wound was stiff and the pain from it almost made him faint, but a pull from Frere's whiskey flask put fresh life in him. On the flap of an envelope which he took from his pocket Frere scribbled these lines:

"Good-bye, Marry Cleaver if he can make you happy. Remember, your happiness, before anything else, has been the one desire of your devoted husband,

"T. F."

Placing the scrap of paper inside the case which held his wife's miniature, with a long, last look Frere handed it to Cleaver.

"Give it to her—it is something her husband gave me and contains his last message."

"I'll not forget. But why not keep it, and give it to her yourself?"

"There is more fighting to be done and who knows—?" Frere never finished the sentence. Cleaver understood.

The two men clasped hands. Frere watched the pony and its rider till both were out of sight.

Then taking out his revolver he examined and cocked it. He knelt down.

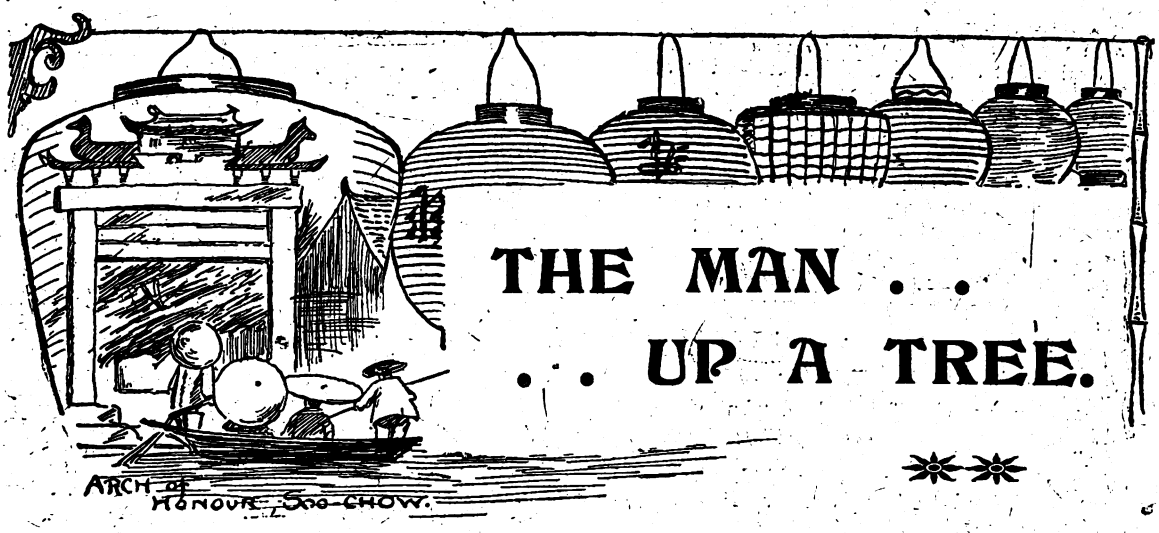
"Heaven have mercy on me a miserable sinner!" he said in a firm voice.

Raising the revolver to his forehead he uttered the words "For your sake, Ruth," and pulled the trigger.

And that night, when Charles Cleaver ran out to greet the man who had saved his life, he met the rescue party bringing their silent burden into camp.

GWENDOLYN STANHOPE.

Digitized by Google



THE MAN . . . . UP A TREE.

I AM something of a reformer not only in theory, but in practice, and when I discovered the man up a tree I determined to try my hand at elevating his moral standard.

I hold that no man is so bad that he can't be reformed to a certain extent, and I hold that any way to bring about a betterment of his moral character is justifiable. I mean by that, to speak frankly and plainly, that, while some men can be reformed by sympathy and encouragement, others need a rap on the head with a cricket bat to arouse their dormant integrity and ambition.

I had extended sympathy and more or less financial aid to this man up a tree. In a burst of confidence he had confessed to me that he had been a swindler, a gambler and a great deal more. He had been "laid away" in prison two or three times during his career, had sailed under a dozen different names, and he might have admitted a murder or two had I not cut him short.

I draw the line at murder. I can set out with a good deal of confidence in the task of reforming burglars, highway robbers, incendiaries, perjurers, and so forth, but when it comes to murderers I hesitate.

Having become interested in this man, I didn't want him to own up to anything worse than robbing a blind man or burning an orphan home. He had come to me as a man who had at last seen the error of his ways and longed to turn over a new leaf and be counted with the good and respectable.

He had given me the name of H. Jones-Jones. It struck me that there was an extra amount of Jones about him, but the name is an honest one, and I didn't find fault about it.

He was a man of about forty-five, with all the evidences of his career in his face, but I didn't look for babylike innocence in his eyes.

When he threw himself upon my mercy, as it were—when he made a clean breast of his wicked career and added that if anyone would point out the path of honesty he would turn into it and travel on without a limp, I agreed to take him in hand.

He had whiskers with which the police were acquainted, and I sent him to a barber's shop. He had clothes which gave him away altogether, and I bought him a modest suit of blue.

Then I gave him money for a week's holiday from crime, and when the holiday was over we were to see what further could be done. I took my week off at the same time and spent it amid the fresh buttermilk and dew-kissed gorse of the country.

On the second night of my stay, as I sat by my open window at midnight to finish the last of my cigar and wonder if my Jones-Jones had kept straight dur ng the last forty-eight hours, I suddenly caught sight of him on the ground below.

It was a farmhouse at which I was stopping. I had a corner room, and at that corner of the hous stood a large apple tree. I had obser ed that a big limb branched out so close to my window that I could have descended by it. What you can descend by you can also ascend by.

I had no sooner caught sight of Jones-Jones at the foot of the tree, at an hour when everybody was supposed to be in bed, than I unders ood that he intended pay ng me a secret visit. How he had tracked me to my lair was of no consequence. Why he should imagine that I had broug it any great am unt of money with me on my week's outing I didn't stop to think. Indeed, I am not sure that he had tracked me. In looking for lodgings in the country he might have stumbled upon the place. He might have thought the open window belonged to some other boarder.

No matter how it was, however. Mr. Jones-Jones had no sooner begun to climb that apple tree than I made ready to receive him with all due hospitality. There was no stick in the room, but the water jug had been filled for the night and made a good weapon. Armed with that I took my stand on one side of the window and waited.

Jones-Jones was not an impetuous man. He had all night in which to climb and creep. and it was at least a quarter of an hour before he grasped my window sill with his hands and drew his body into the opening. I waited with patience until he had reached a particular position and then brought the jug down on his head.

The idea was to administer an anæsthetic, and it was a success. He pitched forward into the room with a long drawn sigh, and I lighted the lamp and took from his wrist the "billy" which he had bought in town with my money to use as a "cracker" in case his sleeping victim woke up before being plundered.

Digitized by Google

Then I forced brandy between his teeth, bathed his face with water, and in the course of a quarter of an hour my midnight visitor had so far recovered his senses that I ventured to remark:

"Well, Jones-Jones, why didn't you tell me that you were coming, that I might be on the lookout for you?"

Jones-Jones sat up. He didn't recognize me. He himself had a different look on his face. That dissipated but yet crafty look had disappeared, and in its place was wonderment if not honesty. It was my wicked man in the flesh, but not in the spirit.

He got off the floor and felt the bump on his head and sat down on a chair, and it was a long five minutes before he said:

"Sir, my name is Brown-Brown, and I don't exactly understand the situation. Am I in your room, or are you in mine?"

"I believe it's my room," I replied, "but since you arrived late and the landlord is asleep you can stop until morning."

"Very kind of you, sir—extremely kind. As to this bump on my head—is it a bump or not? If it's a bump how did I receive it?"

"You hit your head on the door in the darkness, I believe."

"Ah! Just so. Very stupid of me, but it's only a trifle. Now, then, Mr. Ashmere, as to the business in hand. If you think you can advance me a hundred pounds, I am sure I can make good use of it."

It took me a little while to understand, but by and by I discovered that Jones-Jones had disappeared and Brown-Brown had taken his place.

Jones-Jones was a shady character who wanted to reform; Brown-Brown was a poor but honest man who wanted to start in business. He knew nothing whatever of Jones-Jones. He picked up the conversation as if he had been talking about the business when the accident happened.

He called me by another name than my own, and it was plain to me that he was also another man. I sounded him about crime and prison, but he solemnly assured me that he had never been arrested. He was Brown-Brown so far as his name went, but as for his past history he was rather hazy on the subject.

I had turned Jones-Jones, the shady character, back into Brown-Brown, the honest man, by a knock on the head. It was rapid transit reformation, and I looked upon the problem as solved. Having been willing to assist a shady character, I could not refuse an honest man.

When my week was up, we went back to town together, and I gave Brown-Brown money enough to set up in business. He had on the clothes I had bought Jones-Jones. He had the hair, the eyes, the mouth and the build of the shady character, but there had been a change of souls.

So far as the present went he was bright and talkative, but when asked of the past he looked puzzled and could not understand what I meant. The doctors a reed with me that it was the whack on the head that had made Brown-Brown of Jones-Jones and that the police ought to be given full power to go round breaking water jugs over suspects' craniums; but, alas, that was a part of the business we hadn't the foresight to discover and prepare for.

My man prospered wonderfully well. People said he was a little eccentric, but he was honest and a hard worker. In one year he had paid me back half my money and built up a good business.

One day a detective entered the shop to make a purchase. He had known Jones-Jones as a burglar. He knew that Jones-Jones had a crooked finger on his right hand and a mole on his left cheek. When he discovered that Brown-Brown had these same identification marks, he began to look at him more closely, and by and by he made up his mind that the old burglar stood before him. He was so sure of it that he started to make an arrest.

Brown-Brown was an honest man, but in his surprise he started to bolt off. As he ran out of his shop and down the street, pursued by the detective, he encountered a policeman who tapped him on the head with his truncheon. Brown-Brown went down like a log and was carted off to the station. I was present when his senses returned, and you can imagine my feelings when he sat up and said:

"Well, you've got me at last, but I gave you a run for it. You fellers ain't half sharp."

"You are Jones-Jones, the burglar," said the sergeant.

"Of course I am, and the sharpest one in the country. Is it that bank business you want me for this time?"

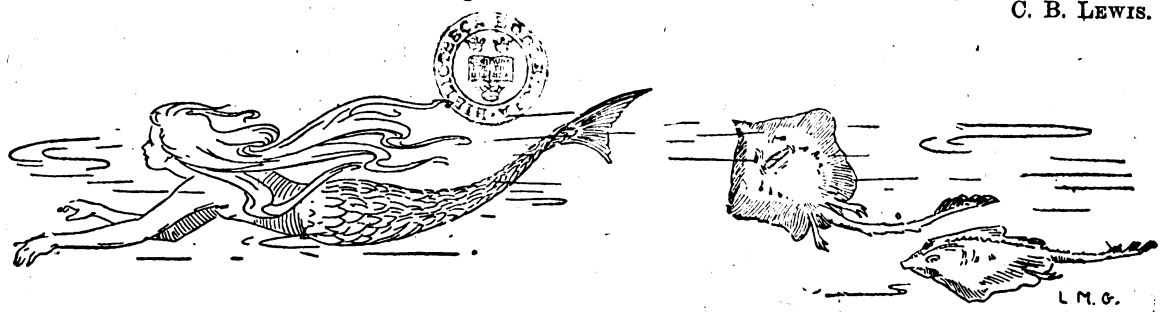
"Mr. Brown-Brown"—I began as I stepped forward, but the burglar stopped me with:

"Who in the name of goodness is Brown-Brown?"

Then I realised how it was. I had smashed Jones-Jones, the burglar, over the head with a water jug, and changed him into Brown-Brown, the honest shopkeeper. The policeman had smashed Brown-Brown with his truncheon, and changed him back into Jones-Jones, the burglar.

The taps on the head had done the business. My tap was all right, and I had founded a new theory upon it and invested a hundred pounds in cash. But I hadn't foreseen that a second tap might come any day, as come it did, and my theory had been knocked into a cocked hat, and I was fifty pounds out of pocket.

C. B. Lewis.



Digitized by Google

KEATING'S POWDER

KILLS BUGS FLEAS MOTHS BEETLES

TINS 3d 6d & 1s
THE NEW BELLOWS 9d

DO YOU KNOW

that with every copy of THIS WEEK'S

HOME NOTES

A Paper Pattern of a

BOY'S TUNIC

is

GIVEN AWAY?

HOME NOTES is the best and daintiest of ladies' weeklies.

Order a copy at once.

ONE PENNY

JUNO CYCLES FOR LADIES & GENTS.

THE VERY BEST.

Discount for Cash.

FREE or FIXED WHEELS

The most up-to-date.

Carriage Paid.

LISTS POST FREE

		Monthly.
£8 10s.	...	14/3
£11 11s.	...	19/3
£12	...	20/-
£12 12s.	...	21/-
£1 14s.	..	24/6

Write for New Season's List.

JUNO Cycles an Accessories (over 100 pages) sent Post Free.

JUNO	...	£10	... 16/8 monthly.
Lady Safety	...	£11	... 18/4 monthly.

Easterly Hard Wood Cycle Stand, 2/6. Handlebar Basket, 1/.

METROPOLITAN MACHINISTS CO. LTD., Juno Cycle School, and Works, 75 76 Bishopsgate Street Without E.C., and Piccadilly Circus, London, W.

SILVER QUEEN & ROYAL AJAX CYCLES

ON MONTHLY PAYMENTS. Enormous stock. New and second-hand. FROM 10s. MONTHLY. Carriage paid. Free wheels and rim brakes Illustrated Price Lists Post Free.—THE SILVER QUEEN CYCLE Co. Ltd., 21 Totte ham Court Road London, W.

NOSE MACHINES. LEES RAY. S. S. Dept., South Castle St. Liverpool, has specialised on Ugly and Red Noses. 1d stamp for particulars of his patent scientific Nose Improvers. Red Nose Cure, medically approved, 3/9. Outstanding Ear Machines 11/6.

TOO STOUT

I was for years; by chance I came across a simple home remedy that reduced me from 17st. to 10st. 12lb., and I will willingly send particulars free to any sufferer enclosing stamp. Mrs. L. E. FELL, 105 Oxford Street, London, W.

DEVONSHIRE CREAM

(Really Genuine). In Patent Air-tight Tins. ½lb., 1/4; 1-lb., 2/4; 2-lb., 4/-, including Tin & Postage. Mrs. CONYERS. Morchard Bishop, DEVON.

SEND FOR

DR. EVANS'S (U.S.A.)

Pamphlet on Nervous Diseases of All Kinds. THIS PAMPHLET describes all the symptoms which arise from Diseases of the NERVOUS SYSTEM. It is up-to-date, having been compiled after years of labour and experience in the Treatment of these Maladies. It is complete, practical, and can be readily understood and acted upon. It gives pure and simple advice to Sufferers. Send stamped addressed envelope to GEORGE WRIGHT, ESQ., Colne House, REMBRANDT ROAD, LEE, LONDON, S.E. (*Name this Paper.*)

A MAGNIFICENT COMPLEXION GUARANTEED

By the free use of LILLIE POWDER. It nourishes, heals, soothes, and brings Health and Beauty.

Order it of your Chemist and refuse all substitutes, as they may be injurious.

Three Tints: Blanche Naturelle, and Rachel. Of all Chemists, Hairdressers, Stores, &c.

THE LILLIE SYNDICATE,

3 Henrietta Street, London, W.C.

"WORTH A GUINEA A BOX."

BEECHAM'S PILLS

FOR ALL

BILIOUS & NERVOUS DISORDERS,

Sick Headache, Constipation, Wind and Pains in Stomach, Impaired Digestion, Disordered Liver, and Female Ailments.

SALE OVER SIX MILLION BOXES YEARLY.

In Boxes, 1s. 1½d. and 2s. 9d. each, with full directions.

Prepared only by the Proprietor,

THOMAS BEECHAM, St. Helens, Lancashire.

Sold by all Druggists and Patent Medicine Dealers everywhere.

KOKO

FOR THE HAIR

UNDER ROYAL PATRONAGE.

KOKO for the HAIR is a tonic, cleansing, invigorating preparation, it eradicates scurf and dandriff, prevents hair from falling or turning grey, promotes growth, contains no dye or greasy substance, is the most cleanly of all hair preparations and invariably gives satisfaction.

1/-, 2/6, and 4/6, of all Chemists, Hairdressers, &c., everywhere

OLD PEOPLE LIKE IT

for its wonderful power to *invigorate decayed hair*, and induce an entirely new growth when that is possible.

MIDDLE-AGED PEOPLE LIKE IT,

because it *prevents them from getting bald*, keeps dandriff, away, and makes the hair grow thick and strong.

YOUNG LADIES LIKE IT

As a dressing, because it gives the hair a *beautiful glossy lustre*, ensures a *luxuriant growth*, and enables them to dress it and keep it in any style that may be desired,

CHILDREN LIKE IT.

Because it keeps the hair and scalp cool and clean, *allays irritation*, and keeps the hair in whatever position desired.

THEY ALL LIKE IT,

Because it is as *pure as crystal*, perfectly colourless, contains no poisonous substance, no sugar of lead, sulphur, nitrate of silver, or grease, and does not soil or colour *the scalp, face, or the most delicate fabric in clothing.*

Digitized by Google

The Brain Gymnasium

In these competitions a prize of £2 will be awarded each week to the competitor whose attempt we receive giving the correct solutions of all the puzzles. If more than one is absolutely correct the prize of £2 will be given to the first correct attempt dealt with.

If no lists of absolutely correct solutions are sent in the first prize will be awarded to the competitor whose attempt is first dealt with showing the fewest mistakes.

Each week we shall award in addition to the above, either ten of our silver plated pencil-cases or ten popular six shilling novels, to be distributed amongst the competitors whose attempts are absolutely correct and have failed to win the first prize, or, if no complete lists of correct solutions are received, to those whose attempts show the fewest mistakes.

Write all your solutions on one sheet of paper, putting the number against each. Post the batch in an envelope marked "Brain Gymnasium," to reach the Editor, Short Stories, 18 Henrietta Street, Covent Garden, W.C., by first post on Monday, August 20th, 1900.

Readers are invited to submit puzzles, acrostics, conundrums, word-squares, etc., for publication on this page. A gold-plated pencil-case will be given to each reader whose attempts are used. All attempts must be vouched for as original, and, of course, it is distinctly understood that the sender of a puzzle must neither compete in the competition nor divulge to anyone the solution. Any reader found infringing this rule will be severely dealt with.

No. 187.

The following letters, when re-arranged, will form a well-known proverb:

AAA DD EE F III MM NNN OO R TTT W.

No. 188.

Make a square word from the equivalents of the following:

A BEVERAGE; BRAINLESS; THE NAME OF A COD; TO MAKE CLEAR; TO REVIVE.

No. 189.

One-sixth of simple, plus one-fifth of think, plus two-thirds of aerial, plus one sixth of system, plus one-fifth of anger, plus two-ninths of beanfeast.

The sum will give the name of a bird.

No. 190.

The first and third letters of equivalents of the following, when re-arranged, will form the name of an English seaside resort:

A BIRD; A PAMPHLET; TO SEIZE; CONVENIENT.

No. 191.

My initials and finals will form the names of two Shakesperian characters:

AN EASTERN COUNTY; A BIRD; A VESSEL; A MUSICAL T RM; A VEGETABLE; AN EASTERN OFFICIAL; A TOWN IN JAPAN.

No. 192.

To feed my SECOND with my FIRST
Was once a sacred rite;
And yet now in this latter day
To strike it gives delight.

Of magic LAST we all have read,
Of power a fabled source;
Now make it Greek, and we shall have
A bright, celestial horse.

My WHOLE at best a dangerous thing,
In spite of care or wire;
And to a city, so 'tis said,
It brought disaster dire.

RESULT OF BRAIN GYMNASIUM.

Nos. 169 to 174.

The prize of £2 has been awarded this week to Mr. J. D. Champion, Quethiock, Liskeard, whose solution was the first correct one dealt with.

A copy of "Fortune's My Foe," by J. Bloundelle Burton, has been sent to:

Miss E. Hill, Barnes, S.W.
F. White, King's Cross, N.
J. Cockerill, Kingsland Road, N.
O.R. Frankenstein, Regent's Park
John Boyd, Glasgow.
D. G. Jelley, Plumstead, Kent
William Robertson, Glasgow.
Miss Maud Abbott, Norbiton.
F. Watson, Morpeth.
James Thain, Bowes Park, N.

SOLUTIONS TO PUZZLES.

Nos. 175 to 180.

No. 175. SCOTT
CELIA
OLDEN
TIERS
TANSY

No. 176. Theatres. The-a-tres (rest).

No. 177. H. RIDER HAGGARD.

No. 178. Gownsman.

No. 179. LEAF.

No. 180.

B	enga	L
E	br	O
R	ubico	N
L	anlan	D
I	dah	O
N	ankl	N

Berlin—London.

SHORT STORIES ADVERTISEMENT RATES.

Single column, per inch, per insertion	£0 10 0
Double " " "	1 0 0
Full page inside, facing page of matter, either white paper or 2nd or 3rd page of cover, or back page, per insertion	10 0 0
Half-page " " "	5 0 0
Quarter-page " "	2 10 0
Eighth-page " "	1 5 0
Front page, whole " "	12 10 0
" half	6 5 0

All spaces above one-eighth of a page are charged at per page rate.

Series discount: 5 per cent. for 13, 10 per cent. for 26, 15 per cent. for 52 insertions.

Black blocks are charged 25 per cent. extra. All advertisements are subject to approval. All copy must be sent in by Noon on Tuesday, August 14th, if intended for the issue on sale August 28th, and dated September 1st. The Proprietors reserve the right to hold over or suspend the insertion of any advertisement without prejudice to other insertions on order. All communications should be addressed to the Advertisement Manager, "Pearson's Weekly" Offices, Henrietta Street, London, W.C.

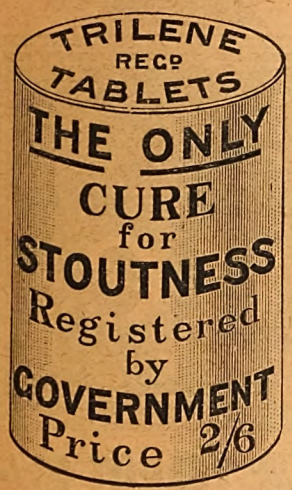
Printed and Published by C. Arthur Pearson Ltd., at Pearson's Weekly Buildings, Henrietta Street, London, W.C.

Digitized by Google

ALL FAT PEOPLE

Can be **CURED** by taking

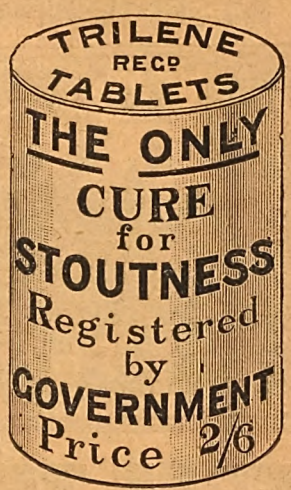
TRILENE TABLETS Regd.



For a few weeks. They will safely REDUCE WEIGHT and CURE CORPULENCY PERMANENTLY, whether Abdominal or General. They are small, agreeable, harmless, sent privately, and never fail to Improve both HEALTH and FIGURE without change of Diet.

An English Countess writes: "Your Trilene Tablets act admirably."

Send **2s. 6d.** to THE TRILENE ASSOCIATION, 66 Finsbury Pavement, London, E.C.



SAMPLES OF TESTIMONIALS.

"67 Alexandra Road, Norwich, October 19th, 1896.

Gentlemen,—In reference to Trilene Tablets, I may say that my wife found the greatest possible benefit from the use of them; their action was rapid, and exceeded our utmost expectations, as they were also most beneficial to the respiratory organs. My wife was many years growing so stout, but although the disease was, I consider chronic, the Tablets soon reduced the same completely. You have our united thanks, and if I can do anything to promote your interests I will freely use my utmost endeavours to do so.

"Yours faithfully, J. R. CANHAM."

Mrs. DARNLEY SMITH, Landscove Vicarage, Ashburton, writes: "Trilene Tablets have reduced my weight very much. I am so much lighter in every way, and better in health."

COUNTESS SECKENDORFF, of Berlin, writes: "The Tablets greatly benefited me personally, and I am recommending them to friends."

MISS CHATTERTON, 7 Salisbury Villas, Banstead, Surrey, says: "I weighed 12st. 8lb., but am now 11st. and getting much better."

Nurse CROUCHER, at Mrs. Bennett's, 14 Buckleigh Road, Streatham, says: "I lost 9.b. from the box I took."

"77 Hindhill Street, Heywood, February 5th, 1898.

"Gentlemen,—I have not quite finished the box of Tablets and am 21lb. lighter. The change is great, and several friends are beginning the treatment, which not only reduces fat but strengthens rheumatic joints—such has been the case with me. "Yours sincerely, M. A. HEYWOOD."

Mrs. D. BURTON, of Silverleigh, Tunbridge, writes: "I am very pleased with difference in size, my friends all telling me how much thinner I am getting."

Miss NORTHLEDGE, The Laurels, Riseholme Road, Lincoln, says: "The Tablets reduced me 1st., so that I am cured."

West Cornforth, Ferryhill.

Mr. WM. USHER says: "A sister of mine, who was 17st., was greatly reduced by your Tablets to 15st."

Extract from *The Lady*, September 3rd, 1896: "Many stout persons have suffered untold agonies in unavailing efforts to reduce their bulk, either by means of severe dieting, or by taking more or less deleterious drugs; but all these pains would have been saved if they had only invested in a box of the wonderful Trilene Tablets which are quite harmless, containing neither mercury, arsenic, nor any other mineral poison, and which are an unfailing cure for obesity."

MRS. T. BOSTON, Cambridge Villas, Clifford Street, South Wigston, says: "I congratulate you on your wonderful Tablets. My weight at first starting them was 11st. 7lb., and I now weigh 9st. 11lb."

Mr. MCLEOD, 44, Calside, Paisley, writes: "I have been cured. If you want to know my weight now, it is 10st.; reduced 1st. 8lb., and I am quite content."

A. M. PRATT of Ongar House, Ongar, says: "My weight is so much reduced it is unnecessary to ake more. The reduction of weight was from 12st. 6lb. to 10st. 4lb."

MRS. H. COX, 28 Watnall Road, Hucknall Torkard, writes: "The box of Tablets has reduced my weight 1½ stones."

MR. WALKER, 236 London Road, Hazelgrove, Stockport, says: "I have used one box and am 14lb. lighter. Send another soon as possible."

Col.-Sergt. WHITTLE, of East Lancashire Regt., Burnley, Lancs, says: "A man in our regiment in 1891 lost several stone from taking your Tablets."

MRS E. ALEXANDER, 102 Dixon Street, New Swindon, says: "They have reduced me quite 2 stone, and I am now quite cured."

Mrs. W. A. RADFORD, of High Street, New Brinsley, Eastwood, writes: "Before taking Tablets I was 46 inches round waist, now I am 32 inches. I hope soon to be 23. I could hardly move or get up, now I get about easily. Please use this as you wish."

Countess FURSTENBERG, of Germany, writes: "They act speedily and well."

The Princess LIECHTENSTEIN writes from Landsberg, Austria: "Pray send me your excellent Tablets."

Mrs. WEAVER, of Greenpits Villa, Ross, Hereford, writes "I am reduced from 13st. 8lb. to 11st. You may use this if you like."

MRS. CROSSLEY, of Rose Hill, Torver nr Coniston, says: "There is a very decided diminution of fat. I am delighted, and cannot speak too highly in praise of Tablets. My heart is better, and I can breathe so much easier. You may refer to me as often as you like."

Lady C. CONRAD writes from Wiesbaden: "I am very pleased with your Tablets."

Mrs. TAYLOR-ROBINSON, of Tweed Green House, Whalley Range, Manchester, says: "I feel so much lighter and better since taking your Tablets, and am so much thinner that I hardly recognise myself."

Miss A. LONG, of 9 South Parade, Waterford, writes: "Your Tablets have reduced me 14lb."

Miss A. DAWSON, 62 Orchard Street, Weston-super-Mare, says: "Glad to say the Tablets have sufficiently reduced me. I shall always recommend them."

Miss F. L. BALL, 47 Chesterfield Road, St. Andrews, Bristol, writes: "I am quite cured through your Tablets. They improve the figure, and greatly relieve shortness of breath."

Miss PATIENT, of Woodberry, Thydon Bois: "Feel great benefit from Tablets. I have lost 2 st. and am sufficiently reduced."

Mrs. DREW, of 1 Bellevue Gardens, The Nursery, Devizes, writes: "I took Tablets some years ago; they soon reduced me and I have not got stout since. Send me a box for my mother."

THE TRILENE ASSOCIATION, 66 FINSBURY PAVEMENT, LONDON.

Digitized by Google

WASHES EVERYTHING

TO BE HAD OF ALL GROCERS &c.

MANUFACTORY: DUKINFIELD, MANCHESTER.

SCRIVEN

PARASITENE

is a new and important remedy for GOUT, RINGWORM, ECZEMA, and all IRRITANT SKIN DISEASES.

Prescribed by members of the London Medical Profession.

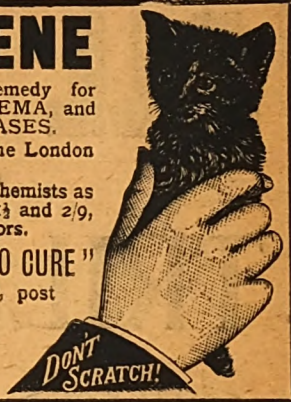
Can be obtained from all Chemists as a Lotion or an Ointment at 1/1½ and 2/9, or Post Free from the Proprietors.

"SKIN DISEASES & HOW TO CURE"

By Parasitene Treatment, post free from

The WEDNESFIELD CHEMICAL SYNDICATE Limited,

WOLVERHAMPTON.



Reckitt's PARIS Blue.

The Best is the Cheapest.

A FREE TRIAL FOR 2/6

DESCRIPTION:

- New Sun Shade Eyepieces.
- Telescopic Slides Ormolu Gilt
- Ebonised Adjusting Screw.
- Crocodile Leather Covered Body.
- Nickel and Gilt Lens Mounts.

J. N. MASTERS LTD, will send one of these handsome **FIELD and MARINE GLASSES**, price value **14/6**, complete with Crocodile Leather Case and Sling, to any reader who mentions *Short Stories* on receipt of **2/6**. If you do not approve of them, we will return your **2/6** in full. If you approve of them you send us **2/-** on receipt, and **2/-** each month for five months; but should you prefer to send the balance at once, send only **10/6**, as we allow you **1/6** discount; or you may send **13/-** at once, and if you do not approve of the Glasses we will return your **13/6** in full.

J. N. MASTERS LTD., RYE, SUSSEX.

MASTERS' ELECTRO SILVER TEAPOT 21/-

Will hold 4 Half Pints.

- Ebony Knob.
- Ebony Handle.
- Fluted Body.
- Heavily Plated With Real Silver.

A FREE TRIAL FOR 3/6.

J. N. MASTERS LTD. will send one of these Full Size Electro Silver "Queen Anne" Teapots, value **21/-**, to any reader who mentions *Short Stories*, on receipt of **3/6**.

IF you do not approve of it, we will return your **3/6** in full.

IF you approve of it, you send **3/6** more on receipt, and **3/6** each month for 4 months.

BUT should you prefer to send the balance at once, send only **14/6**, as we allow **3/-** discount to those who pay cash.

OR you may send **18/-** for this **21/-** Teapot, and if you do not approve of it, we will return your **18/-** in full, if Teapot is returned within 7 days.

Large Catalogue of Watches, Jewellery, &c., post free.

J. N. MASTERS LTD., RYE, SUSSEX.

Digitized by Google

THERE ARE NO SHORT STORIES LIKE THE SHORT STORIES IN SHORT STORIES.

SHORT STORIES

A WEEKLY MAGAZINE FOR HOME AND TRAIN

No. 607. FOR WEEK ENDING AUGUST 18TH, 1900. [ONE PENNY.

A SERGEANT IN THE FIELD POST OFFICE AND

DR TIBBLES' Vi-Cocoa

THE LIGHT INFANTRY BRIGADE UNANIMOUSLY IN FAVOUR OF VI-COCOA.

Sergeant F. W. SPENCE, Sunday's River Camp, near Elandslaagte, 22 miles north of Ladysmith, No. 10 Field Post Office, 4th Brigade, 2nd Division, Natal F.F.

"I have been asked by my comrades in the Field Post Office to write you on the subject of Dr. Tibbles' Vi-Cocoa, which we frequently use. I have said frequently, because we cannot always obtain it, but when we do we lay in a stock, as we find it more satisfying, more palatable, and thirst-quenching in this country, where to drink the khaki-coloured water is almost certain dysentery. I have asked many of the men of the Light Infantry Brigade how they like Vi-Cocoa, and almost unanimously they declare for it in preference to other sorts. But, speaking from my own experience, whilst on long marches, sleeping at nights under wagon, or in the open air, or in a standing camp, we generally make the Vi-Cocoa night and morning, and I firmly believe that it has helped me greatly to bear the fatigues of campaigning, and so preserved my health unbroken during the five months or more we have been working in the field, and now that winter is coming on we shall use it more than ever.

"If you should consider the foregoing of any use, you are at liberty to make what you please of it."

"UNDOUBTED PURITY AND STRENGTH."
—*Medical Magazine.*

"IN THE FRONT RANK OF REALLY VALUABLE FOODS."—*Lancet.*

FAVOURED BY THE HOMES & HOSPITALS OF GREAT BRITAIN.

Dainty Sample Tin Free to any address.

Please mention *Short Stories.*

ADDRESS:

Dr. TIBBLES' VI-COCOA Ltd., 60 Bunhill Row, London, E.C.

DAINTY SAMPLE FREE.

Advertisements should be sent to "Short Stories" Advertisement Department, Henrietta Street, London, WC.

Digitized by Google

"WORTH A GUINEA A BOX."

BEECHAM'S PILLS

FOR ALL

BILIOUS & NERVOUS DISORDERS,
Sick Headache, Constipation, Wind and Pains in Stomach, Impaired Digestion, Disordered Liver, and Female Ailments.

SALE OVER SIX MILLION BOXES YEARLY.

In Boxes, 1s. 1½d. and 2s. 9d. each, with full directions.

Prepared only by the Proprietor,

THOMAS BEECHAM, St. Helens, Lancashire.

Sold by all Druggists and Patent Medicine Dealers everywhere.

THE
BEST OF ALL BEVERAGES
AND THE
CHEAPEST.

GOOD! IT'S
MASON'S
Extract of Herbs

8 Gallons Prime Beer for 6d.

Sample Free for 9 Stamps.
AGENTS WANTED EVERYWHERE.

NEWBALL & MASON,
NOTTINGHAM.

WHY BE FAT?

When a lady, who has discovered a simple means of Self-Cure will be happy to send particulars of same to any sufferer from this distressing complaint. Free on receipt of stamped addressed envelope. ADDRESS:

Mrs. TREVOR WELLS,
63 *HIGH HOLBORN, LONDON, W.C.*

HAIR DESTROYED.

Send me an envelope (stamped and addressed) and I will tell you how to remove all superfluous hair **free of charge.** (Send no money.) Address, in confidence, Miss E. V. (Room 3), 195 Oxford Street, London, W.

ESTABLISHED 1851.
BIRKBECK BANK

Southampton Buildings, Chancery Lane, London.

2% on CURRENT ACCOUNTS, on the minimum monthly balances when not drawn below **£100.**

The BIRKBECK ALMANACK, with full particulars, post free. FRANCIS RAVENSCROFT, *Manager.*

NOSE

MACHINES. LEES RAY, S.S. Dept., South Castle St, Liverpool, is a specialist on Ugly and Red Noses, send stamp for particulars of his patent scientific Nose Improvers. Red Nose Cure, medically approved, **3/9.** Outstanding Ear Machines **11/6.**

VIE D'OR FOR THE HAIR.

THE AMERICAN TREATMENT.

Vie d'Or puts 10 years on the life of the hair.

SOLE AGENT:
GUSTAV ROSSELLI, 4 New Park Street, Park Lane, LEEDS.
Price **2/9** post free.

A SUM of from 12s. to 25s. per week can be earned in spare hours or evenings by either sex everywhere.—Send addressed envelope for particulars to Box 24, Eclipse Works, 89 Aldersgate Street, E.C.

A WOMAN'S HATRED

of **Debt** is only equalled by her abhorrence of unpunctuality and Disorder. H. SAMUEL'S **Sound System of Direct Supply** for **Cash,** and the unvarying excellence of

H. SAMUEL'S UP-TO-DATE WATCHES

have won approval from all classes, the Purchaser receiving the GREATEST POSSIBLE VALUE for money.

A MONTH'S FREE TRIAL
is allowed with every article; thus fullest opportunity is afforded of thoroughly testing the goods. Every purchaser receives one of H. SAMUEL'S

HANDSOME BONUS GIFTS.

Ten Lists of Presents to select from are enclosed in **H. SAMUEL'S CATALOGUE,** containing over 3,000 beautiful illustrations and descriptions of H. SAMUEL'S Specialities, Wonderful Bargains in Gold and Silver Watches, Jewellery of all descriptions, Diamonds, Plate, Cutlery, &c., all supplied at **Wholesale Prices.**

H. SAMUEL'S LADY'S ACME WATCH

Contains Special Inventions protected by Her Majesty's Royal Letters Patent, and obtainable only in H. SAMUEL'S Watches. Fine three-quarter Jewelled Plate Lever Movement, Richly Decorated Dial (plain, if preferred), and Highly engraved Case. Warranted for FIVE YEARS, and sent **BONUS FREE GIFT** on receipt of **25/-.**

H. SAMUEL (DEPT. 29), 95, 97, 99, 101, 33, 89 & 121 MARKET ST., MANCHESTER.

Digitized by Google

SHORT STORIES

No. 607.] [ONE PENNY.

For the Week Ending Aug. 18th, 1900.

A Desperate Remedy.

"DOES not the end justify the means? And yet—and yet——"

Arnold Mervyn could find no conclusion to his thought better than a sigh. He was standing at the window of his library, looking out on the lawn. Here a significant group of three had fixed his attention for the past half-hour. It consisted of a handsome young man and two girls; the one blonde, the other of a dark brunette type. A subtle air of rivalry between the two latter pervaded the scene, and would have been apparent even to a casual observer.

Just now the fair-haired girl was decidedly at a disadvantage. She was alone on the tennis-court, idly tossing the ball to and fro.

A moment before Claude Evans had been at her side. But he had left her to steal behind a rustic seat, and shake down a shower of blossoms about a dark head, and to bend over a laughing upturned face.

It was this position of affairs which had more than all disturbed the unseen looker-on, and stirred thoughts which had been often in his mind of late.

"It is only too easy to see how it will end," Mervyn told himself wretchedly. "Oh my Greta, my love."

He turned away from the window, and dropped into a chair by his desk, his head resting against his hand.

He remained quite motionless in the same attitude, without again glancing out of the window, or a long time—how long he did not exactly know. But he was aroused by a light rustle behind him; and then a pair of soft dark eyes looked over his shoulder into his own and a voice said in his ear:

"One would fancy you were planning some crime, cousin Arnold."

A tremor passed over him at her nearness, but at her words he drew away, as if with an almost guilty sensation.

"I was thinking of you, Greta," he responded, in a moment, and regarded her searchingly.

"Have I done anything to offend you?" she asked, with quick, affectionate concern. "How could you be thinking of me with such a murderous expression, dear Arnold?"

All rights reserved.]

"I am not offended, only worried," he returned, evasively.

Then, looking away from her, he asked, abruptly: "Have your friends gone?"

Greta drew herself up with an air of elation.

Her tone had the same quality, as she replied:

"Bella has gone. She went some time ago."

"Mr. Evans did not accompany her then."

"No doubt she expected that he would, but he—didn't. He is in the drawing-room. He—would like to speak to you, cousin Arnold."

Mervyn had opened his desk, and now let the lid fall with a crash. He was quite pale as he said:

"I cannot imagine what Mr. Evans can possibly have to say to me."

Greta blushed and pouted.

"You are not often so obtuse. As my guardian, you ought to be prepared for such things. I believe this isn't the first time it has happened. Only it is different now, because—well, Claude and I are engaged."

"Why are you so silent?" she queried, after waiting in vain for a response. "I thought you would be delighted. I wanted to be the first to tell you."

At this he rose and confronted her. His face was white and set, and his eyes sad.

"Greta," he said hoarsely, "even before uncle and aunt died and left you to the sole care of my mother and myself, you had learnt to trust me in all things. Will you not heed me now?"

She gazed at him wonderingly.

"You look and talk so strangely, Arnold, you frighten me. Instead of congratulations, you give me something that seems more like groans and hisses. Of course, I will heed you, but—but really I do not think this treatment is quite fair. If you told me that you were engaged I should——"

She did not finish her sentence, but stopped suddenly, as though its significance had struck more forcibly upon her mind than when she began, and had appalled her a little. Mervyn flushed slightly, but, controlling his feelings, said gently:

Digitized by Google

"Now, tell me, Greta, what it is in Claude Evans that makes you love him enough to be his wife."

She twirled nervously the hat she held in her hand.

"I should think the reason was evident enough. Why all the girls rave about his Greek profile and gentlemanly bearing, and Bella Dean has determined to catch him."

"But what if, by-and-bye, when the exhilaration of having carried off the prize that Bella and the rest have desired is gone, and if then your woman's heart, your woman's intellect, demands something in your husband besides a Greek profile and a stylish air?"

Greta burst into a laugh, and then suddenly became serious.

"Of course, I know that he is everything that is noble and good, and—and all that, or I should not be willing to marry him. We like the same things—dancing, tennis, dogs and poetry. We have never had a single quarrel, and he is as attentive as a knight in the days of chivalry. What more could one possibly desire in a husband?"

"Spoiled by flattery, selfish, fickle, indolent and pleasure-loving, Claude Evans has hardly a quality calculated to make a woman happy as his wife. He can never love anyone so well as he loves himself. Five years from now you would not think for a moment of choosing him as the companion of your life. You do not love him in the least now. Greta, I must save you from the sin of ignorance. I must refuse to sanction an engagement between you and him. You shall not make a false start in life, if I can prevent it."

He spoke with a heat which he knew was not wise, but his emotion was too strong to be controlled.

She stopped twirling her hat, and stared at him as if she doubted the evidence of her own ears.

"You will not give your consent to my marriage with Claude," she gasped.

Even while regretting his declaration as premature, he could not recede from the position he had taken.

"If it will avail dear, I will beg you on my knees, to wait; to learn to know yourself better before you decide on such a momentous step," he said. "Do not force me to seem harsh and tyrannical."

"You talk as if I were a child, and I am nineteen years old," she broke out, a dangerous flash in her black eyes. "I know my own mind—it is absurd to suppose I do not. Why you are so prejudiced against poor Claude I cannot imagine. But if you persist in being so unreasonable, and refuse your consent to our engagement, I suppose we shall have to do without it."

Mervyn covered his face with his hands. Too well he knew that arguments would strengthen her obstinacy, and her blind belief that it was love she felt for the handsome fellow whom she had won away from Bella Dean. He was powerless to make her comprehend what he himself perceived so clearly.

Then he felt her breath upon his cheek, and the touch of her head upon his shoulder, as she always used to rest it when a child.

A thrill went over him with a wild regret. Perhaps if he had not been so patient in his waiting, if he had let her know his hopes, and the real quality of his love for her, she might not have turned to another.

"Dear Arnold," she whispered, in her old affectionate way, "we have never quarrelled, and nothing ought to come between us. Try to like Claude for my sake, and do not think that I shall care any less for you because I am engaged to him."

She had divined his jealousy, though not its depths. The thought came that he was, perhaps, blinded by it, as she was by the exhilaration of conquest.

She drew away from him as if hurt.

"Why do you not answer? You are not like yourself to-day, Arnold. Are you trying to be like one of those disagreeable, domineering guardians we read of sometimes?"

"I am trying to be kind—I am trying to understand my duty," he said. "For a long time I have been apprehensive of this hour, and I have seen only one course

Claude Evans had left her to steal behind a rustic seat.

open if persuasion failed. In desperate cases physicians use desperate measures, and take the responsibility.

"There is a way by which I can test the worth of this young man, and prove the sincerity of his feelings for you. But to do it, I shall have to give you pain, and destroy some of your most cherished illusions. Must I do this Greta?"

"You speak in enigmas, Arnold," she replied, slowly, and more thoughtfully than she had yet spoken. "I do not think anything could force me to give up Claude, and I am sure neither he nor I need be afraid of tests."

"Let me say to him that you are willing to wait a

Digitized by Google

year before entering into a formal engagement, because it is my wish," he pleaded.

"I would yield to any resonable wish of yours, but this one is too exacting. It is not fair to him. I defy you to prove him unworthy."

Mervyn's air of irresolution gave place to one of settled determination.

Crossing to the back of the room, he opened the door of a smaller apartment beyond.

"Step in here, and listen to the interview between Claude Evans and myself. But I warn you that it will try your fortitude."

She hesitated, then, without a word, but with a proud uplifting of her head, passed him and entered the room.

"If, indeed, I am mistaken in him, Greta," Mervyn said, with agitation, "I will—I pledge my word—I will give you up to him, trusting that a real love will spring from what is now a girlish infatuation. Do not be startled by the disclosure I shall make. It seems necessary you should know the truth, and although it may give you a shock, it can change nothing, dear. Remember, I am talking to him for a purpose, and, consequently, shall put the matter in its worst light."

"You have made me very curious, but you have not frightened me. This is rather theatrical, though, isn't it? But be sure the curtain will come down on Claude and me embracing each other, and my stern guardian blessing us," said Greta, but looking rather flustered, nevertheless.

"If I am using means that I had better have left unemployed, try to forgive me, Greta, though I shall never forgive myself," he rejoined; and he partially closed the door upon her, leaving an aperture through which she could hear distinctly all that passed.

It was several minutes, however, before he felt equal to ringing for a servant, and sending a message to the young man, who all this time had been waiting in the drawing-room.

At length he did so, and when Claude Evans obeyed the summons, he found Mervyn seated at his desk, and was slightly offended at not being received more effusively.

As he motioned him to a seat, and apologised for keeping him waiting so long, Mervyn scrutinised him sharply.

The Greek profile was apparent enough, but the effect was somewhat marred by his hair being parted in the middle. His clothes were faultless, and his hands white as a girl's. His eyes were of a violet blue, and had a sort of brooding self-satisfaction in their exp ession.

"I suppose Greta has taken all this time to tell you that she has made me the happiest of men," he said pulling at his incipient moustache and smiling. "I suppose it is the proper thing to ask your consent, as her cousin and guardian. Or, ought I to speak to her aunt, your mother?"

"You are correct in coming to me," returned Mervyn. "Under the circumstances, I am compelled to make certain very practical inquiries. Your social position is, of course, all that could be desired. But I do not know what means you have of supporting a wife."

Claude left off stroking his moustache and looked aghast.

"Why, I—really, Mr. Mervyn, isn't that rather straining a point? My father is a man of wealth, and Greta is an heiress in her own right. Surely nothing could be more propitious."

"You are the eldest of five children, if I am not mistaken. Your father's wealth would hardly be wealth when divided amongst so many, and you have been educated to follow no profession. If Greta were a poor girl, should you feel that it would be expedient to make her your wife?"

Claude moved uneasily in his chair.

"My answer to a question based on an improbability can only be that I love her," said Claude, grandly.

Mervyn heard a rustling sound in the little room beyond, and fearing that Greta might take it into her head to rush in with an "I told you so," hastened to say:

"I need not hesitate, then, Mr. Evans, to tell you the truth. At present it is known only to myself."

The rustling ceased, and for a moment there was a dead silence.

Then Claude asked, uneasily:

"What do you mean?"

"To explain, it will be necessary to recall some details connected with the Mervyn family. You are doubtless aware that Mr. and Mrs. Dent Mervyn resided in Italy for many years."

"You are speaking of Greta's parents," said Claude, blankly.

"When they returned they brought Greta with them. She was then a child of six, who was born while they were in Italy," Mervyn continued, without making any more direct answer. "Within a few years Uncle Dent lost his wife, whose health suffered in our uncertain climate; and when Greta was twelve years old, he, too, died. As he left no will, she, as his only child, inherited his wealth. She was given into my mother's charge, and although I was only about your present age, I was appointed her guardian at her request and my mother's."

Claude bowed assentingly. These were facts with which everyone was acquainted, and there seemed no reason why they should be dragged into the present conversation.

"Everything concerning Greta and her inheritance appeared perfectly simple until about eight months ago. Then in going through my uncle's old desk, searching for certain papers connected with the estate, I accidently touched the spring of a drawer which I never knew existed. In this drawer I found papers which materially changed Greta's position and explained something my uncle tried to tell me on his death bed, but—that I was unable to understand."

"A will containing some eccentric condition!" ejaculated Claude, much disturbed.

Mervyn paused before answering.

He remembered that he had another listener, and that it was she and not the young man before him, who must be considered.

"Unfortunately there is no will," he said presently. "I say unfortunately, for, as things are, a will was essential to make the property legally hers. If you will glance over these papers, Mr. Evans, you will at once comprehend the meaning."

Claude received the papers mechanically which Mervyn took from the desk and handed to him.

He was so astounded that for a time he lost consciousness of being a handsome, faultlessly dressed young man for whom the world was made; and the effect of his swift, eager scrutiny of the documents was a sort of stupefaction.

"Is it really true?" he questioned feebly. "Greta an adopted daughter—not a Mervyn at all."

Digitized by Google

Mervyn's strained and anxious ears caught no sound from the inner room, and nothing in his calm tone betrayed the tension he was under, as he replied:

"The same to us all in love, as though she had really

"You are a villain, and I hate you," she cried.

been a Mervyn by birth. But, as you see, her father was a German musician, her mother an Italian, and she was never legally adopted. Her real parents died of the Roman fever when she was an infant, and my uncle and aunt having no childr n, took her, and no one suspected she was not their own; as indeed, she was by every tie of affection."

"Then, I suppose, it is you who are the real heir to the property?" gasped Claude.

"Exactly," returned Mervyn, tersely.

A silence followed.

Claude was entirely overcome by the revelation.

Mervyn watched him attentively, and waited.

"Does Greta know?" the former asked, finally.

"You are the first one to whom I have confided the truth. You can comprehend that the discovery placed me in an unpleasant position, and one in which it was difficult for me to see my best course of action. You will appreciate my motives in not disturbing our dear Greta's tranquility until it became necessary. To one who aspired to become her husband, I was in honour bound to state the exact position of affairs."

"Precisely so," said Claude.

He passed back the papers, his handsome face clouded. Then brightening as a thought struck him he remarked.

"After all, it need not be made public. As Greta is your ward, and you are so fond of her, I suppose in the end it will be all the same as far as she is concerned."

"You mean that she will be my heiress," queried Mervyn. "You forget," he added drily. "I am not an old man. I am barely thirty. I may marry."

At this Claude looked indignant.

"Surely you will make some provision for Greta," he urged.

"Be that as it may," rejoined Mervyn, decisively, "whoever marries her must take her, not as Greta Mervyn, the heiress, but as Greta Retzsch, an orphan without a penny she can call her own."

Claude gave him a searching look, moved uneasily in his chair, and coughed.

"You see now the importance of the question you thought so unnecessary as to your means of supporting a wife," said Mervyn, quietly.

"Certainly—quite proper, of course," stammered Claude. "But—under the new aspect of the case, I fear—I really do not see how I can answer it in a satisfactory manner."

Mervyn drew a deep, long breath.

The young man was beginning to hedge, and Greta would be saved from a life-long mistake. It would be time enough to count the cost later.

"It will be best for you to be quite frank as to your intentions," he said. "Do you still desire to make my ward your wife?"

"Of course, nothing can alter my love and admiration for Greta. This hits me very hard, Mr. Mervyn. But, as you intimated, I should not at present be able to support a wife as—as I should wish. Besides, my parents would never consent to my marrying a girl without a—a pedigree, when there are so many good families to select from. You appreciate the extreme delicacy of my position, Mr. Mervyn."

Perhaps, there were those of the young fellow's most ardent girl worshippers who would hardly have admired his appearance now, so devoid of all manliness Mervyn thought.

He rose and regarded him with an air of decision.

"I have, then, to say to Greta that there are insurmountable objections to an engagement of marriage between you and her."

Claude also rose, but did not meet the other's eye, or respond immediately.

"It is hard to lose her—it will break her heart to have to give me up," he burst out at last.

Mervyn frowned.

"Greta is too young and inexperienced to distinguish between a pleasant sense of companionship, and a deeper feeling," he said frigidly.

"I do not think you need apprehend that she will break her heart. In any event, as I told her, I should withhold my consent to a formal betrothal, at present."

At this Claude looked rather piqued and relieved. The latter emotion only, however, found expression in his response.

"Of course, if you thought our engagement

Digitized by Google

inexpedient, the matter is easily arranged, and it only remains for me to withdraw my suit, although I hope you will say to Greta that I do so with great sorrow."

"She shall know your exact words," returned Mervyn, with a truth that the owner was far from comprehending.

Then, with a few confused regrets, Claude hastened to take a departure which even he could not feel to be dignified.

But that he had a realisation of being well out of an awkward predicament was apparent enough as he walked away.

He had gone, and Mervyn was master of the situation. But there are some victories which cost more than a defeat, and this might prove one of them.

While he stood irresolute, uncertain, the strength which had thus sustained him thus far in his purpose leaving him, the door towards which he was afraid to go was flung open, and Greta appeared on the threshold.

"Greta," he cried wistfully.

Without heeding him she rushed across the room to the desk, seizing upon the papers which had been given her suitor to read.

There was a hard look on her features, and the rich colour in her cheeks seemed to burn there like flame.

"Ah," she exclaimed, as her eyes ran eagerly over the letters signed by the man she had always thought her father, which were addressed to someone by the name of Retzsch. It is true then, it was not a story made up for the occasion."

She crumpled the papers in her hands, and turned upon him with a look of anger such as he had never seen in her face before.

The hot blood of her Italian mother was stirred, and boiled in her veins.

"You are a villain, and I hate you," she cried fiercely. He recoiled, growing pale as death, and could not speak.

"You did not think when you were robbing me of my illusions about Claude, that you were also destroying those I had about yourself," she went on in the same vehement way. "You succeeded in making him despicable enough—in blighting my happy dream of love. But you took from me at the same time my Cousin Arnold, whom I have trusted all my life, who was dearer to me than anyone in the world—yes, not even excepting Claude—and you put in his place an underhanded scheming creature, who had not the bravery to take openly what he coveted, but seized upon the first pretence that offered to get it in a hypocritical way."

As these accusations fell on his ear, Mervyn felt like one stunned by a blow from an unknown enemy.

"Greta," he said, his voice trembling, "I was prepared for grief—for censure, even, but not for this. It is true I had to shatter your girlish dream, but would it have been better to have continued to dream, until the awakening came too late?"

"I would not marry Claude Evans if he were to beg me on his knees," she flashed out. "I despise him."

"Then need you condemn me so harshly? If it was bitter to learn the facts of your birth in such a manner,

"Did you wish to see me, Greta?" he questioned.

Digitized by Google

and at such a moment when you could least bear it, remember there seemed no other way to save you from a mistaken impulse. Of course, dear, you understand that—whatever I said to him—there can be no real difference in your position."

"No difference?" she echoed. "Do you not suppose I comprehend your intentions. Could I not see that you wanted me to think you only claimed the property supposed to be mine, because you were obliged to do so, to prove his unworthiness. Have you not waited all this time for a chance? You mean to say now, of course, that you will not take it from me, knowing all the time that nothing could induce me to touch a farthing of it."

As he listened, the realisation of her meaning penetrated his mind at last, and he saw in what a warped and distorted aspect she regarded the measures he had taken.

A spasm of pain went over him, and seemed to reach his very soul.

He wheeled round abruptly, and going to the window, stood staring out, but seeing nothing.

Greta watched him with a wrathful, rebellious look, into which, however, there crept an expression of bitter anguish.

There was a long interval of silence. When at last he turned towards her again, he was able to speak without anger or unfairness.

"I will not reproach you, Greta," he said. "I can understand that in the first pain of losing your faith in one you thought true you rush to the extreme of suspecting everyone else of being false. Some time you will see more clearly. As for the property, my only desire since my discovery has been to make it legally yours, as it is yours by right. I admit being a little underhand, as you call it, in intimating the reverse to Mr. Evans. But I had to save you from yourself, Greta."

"Oh! But if you are crafty in one direction, you can be in another. I shall never touch the property. You know that. I shall take the name which belongs to me, and go away and earn my livelihood."

"You are speaking from an impulse—you cannot mean to grieve me so much. If I have committed an error of judgment, if I have fallen in your estimation, I am still the Arnold who used to share your joys and sorrows, and to whom you will ever be dear."

She was moved so much by his appeal, that the fiery light in her eyes was dimmed by a sudden rush of tears. But through them she looked at him with an obstinacy that he began to fear could not be overcome.

"If I could forget what you have been to me, this hour would not be so hard," she said. "But now, I would not accept a favour from your hands—I could not. I am not speaking from impulse when I say that I shall always regard this money as yours, and shall act accordingly. You will want it, when you marry, you know."

She was turning to leave the room, when Mervyn, maddened by the possibilities her words held, lost his self-control at last, and, barring her way, cried out, passionately:

"You shall not go, Greta, until you know what going like this means to me—until you know just what you are to me. Even if it puts me still more in the wrong, I must tell you at last that I love you—love you not as a cousin, as a guardian, but as a man loves a woman who alone can make his life complete. Love you, oh, my dearest, with a love which has grown with the years; with a love which would make any sacrifice possible that secured your happiness. Because I love you like this, Greta, because of the hopes I dared to cherish, and which to-day has done so much to destroy, because of the pain I must inevitably suffer, do not wound me unnecessary, I entreat."

Both anger and tears vanished from Greta's eyes as she became conscious of his meaning, and an indefinable expression, part wonder, part confusion, part a betrayal of the strange incomprehensible emotion that thrilled her whole being, took their place.

She stole one swift look at him and knew she could never forget the face that she saw transformed by his long suppressed love.

It was a face, with its strength, its intelligence, its passion, better, better worth gazing at than the handsome one of Claude Evans; and the truth shining in those clear grey eyes shamed her previous unjust suspicions.

But, somehow, she not could ask his pardon, could not respond by any word that might mitigate his suffering. All she did was to clasp her hands together, shrink back and avert her head, then rush from the room, exclaiming as she went, frantically:

"No! no! Do not say more! Do not!"

They did not meet again until the next day at dinner, and then in the presence of his mother.

Mervyn, although the storm of emotion he had experienced had left its traces on his countenance, had regained his self-possession; but Greta was nervous and embarrassed, and did not once glance in his direction.

There was no longer any look of hatred or violence in the dark, beautiful face, but instead a pensiveness such as he had never seen there before.

Was it wholly because of Claude's faithlessness, and her lost illusion, that she grieved; or was there a tinge of regret for the pain she had inflicted on himself? Did she distrust him still? He could not tell. He was sure only of the fact of her avoidance, which did not lessen as the days went on.

He had not the courage to attempt to break through the constraint which now marked all their necessary intercourse, and tell her of the steps he was anxious to take to make his uncle's property legally hers; he trembled still lest she should persist in her resolution to refuse it.

There was no reason why she should not still be Greta Mervyn to the world, as Claude was not likely to betray a secret which would involve placing his own conduct in an aspect that admitted of criticism. Only her own will, consequently, could alter anything. But it was of this perverse, undisciplined will that he was afraid.

Not from Greta, however, but from his mother, did he learn at last precisely what determination the young girl's reserve covered.

Mrs. Mervyn, who loved Greta next to her son, had suspected nothing unusual; for by a mutual, tacit consent, both Arnold and Greta had made an effort to seem as usual when in her presence.

But one morning she broke into the library, where he was in vain trying to work, and sank into a chair entirely overcome.

It was some moments before she could explain the cause of her emotion.

"Oh, Arnold!" she finally ejaculated, "why did you let Greta know of that dreadful discovery? You ought to have known the mischief it would do. She has just been telling me about it, and has sent me to break the news to you that she has made arrangements to leave us next week."

Digitized by Google

The pen dropped from his fingers, making a disfiguring ink-splash on the neat page of manuscript before him.

"Where is she going?" he questioned, in a voice which his mother would not have recognised as his if he had not been before her.

"She intends to take a situation. Through an old schoolfellow of hers, Miss Rayburn, she has heard of a governess who is ill, and wants a substitute for a few months. Greta says it will give her a start to take the position, and that she is determined no longer to usurp a place that is not hers. My son, what is to be done. I cannot move her in the least."

He did not answer, but sat motionless, with white set lips and bowed head.

"I have no doubt your reasons for revealing this unfortunate secret of her birth to Greta were perfectly justifiable," Mrs. Mervyn went on, distressfully. "Yet it might have been better to have waited until she was older. I—I wish you had consulted me first. But you have so much influence over her, even in her most obstinate moods, surely you can dissuade her from this needless and foolish step."

Arnold rose abruptly.

"I can do nothing, mother," he said, like one who was weary and heart-sick.

With those words he left the room, and a moment after she saw him hurrying across the lawn.

In that long, tumultuous, miserable walk which Mervyn took, he formed a resolution which enabled him to accept Greta's decision for the time being.

To the young girl's astonishment he offered no opposition to her plan and made no attempt to overcome her avoidance.

He told his mother, briefly, that the arrangement was probably for the best at present, and to trust to him to find a way to induce her to come back.

Mrs. Mervyn was obliged, therefore, to yield, and prepared to accompany Greta, and leave her with her friend.

Greta herself showed no signs of altering her determination. But she was very quiet and thoughtful, wholly unlike the laughing, careless, impetuous girl she had been.

Mervyn wondered sometimes if she had really cared more for Claude than he had believed, and after the first anger of his desertion had passed, had begun to pine for him, and to find the rumours of his renewed attentions to Bella Dean unbearable.

In view of the change in her towards him, he was prepared for a very formal leave-taking. She, who had been his darling all these years, would go away without a word to soften the cruelty of her repudiation.

He sat on the terrace in the twilight, heedless of the chilly spring wind, oppressed by the thought of to-morrow, when she would be gone, taking the sunshine of his life for ever. Then into the midst of these reflections came the intuition of another presence near. Expecting to see his mother, he looked round. But it was Greta who stood there, her slim pretty figure outlined against the shadows, her head drooping, her hands clasped together.

"Did you—did you wish to see me, Greta?" he questioned, doubting and hoping, as he sprang to his feet.

"I—I could not go away without telling you how wrong I was to distrust your motives as I did," she faltered. "I cannot take the money. I feel I am right in that; but I am ashamed and sorry that I accused you of any intentions that were not generous and good."

Her words lifted a weight from him, and yet left him sad. For the barrier of his acknowledged and unreturned love, of her implacable determination, was not removed by them.

"I have already forgiven you, Greta," he said, gently.

"And will prove it by keeping the money?" she asked eagerly.

"I hope you will not force me to keep what I never wanted, and what is yours by right," he answered.

She grew pale and red, and pressed her hands together nervously.

She waited impatiently while it was being read.

"I could never feel that it was mine now—never," she said.

He looked at her silently a moment, then taking a step nearer, he responded:

"We will not quarrel about it now, Greta. Some day I hope you will see everything differently. Let us part as friends should. I have not asked you to stay, because I feel it might be better for you to get away for a time from the scene of a painful disillusion. But, before you go, I want you to make me a promise."

"A promise?" she faltered, gazing round as if she would like to run away from him.

"Do not be alarmed. It is nothing that need trouble you in the least. It is only that if I resolve to go away for a time, to pursue certain anthropological researches, you will come when your engagement is ended, and stay with my mother. She will not miss

Digitized by Google

me so much if you are here, and it will be a favour to us both."

Greta's manner changed as she listened. She seemed

As he held out his arms wistfully she ran into them.

suddenly like one stunned. He waited in vain for a response.

"Will you not give me this promise—for my mother's sake, if not for mine?" he questioned, at length, again.

"I promise to come if—if you should go away," she said in a low agitated tone. Then abruptly, she added, "Good-bye."

"Good-bye, dear," he answered, sadly, and stooped and touched her forehead with his lips.

This was their parting, and he at least knew that it was very uncertain when and how they would meet again.

For the resolve he had made on becoming convinced of the implacability of her determination to leave her home, was that, since one of them must be an exile, it should be himself, and not Greta.

He was convinced that the sight of him was now too painful and embarrassing to her, and that the love which might have brought them nearer together had, instead, put them irrevocably asunder.

He had felt quite sure that she could be induced to come to his mother, ostensibly for a short time, and that so long as he remained absent she would prolong her stay.

On his own part, he had a consciousness that it was better for him to be among new scenes. He had been living here in a fool's paradise, his fatuous hopes mocked from their ashes.

It seemed to him now that he had been very presumptuous to have imagined the young girl's cousinly fondness would ever be transformed into love.

Far far away from all that was familiar, and all that was associated with her, he would be better able to learn resignation; consequently three months afterwards, he left England, en route for South Africa, where he proposed to make a study of the people. He had timed his departure just before the termination of Greta's temporary engagement, and, in another week, she was again an inmate of her old home.

Mrs. Mervyn had heard from her often, and knew that she had sometimes been homesick and depressed. But she was not prepared for the continuance of the girl's low spirits now that she had come back. It must be she was fretting for Claude, the elder lady decided.

She had heard the story of her son's heroic measures, before he went away, from his own lips, with the reservation of the confession of love into which he had been betrayed, and she had shaken her head over it dubiously.

Claude's betrothal to Bella Dean had been announced before Greta's return, and Mrs. Mervyn had taken pains to prepare her for the news by letter. Greta had made no comment, and when Bella called upon her, received her with an air of triumph with apparent equanimity.

Even on meeting Claude himself, for the first time since their parting as engaged lovers, she was much less embarrassed than he was. Nevertheless, Mrs. Mervyn felt assured that there was in the girl's heart a secret yearning for something gone. It could not be on account of the fact of her birth—she talked freely and frankly about that, with no undue regret. It must be then, she had really loved Claude, or, at least that the shattering of her first romance had left a void nothing could fill.

She did not venture to talk much of her son, therefore, except when his letters came, and then Greta would listen attentively enough to such extracts from them as his mother read aloud. There was never a word about Greta herself in them, though Mrs. Mervyn wrote him always her own doubts and fears concerning her. Neither did Greta ever send him any message, or make any comment on what was in his letters.

But on the day that Claud and Bella were married, after returning from the wedding, Greta broke out suddenly with the unexpected question:

"When is he coming back?"

Mrs. Mervyn put on her spectacles to look at her. There was a far-away expression in her eyes, and there were tired lines about her mouth. Evidently this

Digitized by Google

wedding had been too much for her strength, and she was trying to forget it by talking of Arnold.

"You know he has said nothing about coming back at present," was Mrs. Mervyn's response.

"He has been gone more than three months. I should think you would ask him his intentions," said Greta, in a tone that was not quite natural.

"Perhaps I had better," returned the other, slightly surprised at the suggestion, and Greta said no more.

But from this time she evinced a restlessness that could not be accounted for, Mrs. Mervyn thought, except by the supposition that witnessing Claude's marriage had upset her completely.

When Arnold's next letter came, there was a feverish glitter in her eyes, quite alarming, as she brought it from the postman to his mother.

She waited impatiently while it was being read, and finally interrupted the mother's fond pondering over it.

"You asked him when he was coming back, what does he say?"

Mrs. Mervyn sighed.

"He writes he is much engrossed by his studies, and is likely to remain in Africa for a long time to come."

Without a word more Greta turned and left the room.

It was several hours before Mrs. Mervyn saw her again, and then her restlessness had all disappeared, and she was strangely quiet and pale.

In the months that followed nothing more was said about Arnold's coming back.

Greta had grown very tractable now, and made no references to her determination to earn her own livelihood. But time did not bring back her old happy self.

The months went by, and a year had passed since the day that had changed the current of her pleasant life.

A year that had taken away Bella's air of elation, with much of the pretty colour in her cheeks, and had brought her to say, with tears in her eyes, to her quondam rival:

"Never—never marry, Greta! If girls only knew how selfish men are!"

A year and the fruit trees were again in bloom.

As Greta stood gazing mournfully at the blossoms white in the moonlight that streamed over them, Mrs. Mervyn's agitated voice behind her broke in upon her meditations:

"I am much affected by what I have heard, Greta. Arnold's lawyer has been here, you know, and he says my son is going to buy an ostrich farm, and stay in Africa permanently, or at least for many years. How can I bear him to be away from me so long?"

But Greta returned no sympathetic answer. She had drawn a quick, gasping breath; and then, as Mrs. Mervyn paused, she said moodily:

"Ostriches are supposed to be the most stupid creatures on earth. I do not see how anyone can be interested in them."

As she spoke she went down the steps, and on across the lawn.

Hurt and perplexed, Mrs. Mervyn stared after her a moment, then went back into the house.

Had she followed the young girl, she would have found her on the garden seat, weeping as though her heart would break, and have made a better guess as to the cause of her hidden sorrow of the past year.

Greta herself had made no mistake as to what it was she had missed out of her life all this time. Since she had seen that look of passionate love on Arnold's face, even in that moment of mortification and confusion and change, she had realised dimly that something in her nature had been awakened by it, which had never responded to any look of Claude's.

It had not needed the significant words of his wife to convince her she had made a false start, which but for Arnold could not have been retrieved. Slowly the consciousness had grown, from which at first she had shrunk afraid, that he whom she had loved as a child and a girl, was he whom alone she could love as a woman.

Those lonely, homesick days had shown her how little she had known her own mind, and stamped upon her heart a longing for another look of love from Arnold's eyes, which had never left it since.

Now—now she would see him no more. It was too evident that she had driven him from his home. Perhaps he despised her—how could he help it, when she had been so obdurate, so unjust—a spoiled child?

"Oh, Arnold! Arnold!" she sobbed out, "will you never, never come back to me?"

The trees overhead rustled in the breeze, and a shower blossoms fell upon her. Then a voice said, through the still evening air:

"I am here, Greta."

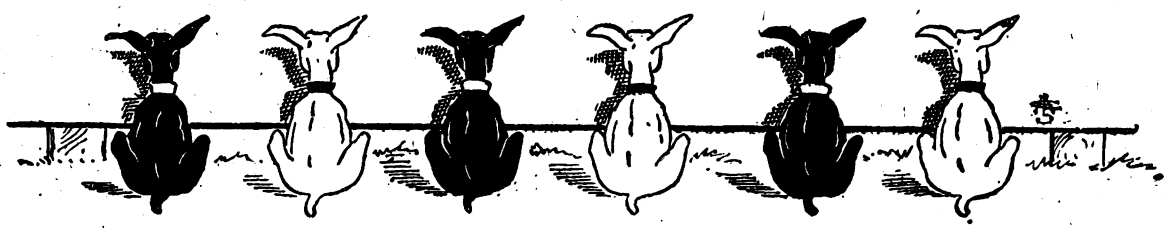
With a shriek, she started up. Surely it was a phantom of her imagination—not Arnold himself who stood there, with the love-light in his eyes that she had yearned so long to see?

"Do not be frightened, dear. I had a sudden impulse to come home that I could not resist. I have just arrived. Mother said you were here, and I came to find you. Is it true that you wanted me, Greta—is it true you said, 'Arnold come back'?"

She was pale and trembling, but as he held out his arms wistfully, hopelessly, she ran into them, and laid her head on his shoulder.

"I am not worthy of your love, Arnold; but I will try to be—I will try very hard. I will do anything you wish—only—do not leave me again, for I cannot live without you."

T. Johnson.



Digitized by Google

The Tiger's Bell.

THE weather that autumn, was so fine and warm, as the forecasts say, that almost everyone stayed on at Loch Neven—that is, of course, everyone who was worth talking to or talking about. And others came, sporting people, not "sporty" people, who are an abomination in the eyes of the god Pan and his true disciples, but men, real men, clad in weather-beaten tweeds, disreputable head gear and heavy tramping boots and accompanied by dogs and guns.

These tarried not at Loch Neven, though femininity there was sweet and lovable and flirtatious, but hied away by waggon to the north; save one, MacNichol, who tarried because fate brought him face to face the next morning with someone in white, someone fresh as the morning, and because the law of natural selection bade him tarry.

So the good MacNichol forgot the promises he had made to his friends in town of no end of braces of partridge and mallard; forgot his sworn determination to take a pair of antlers home, and let the other comrades in arms go north; and the ducks continued to fly in across the red of the western sky, and the gun of the native pot-hunter echoed from afar, but he neither saw nor heard.

And everything would perhaps have gone well and ended happily and uneventfully, had not interference in the shape of one Bronson came by a subsequent boat and made himself obnoxious in the eye of MacNichol. He was a plausible, well-dressed fellow, immaculate from morning until midnight, and he neither swam nor fished nor shot nor played tennis, but straightway monopolised Miss Muriel Manning's society to the exclusion particularly of the tardy MacNichol.

It was maddening to Mac to hear Bronson talk; and his appetite fell away, and he became moody and taciturn, until at length even the preoccupied noticed his complaint.

"They've got the queerest yarn up the river," said Jimmie Brown one evening, as all the guests sat at ease upon the broad verandah of the hotel. "When I was up there this afternoon a farmer told me there was a strange wild animal in the woods, a big yellow thing that wasn't like any other animal that he had ever seen except in the pictures and circuses."

"What do you think it was?" said Bronson.

"Well, he said it might seem like foolishness to say so, but he believed it was a tiger."

Some of the ladies screamed. Bronson said:

"He must have thought you easy, Brown. Next time it will be elephants, or rhinoceri from Lake Nyanza."

"I tell you, he was in dead earnest," said Brown. "He wasn't the only one, either, he said, who had seen it. One of his neighbours, he said, had lost a sheep that they couldn't find a trace of, not even a lock of wool; and another neighbour, he said, had been driving back one day, and his team had all of a sudden become possessed with fear, and wouldn't go any farther. I tell you, there's something strange about it."

"Very," said Bronson sententiously.

"Oh, a man who knows as much as you do about live stock might easily think he saw live elephants and rhinosceroses!" retorted Brown. "If you weren't so slow that you couldn't walk more'n a hundred yards past the tennis court, you'd see buffalo in the meadow and hippopotami switching their tails over the rocks."

"Hippopotami," echoed Bronson, musingly.

"What do you think about it, Mr. MacNichol?" She said, breaking the tension.

MacNichol felt for his tobacco pouch. It was dusk, and MacNichol was dark skinned, so that they did not see him flush. But he always flushed, at least inwardly, when She spoke to him. Remembering this, he did not light his pipe just then, for one flame might have betrayed another, and because Bronson was looking at him from beneath his heavy lids.

"I think it possible," MacNichol said.

"Won't you say why?" she said.

"Never mind the why and wherefore," hummed the sceptical Bronson. "It's sufficient that MacNichol thinks it possible."

"And why impossible, O Self Sufficiency?" said MacNichol.

"What! elephants and rhinoceri and hippopotami?" said the evasive Bronson.

"Yes, elephants and rhinoceri, if you like," said Brown.

"Is this a kindergarten?" said Bronson.

"We will suppose that it is your class, and I will give

Digitized by Google

you an object lesson," said MacNichol, "to demonstrate my belief in the possibility of a tiger having been seen by Brown's farmer.

"Not long ago," he continued, after he had lighted his briar, "a circus showed at Smithville, forty miles from here. During its stay there, so the papers said, a tiger escaped from its cage and its keeper and made its way into the hills to the north——"

"There you see!" cried Brown triumphantly, while the ladies exclaimed in horror, and drew in their chairs.

"At least we hear," said Bronson sneeringly.

"Of course," said MacNichol, "when Mr. Bronson sees the tiger we shall both see and hear."

"Yes, we'll hear Bronson all right," said Brown; and that was one on Bronson, for he did not like to hear her laugh at him.

"Of course," he said, ere the laugh had died, "Mr. MacNichol has every intention of hunting the tame tiger."

"Every intention," said MacNichol. "Would you care to accompany me?"

Brown laughed annoyingly.

"Not on a wild goose chase," said Bronson a little out of humour.

"It will be a wild tiger hunt," said MacNichol. "If there is any chasing——" he paused significantly, and Brown laughed triumphantly.

"You might carry Mac's gun, you know," he said gaily. "Only no climbing trees, Bronson, no climbing trees."

"I'll bet Mr. MacNichol twenty pounds he don't see any tiger," cried Bronson vulgarly, "and I'll bet him another twenty that if he does see one he won't shoot him."

"I'll compromise," said MacNichol, "and bet you fifty that if I see the tiger I shall kill him."

"That's all right," said Bronson, "only——"

"Only," said the mind-reading MacNichol, "you would have to take my word that I hadn't seen the tiger. Quite right. We will hunt him together, you and I and Brown. Brown can be stake-holder."

"That's all right!" said Bronson again. "But if you think I've nothing to do except tramp through a bush all day on the jolly of a hayseed, you're away off! Tell you what I'll do; if you shoot the tiger, I'll give ——"

"If Mr. MacNichol shoots the tiger," She put in adroitly, "you will give twenty pounds towards the bell for the new church."

"Good idea!" said Bronson. "I'll make it the whole bell!"

And so it was agreed.

And now, from morn till eve, from dawn till dusk even by moonlight, Brown and MacNichol did the hills and hollows, the marshes and meadows of the country roundabout, intent upon the slaughter of that mythical tiger, until at length even Jimmy Brown grew tired if not sceptical, and returned to tennis and the dance and flirtation.

At the end of three days, MacNichol had to submit to much chaff, in which even she joined, and it would have provoked a less determined man into packing up and getting out. But MacNichol, smiling grimly, held his peace.

More stories floated in from farmers of the strange "something" that had frightened horses and incidentally the farmers themselves. The farmers had gone out, armed to the teeth with family heirlooms more dangerous to the family than the quarry; but nothing came of that.

And MacNichol did not say that the story he had told of a tiger escaping from a circus menagerie at Smithville was pure fiction, invented at the time to silence the aggressive Bronson; yet he clung to his strange faith that something—if not a tiger, then something alien, something strange, perhaps even uncanny—was haunting the wilds about Loch Neven, and his adventurous spirit would not be quenched.

And it was upon the fourth day that his perseverance was in some measure rewarded! For suddenly coming upon the sandy shore of the river, miles above Loch Neven, in a desolate place, he came upon the footprints of the tiger!

At least, he concluded they were a tiger's. They were large, feline, terrible. He had never before seen the print of a tiger's paw, and these if not a tiger's were those of a very large cat of some sort.

Perhaps, after all, he said to himself, a monstrous wild cat was in the locality; and remembering the proclivities of wild cats, he turned half-fearfully and looked into the trees roundabout.

Failing to find the returning trail, as the ground above the sand was barren and rocky, he came again to the place, and waited. But the strange creature came not; and Mac, though believing firmly in its existence and proximity, came to doubt his luck, and reviled the freak of humour that had led him into the undertaking.

Meantime, the weather remained marvellously mild and fair, and the moon grew round and smiling above the gaiety of Loch Neven.

MacNichol had come in one night, tired and ill-humoured, from a four mile row up the river, where he had lain for an hour or so hoping against hope that Fate would bring the cat his way. It was eleven o'clock, and the mellow moonlight flooded all the water and the long, crescent-shaped beach, turning river and shore to gold.

Mac could see as he walked up, rifle in hand, to the hotel, that Muriel and Bronson were sitting on the beach a little way below the bathing houses almost within the shadow of the deep pine grove. He could hear their voices, and her laughter, which doubtless was at his his expense.

Poor Mac! He began to pity himself, and then decided that a fool deserved no pity.

When he got to his room, which overlooked the beach, he lit his pipe and sat at his window, and by the clear light of the moon re-read a newspaper paragraph that had come by chance into his hand one day.

The paper slipped to the floor, and MacNichol sat at his window, smoking and thinking. He was not thinking of his tiger now, but of the "lady" down there with Bronson, on the beach. Mac could see or thought he could see, with his emerald eye, the gleam of Bronson's diamond upon her hand, even as he could see the ruby-like glow of Bronson's cigar.

He wished he had never come to Loch Neven! If he had never come to Loch Neven, he would never, perhaps, have seen her, he would never have come across this confounded paragraph with its cock-and-bull story about—

A moving something—a shadow—grew out of the blackness of the shadow of the grove; a stealthy, silent, seemingly impalpable something that moved along the sand. But no one saw—no one, save MacNichol, sitting breathless and wide-eyed at his window.

How still it was for a moment! Then came the music of the pine tops moved into murmuring by a vagrant

Digitized by Google

breeze; and after that, the music of her voice, low and sweet; and then again silence, to MacNichol, save for the thumping of his heart as he snatched his rifle from the corner, sprang nimbly in shoeless feet through his window to the balcony, ran along that to its end, climbed over it and dropped noiselessly to the sand twelve feet below. And then as he turned, there in the shadow of the hotel, he saw, not the shadow of the tiger, but the tiger itself!

And at that moment, even as he ran into the moonlight, fell upon one knee and levelled his rifle, the full left side of the tiger toward him, his involuntary vision caught an impression of Bronson springing to his feet and running like a terror-stricken thing down the beach. And as he ran, Bronson screamed like a maniac.

Then She turned her head, wondering, and saw fastened upon her the horrid gleam in the moonlight of those awful yellow eyes; and petrified by horror, she sat like white stone, fascinated, mesmerized, unable to stir a finger, not even the finger upon which Bronson's diamond lay cynically gleaming. Then she closed her eyes, for the tiger was about to spring.

And even as he made to spring, MacNichol's rifle spoke out, even as the rifle spoke MacNichol sprang up and ran madly towards her, ready to give his life, and even as he ran, the beast flung itself into the air, and fell dully and lifeless across the yellow sand.

The tiger was dead. And so it is no wonder MacNichol held her white and lovely, and trembling now, in his arms, though there was much screaming in many keys from the hotel, and heads at windows and voices calling, and eyes upon them, and even Bronson, panting and white, coming back cautiously along the beach.

"You have your wish," she managed to say, gazing at the prone bulk of the gaunt beast lying there in the glamour of the moonlight, black and yellow like an outcast spirit of the night. And she drew back, leaning against him.

"My wish," murmured MacNichol. "Yes, I have my wish in part."

And perhaps the pressure this arm gave was involuntary.

"I mean you have killed the tiger," she said gently withdrawing from his arm.

"I was not thinking of the tiger," said MacNichol.

"No," she said, looking down.

"I had another wish, I have wished for you, because I have loved you from the moment I first saw you."

"You have saved my life," she said, looking steadily at him. "You may have—your other wish—if you care."

"Not because of this, altogether?" pleaded MacNichol, with a gesture towards the tiger.

"Perhaps I want you to take care of me always," she said smiling, and holding out her hands.

"By George!" said Bronson, coming up. "You were right about the tiger, after all, MacNichol; I've always heard that a tiger could be scared by an umbrella or a good yell. Didn't have an umbrella, so I thought I'd try the yell, and I thought if the yell failed, and I ran a bit, you know, he would follow me, and——"

"He couldn't run fast enough," she said. "But fortunately, there was one man near."

"Oh, look here!" said Bronson. "Every fellow don't go walking round with a rifle, you know, Muriel."

"Not 'Muriel' now, Mr. Bronson."

"Oh, I say!" said Bronson, staring.

"You will, I am sure, not forget the bell which you now owe to the new church."

And then she turned and walked away on MacNichol's arm, leaving Bronson motionless and staring, and a dozen people in negligé gathering in.

Bronson went away by the early boat next morning; but he was as good as his word, and sent an express order to the vicar for a goodly sum with which to buy the bell.

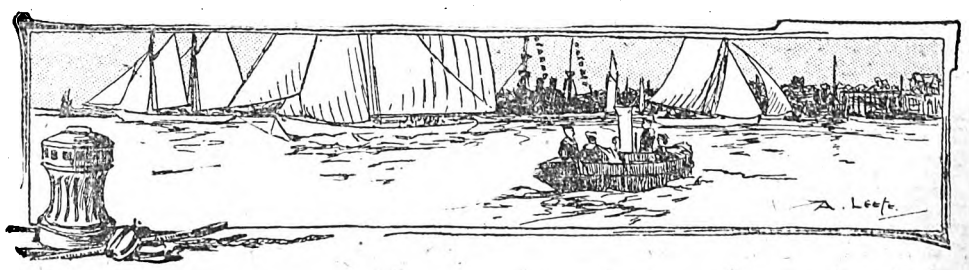
In due time the church was completed, and the bell arrived and was put in place, and in clear and resonant tones called the people to worship. When I attended service there this Autumn, I met MacNichol and his wife. Mac, brown and radiant, and his wife even lovelier within the past twelve months.

They were spending their first married weeks at Loch Neven, under a moon as wonderful and warm as that of a year ago.

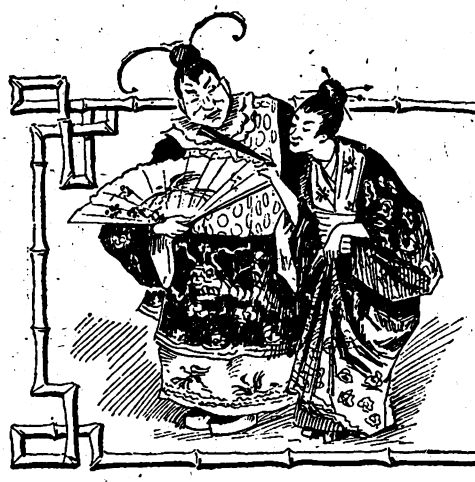
The tiger? The tiger was the expensive importation of a wealthy individual, who owned a vast natural park which he purposed turning into a sort of cosmopolitan menagerie and game preserve, by turning into it wild animals of all sorts from all parts of the world.

The tiger had got away and was making tracks south, and it was the knowledge of that, communicated through the medium of a newspaper item, which had kept MacNichol on the hunt, solely of course, for the philanthropic purpose of winning for the chapel a tiger's bell. Of course.

Roger Gordon.



Digitized by Google



Mr. Bowser's Tribulations.

XIX.—HIS NIGHT ADVENTURE AT HIS COUNTRY HOUSE.

In the last sketch it was related how Mr. Bowser had hired a farmhouse for the benefit of his health and rushed Mrs. Bowser and the cook out there at an hour's notice. The house was found in such a state of dilapidation that when night came the cook was weeping, Mrs. Bowser was homesick and Mr. Bowser was doing his best to make out that things would be all right next day.

Amid the songs of larks and blackbirds and the hoots of owls they went to bed. Mr. Bowser had just fallen asleep and was dreaming that he was a farmer eleven feet high, cutting grass seven feet tall with a scythe fourteen feet long, when Mrs. Bowser awoke him to say:

"Get up this minute! I can hear someone prowling about outside the house!"

"My dear woman," he answered as he slowly got out of bed, "I am getting tired of this nonsense. If you are going to keep it up I'll send you home the first thing in the morning. I came out here for rest and quiet, but you——"

"Don't you hear footsteps?" she interrupted.

"It's probably a rabbit hopping about, and I'll open the door and scare the legs off him."

He went downstairs and unlocked the door and threw it open, and was just on the point of uttering a "Shoo!" when a man appeared before him and said:

"Hello, old pal, but what you doin' in my nest?"

"Who—who are you?" demanded Mr. Bowser in considerable confusion.

"Dusty Jim, of course, and you'd better clear out at once."

"Look here, you old tramp, but what are you doing about this house?" shouted Mr. Bowser as he recovered from his surprise and began to get cross.

"And what are you doin'?" shouted Dusty Jim in reply. "I've bin sleepin' in this crib for the last three months, and I don't propose to let no man turn me out. Come out, or I'll make you tired!"

Mrs. Bowser and the cook were now calling to know what was the matter, and as Mr. Bowser fell back from the door to answer them the tramp slipped inside. He was a big man and a bad man, but he had made a mistake.

Mr. Bowser turned and tackled him at once, and in five minutes he was a beaten man and being dragged off the doorstep by the heels. Mrs. Bowser was crying, and the cook was on her knees, praying as Mr. Bowser shut the door and demanded:

"Now, then, what have you broken loose about? You two women seem determined to act like idiots. I hired this place for the benefit of my health, but no sooner do we get out here than you try to upset things. I tell you I want it to stop!"

"You—you call this a holiday?" sobbed Mrs. Bowser as Dusty Jim was heard moving off for the road.

"Of course it is. I never saw such an inconsistent woman. We are out in the country. We are getting the benefit of the fresh air and the songs of the night birds, and yet because a few things are not to your liking you make a fuss. You may cry and sob and howl and kick, but we shall stay here just the same. Now you two go to bed again, and I'll sit up the rest of the night and keep things straight."

As the night was warm, Mr. Bowser opened the door and sat down on the steps. The house had hardly become quiet when Dusty Jim reappeared. He had come in peace to make inquiries. He was willing to acknowledge that he was a beaten man, but he wanted to ask:

"What you doin' in my nest?"

"How did you do it, old pal? You're a fat man and a baldheaded man, and I thought I could do you in two minits. If you'll show me that little trick you used, I'll give you half-a-sov."

"If you don't shift yourself," replied Mr. Bowser as he rose up—"if you don't get a mile away before I count a hundred, I'll mop the whole farm with your body."

"And you won't show me the trick?"

"Never!"

"All right, old boy. The conquered flies before the conqueror. If I had that trick I'd lick every tramp between here and London, but I ain't goin' to stop and argufy the matter."

Digitized by Google

An hour later, as Mr. Bowser leant against the doorpost and dozed, something cold touched his hand, and he sprang up to find a stray dog sitting in front of him. It was a dog in search of a kind-hearted master and all the comforts of home, but he had made a mistake in the number of the house.

Mr. Bowser uttered a yell which woke up both women and then went for the dog. In his hasty movements he tripped over his own feet and took a roll among the weeds round the house, and he had just reached his feet again when Mrs. Bowser appeared at the door to ask:

He tripped over his own feet.

"Is it murder or robbery, or what?"

"And if it ain't, then what is it?" added the cook from behind.

"Oh, you are dancing about again," he replied as he came forward. "It beats all creation how you women act. Why in thunder can't you go to bed and stay there like sensible people?"

"But when you screamed out I thought——"

"I never screamed out. I was yelling at the dog. I have tried to be a patient man since we arrived here yesterday, but I warn you that the limit has been reached."

"What a holiday!" murmured Mrs. Bowser, with tears in her eyes.

"I know I shall never see home again," sobbed the cook as she turned away.

"There you go!" shouted Mr. Bowser as he combed the weeds out of his hair. "What has happened to spoil this holiday? Nothing whatever. I have simply licked a tramp and frightened away a stray dog. Now, don't let me hear again from you till morning."

He resumed his place on the step, and the house grew quiet again. Dusty Jim and the stray dog were far away, and there could be nothing more to disturb the remainder of the night.

Mr. Bowser had dozed again for half-an-hour when the owl which had hooted in the evening and gone off to see a friend now returned to have another try at it. He alighted in a tree across the road and, drawing a long breath, uttered a "hoo-o-o-o" that would have lifted a bag of potatoes a foot high. It lifted Mr. Bowser off the doorstep, and it lifted Mrs. Bowser and the cook out of bed, and for two minutes there was wild alarm.

Day was breaking, and when the women declared they would not go to bed again Mr. Bowser did not oppose them. The thought was in his mind to start for home at sunrise and to seek out the man from whom he had hired the farm and kill him as quickly as possible, but Mrs. Bowser spoilt it all by saying:

"If you will only take me home to-day I won't ask for a new thing for the next year."

"Go to all this trouble for a twelve hours' holiday!" he replied, with his obstinacy aroused in a second. "Never, Mrs. Bowser. We came out here to find rest and peace. It's just the place for it. Do you suppose we are to be driven back home by a tramp, an owl, and a dog? Not much. We stay here for the summer."

"Then I'm afraid you'll have to bury me out among the weeds."

"There'll be no funeral. I am already feeling better for the pure air, and in a week you won't know yourself. Look at that sunrise and tell me if you ever saw anything to beat it. Italy never furnished a sunrise like that. I'll go down to the road to have a better look at it while cook is getting breakfast."

When Mr. Bowser reached the gate he found Dusty Jim seated on a log opposite. The tramp rose up and removed his hat and bowed.

"Do you want another licking?" was shouted at him across the gate.

"No, kind sir," he humbly replied. "I'm a beaten man, and a beaten man don't want any more of it. But I came back to see if you wouldn't really tell me how it was done. I'm wantin' to lick Highway Bill, and if you'll show me the trick I'll run him out of the country."

Mr. Bowser rubbed his hands and opened the gate, and Dusty Jim fled for the third time. M. Quad.

Next Week: **"He Does a Little Investigating at his Country Place."**

Digitized by Google

A Narrative of the Future.

THERE was trouble in the Central Rain Producing Company. The last order for a two-hours' rain had not been satisfactorily accomplished.

The rain had only lasted twenty minutes, and as this company made a speciality of guaranteeing the length of storms, or money refunded, this job had been a losing one for them, both in pocket and reputation.

Wallace Carlton was held to blame for the failure, as he had used his new explosive in the balloon that was sent up without consulting the company who employed him.

Wallace had insisted that there was no fault in his explosive, but that the failure was wholly due to the fuse being too long, thereby allowing the balloon to get too far away before exploding. His explosive in a balloon travelled more rapidly than the other kinds used.

But Mr. Wilson, manager of the company, was not to be appeased, and Wallace was officially notified that the company no longer desired his services.

"This is only an excuse," Wallace muttered; "the real reason for my discharge is that he knows I love his daughter. But I will prove the value of my explosive to his cost, and I will win Ethel yet."

A week from that day was the time set for a grand *fête* on Mr. Wilson's grounds in honour of a certain influential political friend.

Wallace determined that the *fête* should be deluged with such a rain as the most successful explosions had never yet brought upon this earth.

But Fate had another victory in store for him. That same morning Ethel Wilson had started homeward on the air-ship *Pegasus*. It proved a most disastrous voyage, for a few minutes after the start there was blown against them a balloon, sent up for a small local shower, which exploded as it struck the *Pegasus*.

Fortunately, it was of the smallest size (known as the lawn-sprinkler balloon), and the *Pegasus*, though badly shaken up, was not blown to atoms, as would have been the case had the balloon been of the regular rainstorm size.

One of her hydrogen gas compartments remained unhurt, and the *Pegasus* still floated slowly along, though entirely unmanageable.

Floating thus it came into the view of Wallace Carlton, who was watching the slow ascent of a rain balloon just sent up by the man who had been promoted to his place.

Wallace saw with horror that the air-ship must be blown to powder when the balloon exploded. Suddenly he remembered that Ethel was coming home in the *Pegasus* this very trip.

There was no thought in his mind of his own risk; his only thought was that he must save Ethel. His private flying-machine was anchored near. He looked at his watch.

In just two minutes the balloon would explode; he knew exactly the workings of those slow, old-fashioned things. Could he possibly reach it and extinguish the fuse in time?

Springing into his machine he weighed anchor and darted upward, steering straight for the slowly-ascending balloon. It seemed ages to him as he flew upward, straight and true as a bullet.

On came the *Pegasus*. Would he be in time, and would he do it?

There was no time for slackening speed as he neared the balloon. He must sail by close enough to reach the fuse, yet not to collide with the balloon, or he would explode it with the concussion.

It was a beautiful and neat piece of airmanship.

Now he could see the fuse. It was burning not four inches from the balloon! He leaned far out as he swept by, and firmly grasped the fuse in one hand.

His hand will carry through life the scar where the slow match burned deep into it before it was extinguished.

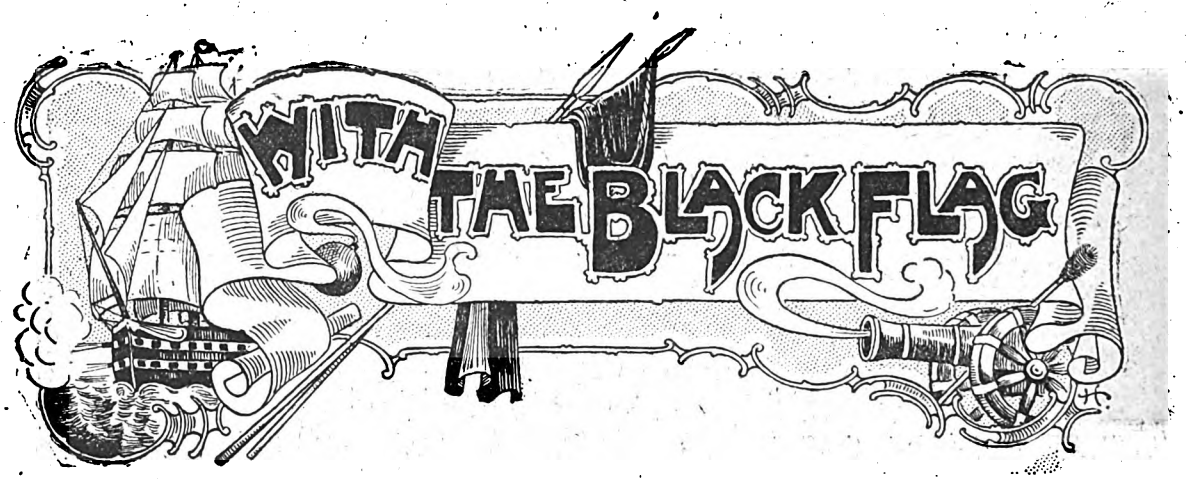
But Ethel was safe.

He could see her leaning over the side of the *Pegasus*, white with terror.

Wallace sailed up to the disabled air-ship, and threw her a rope; then he slowly descended with the *Pegasus* in tow, and landed on the firm earth in safety.

[Continued and concluded after the manner of the nineteenth-century novels; for the onward march of science makes no change in human hearts.]

Digitized by Google



A ROMANCE OF LAND AND SEA.

By WILLIAM WESTALL.

Author of "With the Red Eagle," "The Phantom City," "Nigel Fortescue," etc., etc.

SUMMARY.

Major Wyvenhoe leaves England on the *Campanella* with a detachment of troops, raised by Major Barnish, to help the Venezuelans in their struggle for liberty. Major Barnish is accompanied on the vessel by his wife. At Cork a detachment of Irishmen is taken on board, together with General Molyneux, who is connected with the Venezuelan Army, his secretary and chaplain. When the vessel has been out a few days Major Barnish meets with a fatal accident, and on that same day a mutiny breaks out among the troops, but it is speedily quelled.

Shortly after this Venezuela is reached, and as Captain Cautley does not know the coast well a pilot has to be obtained, and it is found that Conroy, one of the chief mutineers, is able to act as such, and the course of the ship is intrusted to him.

On arrival at Pampatar Major Wyvenhoe and Captain Cautley are received by the Governor, General Arismendez, and his second in command, General Urdenetta.

During the stay there of the *Campanella* the British officers are lavishly entertained, and Major Wyvenhoe excites the jealousy of Arismendez' son, Ramon, owing to his attentions to a Spanish lady. This results in a challenge, and a duel is about to commence when Arismendez appears on the scene and stops it, and just at this time the alarm guns from the fort are heard, on which Arismendez orders everyone to their posts.

CHAPTER VIII.

An Encounter with the Enemy.

The governor's stirring words were followed by a general stampede, everybody bolting from the grove and making for the beach, in a state of great excitement, except the skipper, who took it all very coolly.

"You need not call out the troops. I don't think there is going to be an invasion," he remarked to Arismendez in broken Spanish, having by this time acquired a sufficient knowledge of the language to make himself intelligible.

"The alarm guns are only fired when danger threatens, and I know of no danger but invasion," answered the general curtly. "And look, what is that?"

"A rocket from the *Campanella*."

And then Cautley explained that by putting two and two together—Conroy's scarcely veiled threat and the movements of the sloops, which had been reinforced by several flecheras, as reported by fishermen and others, he had come to the conclusion that an attempt would be made before long to cut out the brig, and as it was just as likely to be made that night as any other, he had arranged for a boat to be sent seaward on a reconnoitring expedition, with orders to fire a rocket if anything suspicious were seen, which was to be repeated by the ship as a warning to us.

"And I suppose," he added, "that the commandant of the fort, thinking that the rockets betokened danger, fired the alarm guns?"

"Which shows that he was on the alert, and he did quite right."

"At any rate you did not see the rockets," retorted Arismendez sharply.

"I should have done but for the duel, which I had no reason to expect. All the same, we can beat off the dons without calling the entire population to arms. The wind is too light for the sloops to venture among the shallows. It can only be a boat attack. But we shall soon know. I am going on board right away."

"Is there nothing we can do?"

"Of course there is. Here are two flecheras close inshore. Put fifty soldiers and a few sailors on board each of them, and let them join us as soon as possible, and I should like Major Wyvenhoe to bring two or three score of his men for service on board."

"It shall be done, Señor Capitan," answered the governor and Cautley, stepping into his gig, went off to his ship.

I saw at once that Arismendez was a bold leader; his orders were clear, peremptory, to the point and promptly obeyed.

One of the flecheras which were brought to the jetty was to be manned by Englishmen and commanded by Martley, the other by natives under the command of Don Ramon, but both were to place themselves at Captain Cautley's disposal and strictly obey his injunctions.

"Disobedience will be punished with death," said the governor sternly, a warning which, as I thought, was given for the special benefit of his son, whose hot temper might lead him to refuse obedience to an Englishman and take a line of his own.

Flecheras, it may be well to explain, are narrow boats from thirty-five to a hundred feet long, carrying one gun or more, generally two-masted, yet easily rowed, and admirably adapted by their build and light draught for service in shallow waters.

While the two in question were being prepared for action I was getting my detachment together, and it was so

Digitized by Google

smartly done that we ran under the *Campanella's* counter in little more than half-an-hour after the alarm, and several minutes ahead of the flecheras.

So soon as we were aboard the boats were sent back, and when the flecheras came alongside they were ordered to remain there pending further developments, the troops and seamen being meanwhile enjoined to observe strict silence.

We found the brig cleared for action and the men at quarters, though it was, as yet, uncertain whether we should be attacked. The people who had been out reconnoitring reported having seen two big ships and the vague outline of several large boats under the lee of a small island some six miles to the southward, on which they hurried back, and when they sighted the lights of Pampatar sent up a couple of rockets.

"The big ships are no doubt the sloops, and the large boats, flecheras or launches," said Cautley. "I am pretty sure the dons did not see the rockets, and hope they did not hear the guns, for if they think we are on the alert they may not attack, which would be a disappointment after all the trouble we have taken."

"Why not send the boat again?" I asked.

"It would be of no use and might do harm. We cannot be more prepared than we are, and if Conroy, who is sure to be there, were to catch sight of the boat, he would draw conclusions. We must just wait, and it won't be a long wait either, for if the villains don't come soon they won't come at all. It will be daylight in two hours. But we cannot both talk and listen. There is noise enough already. Pass the word for silence, Mr. Pritt."

The order was obeyed, all voices were hushed, and the skipper and the rest of us, leaning over the rail and bulwarks, peered into the darkness, listening intently.

Soon a faint rhythmic sound, like the splash of oars, was heard above the ripple of the tide. Gradually it grew more distinct, and presently, through the night glass, could be distinguished shadowy forms moving on the face of the water.

Cautley gave a grunt of satisfaction, and a murmur, which sounded like a cheer, ran round the ship.

The skipper's idea was to make no sign until our assailants were so near as to be easily seen, then to give them a broadside, followed by a volley of musketry, and at them with the flecheras and the corvette's launch, which was lowered and ready. But Conroy was too crafty to fall in with the skipper's plan. He made what soldiers would call a front attack, thereby exposing his boats to the fire of one gun only—the bow-chaser, instead of eight. There were four of them, flecheras of the largest class, each carrying two pivot-guns, and, as presently appeared, crowded with men.

When the leading boat came near enough to serve as a target we gave her a shot from the bow-chaser, which, though it went home, and probably did some execution, failed to stop her. On this all the flecheras let fly, most of the balls missing, though one hit the foremast, and the other took off a man's head.

"The beggars mean boarding," said the skipper to Martley and Don Ramon. "Be prepared, and as they run under our bows, fire slap into them with your two guns, then a volley of musketry, close action and cold steel."

To which Martley answered, "Ay, ay, sir," and Don Ramon, "*Con mucho gusto, Señor Capitan* (with great pleasure, Mr. Captain)."

The flecheras were so low in the water that the bow-chaser was of little use, and as they drew near of no use at all.

Then came the tug of war, the Spaniards attacking us with a boldness and resolution I never saw surpassed. Though engaged at close quarters by our flecheras and the launch, and assailed by a murderous musketry fire from the ship, they ranged alongside, and nearly a hundred big black fellows, who climbed like monkeys and fought like wild cats, succeeded in getting on board. In the end, though only after a desperate hand-to-hand struggle, all, except a few who jumped overboard, were slain. Yield they would not, go back they could not, for a cold shot, dropped into the nearest Spanish flechera, had started a plank and sunk her, and our flecheras and the launch, still hotly engaged, had thrust themselves between the others and the brig, all being so intermingled that it was difficult to distinguish friend from foe.

After a desperate hand-to-hand struggle all were slain.

"The black fellows are Zambos," said General Arismendez, "and Zambos neither give nor take quarter nor fear death."

The defeat of the Zambos was the end of the battle. The Spaniards, having lost one of their flecheras and half their men, beat a retreat, unpursued except by a few futile shots from the bow-chaser and the boats.

Our losses were also heavy, and many of us were hurt. Martley, Don Ramon, and Pritt rather badly; Cautley had a nasty cut on the head, and myself several wounds which, however, though unpleasant, were not serious.

Altogether it had been a stirring night, and even keen fighters like the skipper and Don Ramon were quite satisfied, except with the result, Cautley having counted on capturing or destroying at least two of the enemy's boats.

General Arismendez, on the contrary, thought we had done exceedingly well, saying that but for the danger signals and the skipper's foresight the brig must have been cut out, and that fighting Zambos, of whom the flechera's crews were mainly composed, was a very different matter to fighting Spaniards or Creoles.

Digitized by Google

Zambos, he explained, are a mixed breed, descended from fugitive slaves who have taken to the woods and intermarried with Indians. In feature and physique more African than American, they combine great strength with an untameable ferocity, delighting even more in carnage than battle, and fighting only to kill. Though more friendly to the patriots than the royalists, they never hesitate to take the side which pays the best and promises the most bloodshed.

I agreed with Arismendez. The attack was well planned and ably led, and had we been less thoroughly prepared might have succeeded. It was so well-timed, indeed, as to suggest a suspicion that the Spaniards had heard about the ball, the date of which was a matter of common knowledge at Pampatar ten days or a week before it came off, and thought to take us unawares. I asked the general if this were possible.

"Quite," he said. "There are traitors everywhere. Nothing is easier than to get secret intelligence from Cumana, if you like to pay the price, and I suppose it is just as easy for the Spaniards to get intelligence from Pampatar on the same terms."

It was the general opinion that Conroy had piloted the flecheras and probably commanded the expedition, but as to this and also whether he was alive or dead, no information was forthcoming—for a very good reason, we had taken no prisoners, and as there was barely enough light to distinguish between black faces and white, he might have fallen or escaped without being recognised. Some of the Spanish dead were stripped before being thrown overboard and papers had been found which, when they were examined, might solve the mystery. These were of course handed to the governor.

My quarters were at the posada, an inn of modest pretensions with a patio (inner court), a verandah, and a very obliging posadero, where I had a large chamber with bare white-washed walls, furnished with a truckle bed, one chair and a washstand, and infested, especially at night, by rats, cockroaches and mosquitoes. For which cause I had hitherto slept in a hammock slung in the patio, but as I was weak with loss of blood and my wounds rendered rest for a few days imperative, I had to keep to my room, the patio being available only at night. Yet I had no reason to complain of my lot, John Ready catered for me and kept me company, and visitors came every day. One of the first was Señor Don Esteban Sidonia with kind inquiries and a beautiful nosegay from his wife and Inez, his daughter, and an intimation that when I was sufficiently recovered to get about it would give him great pleasure to place his house and all that it contained at my disposal.

It was his way of asking me to become his guest, but as I had not fallen in love with his daughter and it would have been as much as my life was worth to accept the invitation, the young lady having many admirers and Ramon and Arismendez many friends, I gave Don Esteban hearty thanks and an evasive answer.

Another visitor was General Urdenetta, who after some fulsome compliments began to ask insidious questions and make innuendos against the governor, whom he accused of incapacity, and more than hinted that affairs would be much better managed if the Supreme Chief were to provide him with a successor. To which I replied that these were matters that did not concern me, but that, personally, I held the governor in esteem and considered him my friend. On this Urdenetta protested that he also had a great regard for the governor, and tried to laugh the matter off as though he had been jesting, but with an ill grace, and I saw that by refusing his advances I had incurred his enmity.

On the following day came General Arismendez, looking very serious. After we had exchanged inquiries and compliments he said that he had a bit of paper to show me. It was found in one of the Spaniards' pockets, and answered the question I had asked him. The bit of paper was an unsigned letter without address, consisting of a single sentence: "On the night of next Monday week the governor gives a ball at which all the military officers and the officers of the *Campanella* will be present."

"So you were right," he added.

"You also," quoth I; "but who is the spy—or the traitor?"

"I think I know, yet fear I cannot prove. Compare the handwriting of the unsigned letter with this" (handing me another letter) "but don't look at the signature, which is on the other leaf, until you have given your opinion."

After carefully comparing them I said that despite some slight differences I had no doubt that both letters were in the same hand.

"Now turn over the leaf."

Which I did. It was signed "Urdenetta."

"But it is not possible. Why should the general commit such an infamy? What conceivable motives——"

"Mainly to injure me; incidentally to injure you English, whom he detests. Urdenetta is intriguing to supplant me, had the *Campanella* been taken I should have been blamed for inviting her officers to my wife's ball, instead of leaving them on board to look after the ship, and my enemies, both here and at Angostura, would have made the most of it."

"But why should he hate us? We are fighting for the same cause."

"Out of jealousy. Jealousy and greed are our bane. I think they are in our blood. If our leaders would pull honestly and harmoniously together, making the country their first thought, we should be rid of the Spaniards within the year. If the royalist generals would cease thwarting each other, robbing the king and starving their troops, we should be subjugated in six months. But you must not think we are all alike. There are a few, of whom I hope I am one, whose only aim is their country's good."

"It is all very strange," I said, still incredulous, "but why don't you put Urdenetta under arrest and have him tried by court-martial?"

"Because I have no positive proof of his treachery, and he is protected by Bolivar, who is jealous of Congress, from whom, and not from him, I hold my appointment."

"Which is the higher power?"

"Congress, of course, whose minister and servant he is, or ought to be; but practically he is, as he likes to call himself, the supreme chief. I am speaking to you very openly, Major Wyvenhoe, but you are an English caballero, and will not abuse my confidence. It is only among the higher ranks that you will find the jealousies, and greed, and ambition of which I have spoken. The common people, both civilians and soldiers, though ignorant, are honest and brave. All the same, I must sorrowfully admit that we have more to hope from the faults of our enemies than our own virtues."

The governor was so much put about by Urdenetta's treachery, and his mood so gloomy, that I attached less importance to this conversation than I otherwise should have done. I thought he exaggerated; I could not believe that the patriot leaders were such scamps, and the Republic in so bad a way, as General Arismendez made out.

A few days later his cares were increased by the arrival of a part of the British legion, some two thousand strong, under General English, who was, of course, an Irishman.

There was some difficulty in finding them quarters, but the chief difficulty was finding them something to eat. The governor's repeated applications to the government for money and supplies had elicited only vague answers, or fine promises that we were still to keep, and he had absolutely nothing to give the troops but sugar-cane, which could be got for the asking, or at any rate, for the cutting.

This, for men who thought they were coming to a land flowing with milk and honey, was distinctly disappointing, and I was not surprised to hear that there was a good deal of grumbling and some apprehension of mutiny. Discipline

Digitized by Google

was relaxed, drills were discontinued. For as the only way of extracting the sugar was chewing the cane, the men had time for little else. They were always either chewing or smoking, tobacco being as plentiful as cane, as also, unfortunately, was rum.

Money there was none, nor had been for weeks. Except the pound apiece I had given the men of my battalion they had not received a penny; the officers had received nothing.

Neither had Mrs. Barnish, though she had sent particulars of her claim to Angostura with a pressing request, supported by the governor, for an immediate payment on account. The poor lady was in despair, and Cautley wildly indignant, both on her account and his own. Being dependent on his pay he had no money except what I, thanks to an open credit on a house at Port-of-Spain, had been able to lend him, and his sailors were as badly off for rations as were our soldiers.

"I won't stand this any longer, neither will my crew," he said one day. "They cannot chew enough sugar-cane to keep themselves alive, and their jaws ache so at night that they cannot sleep a wink. I am off on a cruise, and I will either make a fat prize or go below. My fellows are so sick of sugar-cane that they would tackle a three-decker if they thought there was any hard tack and salt pork on board of her."

"You had better speak to the governor first."

"I have done, and he says that though he has strict orders to detain the *Campanella* until the arrival of Admiral Brion's squadron, he can see no further than anybody else after dark."

"Which means that if you like to slip away unobserved you may try your luck."

"Also I take it, that if I am successful I need not fear further troubles. If I am not, Margarita will see me no more. I shall weigh to-night at the turn of tide, so good-bye for the present, old man."

The disappearance of the brig caused some excitement and gave rise to a good deal of talk and more or less malicious gossip. General Urdenetta was especially curious on the subject, and asked both the governor and myself whether we had authorised El Capitan to go, or knew whither he was gone, to both of which questions we gave decided negatives.

But the excitement rose to fever heat when, a week later, the *Campanella* sailed in, followed by a full-rigged ship with the Venezuelan flag at her peak and under the Spanish ensign reversed.

The beach was crowded with spectators, most of whom were soldiers chewing sugar-cane. Urdenetta and I boarded the brig so soon as she let go. He had invited himself to accompany me, and pretended to be very friendly.

The skipper was all smiles and I could see by the faces of the crew that they had been feeding on something more substantial than sugar.

"Why did you go off without saying anything?" I asked him (glancing at Urdenetta), "and where have you been?"

"I have been on a cruise and taken a prize, *La Stella*, bound from Cadiz to Maracaibo. There she is, what do you think of her?"

"A very fine ship. I congratulate you, Señor Capitan. What is her cargo?" demanded the general.

"A few bales of clothing for the troops—wine, biscuits, salt pork, salt beef, salt fish and a few dollars and doubloons."

"Doubloons! Did you say doubloons, Señor Capitan?" cried Urdenetta, his little black eyes glittering with greed.

"Si, Señor General, I said doubloons."

"Are there many, Señor Capitan? But you have not counted them, perhaps, if so——"

"I have counted the cases; they tally with the number set down in the ship's manifest, and contain twenty thousand."

"Twenty thousand! Madre de Dios! Twenty thousand gold doubloons! Where are they, Señor Capitan, where are they?" and Urdenetta's fingers worked with an eager claw-like action as though they were raking in money.

"I have them safe. You may be sure I did not leave them on board the prize."

"But they will be very much safer ashore, Señor Capitan, The *Campanella* might be sunk or be cut out by the Spaniards. I shall give you a receipt and put them in a strong-room under guard, and in due course you and your brave crew will receive your share of the prize money, so if you will kindly show me——"

"Not quite so fast, Señor General," interrupted the skipper. "Before I part with this treasure there are a few claims to be dealt with. Mrs. Barnish must have two thousand doubloons in part satisfaction of her claim on the government, my men two, and the officers five doubloons a piece, on account of their share of the prize money, and all of us our pay up to date. The balance I shall hand over to General Arismendez and yourself, against your receipt, to be disposed of as a prize court may direct."

"But this would be highly irregular, my dear sir, and I cannot possibly sanction such a proceeding. The money must be taken as it is and placed in safe custody until these claims you speak of are investigated."

"Not a doubloon of it shall be taken ashore unless my conditions are accepted. Remember that though the brig has been sold to the Republic she has not been formally transferred, so there is nothing to prevent my sailing away and disposing of her and all she contains on Mrs. Barnish's behalf."

"Did you say doubloons, Senor Capitan?"

Digitized by Google

The implied threat was effectual, so frightening Urdenetta that he accepted Cautley's terms without further demur. The dollars and doubloons were brought into his cabin, and the two thousand for Mrs. Barnish counted out and put into bags, and the bags into a box. Next, the officers and men received their pay and the doubloons as agreed. But the skipper took only his pay.

This business being concluded we went ashore escorted by a dozen bluejackets, who carried the treasure, which, on our arrival at the Government House, Cautley made over to the governor and Urdenetta, taking their joint receipts for the full amount, and giving them his own for the sums which he had disbursed and retained. Urdenetta would have made difficulties, but Arismendez overruled him, saying that he was astonished at the captain's moderation, and I could see by Urdenetta's manner that he thought him a fool for taking so little.

"We have brought you something, Mrs. Barnish," said Cautley, as the sailor who carried the box containing the doubloons laid it at her feet.

We had now only to arrange with Mrs. Barnish, whom we found in the patio of the governor's house, reclining in a wicker chair and looking very charming.

"We have brought you something, Mrs. Barnish," said Cautley, as the sailor who carried the box containing the doubloons laid it at her feet. Then to the man, "You and the others wait outside till I come."

"Ay, ay, sir."

"You are very good, but what is it?" asked the lady.

"A payment on account of your claim—a thousand gold doubloons."

"And pray how much is that in sterling money, captain?"

"As nearly as possible six thousand pounds, madam."

"Six thousand pounds! Oh, what a relief! Thank Heaven! I was almost reduced to my last dollar. Now I am independent again. It is nearly half of what they owe me."

"The price of the brig and the cargo, and as the government are now in funds I have no doubt you will obtain a full and speedy settlement of your claim."

"But how was it managed? Whom have I to thank?"

The skipper hesitated, and, seeing that he was too bashful, or too much in love, to tell his tale properly, I told it for him.

Mrs. Barnish was deeply touched, her colour heightened, her eyes filled with tears.

"How good of you, Captain Cautley!" she exclaimed. "How noble! How can I show my gratitude?"

Then she paused, and the skipper whispered something in her ear, and perceiving that I was not wanted I betook myself to the garden and lighted a cigar. When I went back the widow's eyes were very bright and Cautley's face very red.

"We were talking about this money, Major Wyvenhoe," she said, as coolly as though she were speaking the truth. "What shall I do with it? I have neither a strong-box nor a strong-room."

"You might ask General Arismendez to take care of it for you, but the safest, perhaps the only safe place is the brig, and if it be taken there after dark, and the sun will set in half an hour, nobody will be the wiser; and, if I were you, Mrs. Barnish, I would be off as soon as possible to Port-of-Spain and lodge the money in a bank. It is only a day's sail, and there is a Trinidad schooner in the harbour that I daresay might be chartered on moderate terms." And noticing that the captain looked rather blank I added: "But even on the brig I would not insure the safety of your money for more than twenty-four hours. We may get the route at any moment, Admiral Brion's squadron is expected almost immediately, and there is talk of an expedition to the Main."

"I think you are quite right, Major; don't you, Captain Cautley?"

"I am sure he is. The sooner you and the doubloons are under the British flag the better," rejoined the skipper.

"Then will you kindly see the captain of the schooner and arrange with him?"

"This very night, madam."

"And I can give you a letter of introduction to the house at Port-of-Spain, on which I have a credit. They will arrange your business and give you a hospitable reception, and you might stay there until Cautley and I obtain a final settlement of your claim on the Republic," I remarked.

"That is just what I should like. I have no desire to go home just yet."

On this the skipper brightened up, and night having fallen, we took our leave and carried off the doubloons.

"That was a good idea of yours," said Cautley as we walked to the jetty. "You were thinking of your friend with the little black eyes and rake-like fingers, weren't you? I know I was."

"Yes, he knows we brought the money, but he won't know we have taken it back. But you have not told me how you got on with the lady."

"Well, it was this way. When she wanted to know how she could show her gratitude, I said by giving me her love, at which she seemed very much surprised, and said it was quite out of the question—at any rate so soon after her late

Digitized by Google

husband's death. Then I talked to her a bit, and she said at last that if I really loved her I might speak to her again in a few months. But I presently prevailed on her to say, 'a little while.'"

"So you are virtually engaged. I congratulate you, my dear fellow," quoth I, though remembering Araminta and how likely he was to be jilted, it went against my conscience. If I had been perfectly sincere, I should rather have condoled with him.

"You are very kind and I am very happy," he said simply. "Also nervous. If any harm were to befall her I should never forgive myself. I shall board the schooner at once and if possible arrange for her to sail to-morrow."

In this he succeeded, and on the following evening the widow and her doubloons, accompanied by the second officer, whom Cautley wisely sent with her, set sail for Port-of-Spain.

Mrs. Barnish had a second protector in the person of Father Bartrum, who was heartily sick of Margarita and glad of a chance to get away.

A few hours previously the *Libertad*, a sloop-of-war (as she would be called in our service, though barque rigged), arrived from Angostura with dispatches, and the next morning (the troops having meanwhile received full rations and a modicum of pay) we had a parade of the entire force.

After the "fall out" I returned to my quarters to breakfast, and was half through with my matutinal cigar when Captain Clincher, of the Legion, and a sergeant's guard marched into the patio.

"I've come on a very unpleasant errand, Major," said the captain, who was a man of few words and fewer ideas.

"Indeed! What is it?" I asked.

"To arrest you, I am sorry to say."

"By whose order and on what charge?"

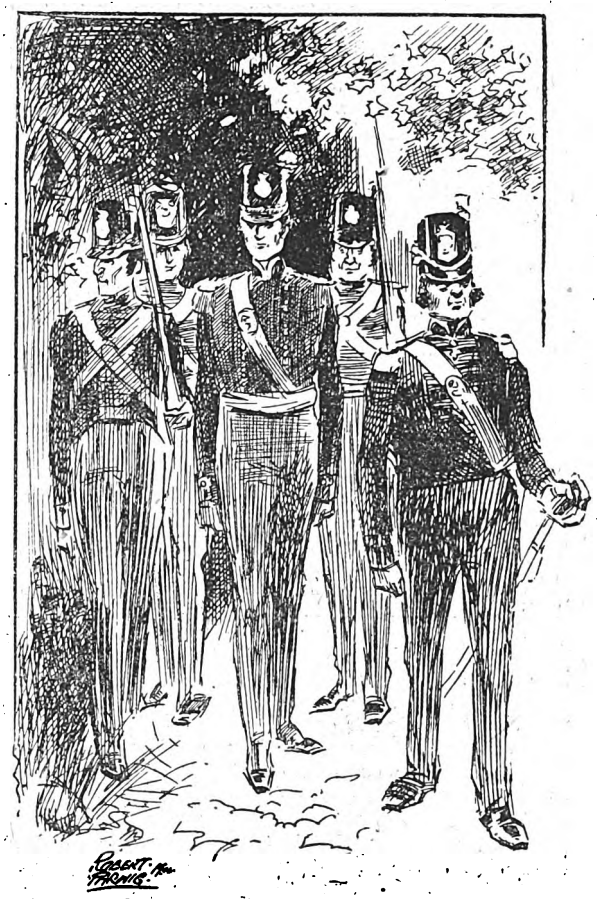
"The governor's. I know nothing about a charge—didn't ask."

"The governor's! Impossible!" I exclaimed.

"Excuse my contradicting you, major, but Colonel Rooke has the governor's written order to have you arrested and taken on board the *Libertad*. Very sorry, but duty is duty."

"I shall go with you, of course, though I am sure there is some mistake. I suppose my servant may follow with my kit?"

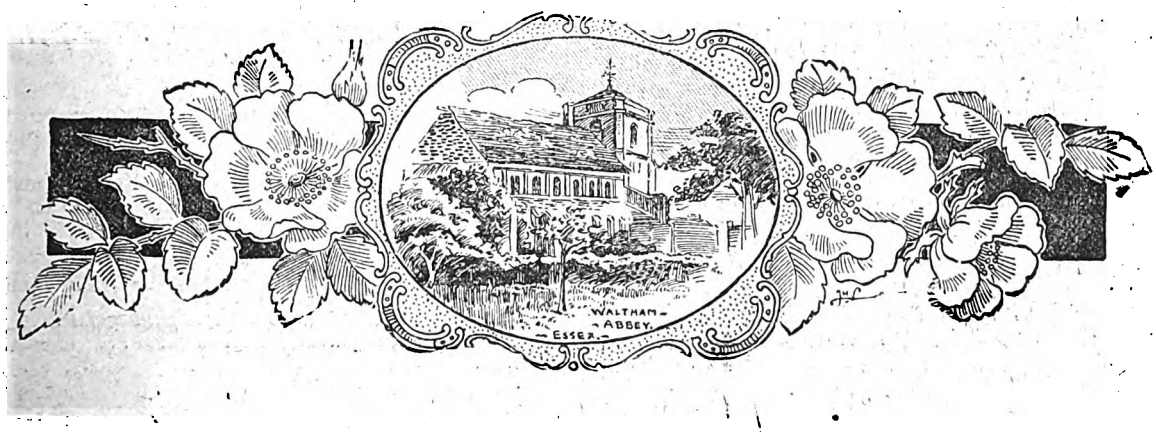
"Certainly. No orders against that."



I placed myself at the disposal of Clincher and the guard, and was conducted to the jetty.

On this I told Ready what to do, placed myself at the disposal of Clincher and the guard, and was conducted to the jetty, where a boat was awaiting us.

(To be continued.)



Digitized by Google

SHORT STORIES ABOUT VENTRILOQUISTS.

We devote, every week, two pages of *Short Stories* to pithy, humourous anecdotes similar to those which appear in these columns. A prize of £1 1s. will be sent to the reader who submits the best storyette this week, and a copy of "Mystery of the 'Medea,'" by Alex. Vaughan, to each of those whose attempts are used. The anecdotes may be either original or selected; in the latter case the source *must* be stated. The prize of One Guinea offered for the best Storyette in this competition has been won this week by Mr. William Inglis, 24 Barrack Street, Perth. Attempts for this week's prize must deal with Stories about Landladies and Lodgers, and must reach the Storyette Editor, *Short Stories* Office, Henrietta Street, Strand, London, W.C., by Monday, August 20th. Post-cards only, please.

From the Lower Regions.

A FEW nights ago loud cries for help were heard proceeding from an open drain in a flourishing Scotch town.

The police arrived, obtained the assistance of some navvies, and dispatched them into the subterranean regions. But the more they explored the louder became the appeals for assistance, and soon the street was crammed with sympathising spectators, who had to be kept back from the mouth of the drain by a cordon of constables.

Cries of "Bunglers!" "Get him out!" "The man will die!" arose from the crowd, which assumed a threatening appearance, so much so that the police compelled it to disperse.

The cries for help now ceased; the ventriloquist who had caused all the commotion having also been compelled to disperse.

W. I.

It Spoke Without Its Head.

A VENTRILOQUIST was entertaining an audience; the doll was singing "Mary had a little lamb," when its head dropped off and hung by the string.

The ventriloquist, not noticing the mishap, went on and finished the song.

On looking up, he perceived what had happened, and as quick as thought (speaking through the doll), he said: "See what I can do with my neck broken."

F. G. C.

Next, Please!

IN the commercial room of a Bristol hotel the other night, the subject turned on ventriloquism.

One commercial remarked:

"I once knew a man who was a great ventriloquist. He was practising his favourite amusement in a crowded street one day, when he threw his voice so far away that he lost it, and it took him an hour and a half, with the aid of a policeman, to find it again."

"That's nothing," remarked a little man in the corner with a wink at the rest of the company, "I was at an amateur entertainment last winter when two ventriloquists were giving a performance. They had been throwing their voices to various parts of the room, and at the end it was found that the voices had returned to their wrong owners. When I left they were vainly endeavouring to throw their voices down each other's throats to persuade them to return to their rightful owners."

A. E. T.

Sold!

M. ALEXANDRE, the famous ventriloquist, was on one occasion passing along the Strand, when a friend desired a specimen of his abilities.

At that instant a load of hay was passing along near Temple Bar, when Alexandre called attention to the suffocating cries of a man in the centre of the hay.

A crowd gathered round and stopped the astonished carter, and demanded why he was carrying a fellow-creature in his hay. The complaints and cries of the smothered man now became painful, and there was every reason to believe he was dying. The crowd, regardless of the stoppage to the traffic, instantly proceeded to unload the hay in the street. The smothered voice urged them to make haste, but the feelings of the people may be imagined when the cart was empty and nobody was found, while Alexandre and his friend walked off laughing at the unexpected result of their trick.

J. H.

The Ventriloquist Scored.

RECENTLY a well-known ventriloquist, who was taking a journey, just managed to get into the train as it was leaving the station, and had no time to take out a dog ticket for his terrier.

When the cry, "All tickets ready!" was heard a few stations further on, the ventriloquist dropped the dog into a hamper, which was labelled in bold characters, "Professor Jones, Ventriloquist."

When the ticket inspector opened the carriage door the dog began to bark.

The man, noticing the label on the hamper, turned to the ventriloquist with a self-satisfied grin, and said:

"All right, mister, that's verra clever, but ye canna fool me. That trick's been played on me before."

A. H.

Why He Fled.

A BASHFUL youth was sitting in a state of nervous terror, alongside a young and pretty girl, in an obscure corner of the hall leading to the ball-room.

A young man, who was a bit of a ventriloquist, observed them, however, and pitching his voice to make appear as if it proceeded from the bashful youth, he said:

"Ah—Miss Loveleigh—er—I do love you—er—my dear—will you marry me?"

With a scream of terror the bashful man fled, leaving his companion in grave doubts as to his mental condition.

W. H.

Digitized by Google

How He Got a Front Seat.

At a concert once, all the seats were the same price, and there was a great rush to get front seats.

A certain gentleman (a ventriloquist) wanted to get a front seat, so when the manager appeared on the stage to announce that a certain song was to be sung, he threw his voice on the stage, and said:

"Ladies and gentlemen, I am sorry to say there will be no performance to-night"

The people went out disgusted, while the ventriloquist took a front seat.

The concert went on just the same afterwards.

G. B.

The Professor Ran.

The whole of the villagers seemed to have squeezed themselves into the diminutive public hall to witness the wonderful entertainment of Professor Vox, the marvellous ventriloquist.

For some time the Professor kept his audience alternately gaping with awe and vociferously applauding his clever performance.

"Now, ladies and gentlemen," said he, "I will imitate the voice of a man on the roof of this hall."

"Are you there?" he called in his natural voice.

"Yes, sir," replied an astonishingly natural voice coming apparently from the roof outside.

"Where are you?" shouted the Professor.

There was a sudden clatter on the slates, a dark body crashed through the skylight and fell into the midst of the audience.

"Here I am, sir," said the "voice."

Two seconds later the Professor was giving the villagers an exhibition of his wonderful sprinting powers.

W. J. O.

The Audience was "Sold."

A popular ventriloquist in the north was given a benefit some time ago, and announced that he would endeavour to surpass himself on the occasion.

On the eventful evening the building was crowded in every part, and when the beneficiaire's "turn" came it was seen that the number of his performing figures was considerably larger than usual, and were arranged on chairs in a semi-circle, after the manner of a minstrel troupe.

Going behind each figure in turn he so manipulated them that his audience was astounded.

Classical, humorous, and patriotic items were rendered in perfect taste and with marked ability; and the movements of each figure was so lifelike and natural that the "house" was completely carried away, and round after round of applause greeted the clever artiste.

At the close of his performance the applause was renewed; but as he bowed himself off the stage the audience was considerably astonished to see the figures rise, one by one, and walk off after him.

Then their applause gave way to roars of laughter, for it suddenly dawned upon them that they had been "sold."

And so it proved, for the "figures" were well-known concert artistes, each of whom had volunteered to act in that capacity on the occasion of their old friend's benefit.

A. V.

Equal to the Occasion.

At one of the London halls a short time ago, Lieutenant Frank Travis, the ventriloquist, was amusing the audience with his merry family of dummies. Nearing the end of his performance, one of the dummies is supposed to ask the following question:

"If a child is born in England of German parents, what nationality is it?"

"English," shouted the ventriloquist.

"Wrong," was the supposed reply. And so the argument went on, until the ventriloquist said at last that he would leave it to the waiter to settle, and whatever he said should decide the supposed argument.

"Waiter!" shouted out the ventriloquist at the top of his voice. "Now, then, what's it to be, English or German?"

The old waiter, who had been busy all the evening, not knowing what was going on, looked up, and amidst roars of laughter shouted back:

"A drop of Scotch, please!" W. L.

Mr. Bowser Learning Ventriloquism.

"Mr. Bowser, what on earth are you doing?" asked Mrs. Bowser, as she rushed into the drawing-room, almost frightened out of her wits by the dreadful noise which had proceded from it.

Mr. Bowser had the cat on his knee, and was pinching that poor animal's tail, and, as it screamed with pain, he tried to imitate its voice.

"Mrs. Bowser," calmly remarked her lesser half, fairly mesmerising her with his glaring eyes, "I am developing my vocal organs. By the aid of this so-called dumb animal, I shall in a few moments, by practice, be able to imitate the mewing of a cat to perfect——" But at this moment the Bowser cat, in a fit of desperation, bit its master's hand, and that gentleman's voice put a complete legion of moonlight howlers in the shade.

When he had somewhat cooled down, he turned to Mrs. Bowser with an injured air, and said:

"Woman, all is over between us, by your interference my hand will have to be cut off. Leave this house at once, and take your ungrateful cat with you. Don't expostulate, madam, you and your infernal cat have ruined me, and I wash my hands of the pair of you," and Mr. Bowser slowly walked from the room.

J. W. H.

The Last Straw.

A young man, in flannels and straw hat, was wheeling a perambulator backwards and forwards along the pavement in front of an imposing set of flats. The hot afternoon sun poured pitilessly down upon him, and he was angry as any man could be.

"My dear!" came a voice from an upper window.

"What's the matter?" he shrieked back. "Let me alone, can't you?"

And he went on wheeling.

An hour later the same voice came from the same window, in earnest, pleading tones:

"George, dear!"

"Well, what's the matter now?" he shouted. "Have the water-pipes burst?"

"No, George, dear," wailed the voice; "the water-pipes are all right, but you've been wheeling Lottie's doll all the afternoon. Hadn't you better let baby have a turn now?"

Digitized by Google

THE BROWN-CRESSWELL SCANDAL.

"It's a fact, I assure you," quoth little Mrs. Brown solemnly, glancing over the top of her spectacles at the circle of ladies plying their needles in the cause of the Geddesdon poor.

"You don't say so," gasped her neighbour, Mrs. Smith, stopping for a moment with her needle poised on high. "How intensely shocking!"

"To think of the serpent we have nourished in our midst," broke in another.

"It is really very sad that one's kindness should be betrayed in such a manner. What shall you do about the new district, dear Mrs. Spinks? Of course it is not possible that this—er—person should work amongst us any more."

Poor Mrs. Spinks, wife of the Rev. Spottiswood Spinks, Rector of Geddesdon, looked up with a little appeal in her soft, brown eyes. She was a kind-hearted little soul when left to herself, and it vexed her to hear these unkind remarks made about the stranger who had lately come into their circle.

"I do not think she can do any harm to the people she visits, Mrs. Hobbs," she answered gently. "She has already won the hearts of those she has been to see. Besides, what proof have we that these rumours have any truth in them?"

"What proof?" exclaimed Mrs. Brown indignantly. "Why, Mrs. Spinks, have I not already told you that it was my own brother, who knows the doctor, who lives three doors off them at Notting H ll who wrote and told me all about them a fortnight ago? And this morning I had another letter from him confirming all that he had said before—that their goings on were terrible, and that no decent-minded people would visit them. You can hardly expect me to doubt my brother's word, Mrs. Spinks," concluded Mrs. Brown with a decidedly aggressive, ill-meaning sniff, as she resumed her work, which in her excitement she had dropped for a moment.

"Of course not, of course not," hastily responded the Rector's wife. "Did you ask for buttons, Mrs. Jones? Here are some," and she tried to turn the discussion into another channel.

But it was of no use. Another worker, Miss Anne Bruce, had been absent from the town a week or two, and had missed the heart of the subject in hand.

"What is it that is rumoured against her?" she asked. "One hears all sorts of things but nothing definite. It would hardly be fair to ostracize a girl for the sake of an indefinite report."

Mrs. Brown bristled again.

"I tell you it is not indefinite, Miss Bruce," she said. "The story is—as you will have it, only don't accuse me of scandal-making after you have insisted on hearing it—that she is the daughter of a card-sharper, who has several times only just escaped detection. They say that she was the trap set to catch the poor young men. It is said," and she lowered her voice ominously, "that troops of young men used to flock there at all hours. Now you can see why this person is not a fit associate for us who are, however feebly, trying to do our duty. And I have my brother's word for it," she finished, closing her mouth with a little snap, as if that settled the whole matter beyond dispute.

Silence fell on the group of workers. Certainly to some of them, the working party that afternoon seemed to be more interesting than usual, and they were astonished when the clock struck five and the Rector came in to read a prayer before they went to have some tea. They were all extremely devout, joining in the Lord's Prayer with more earnestness and unanimity than usual.

Many events do not happen at Geddesdon-on-Sea. Most of its inhabitants are fisher-folk, there being only a slight sprinkling of better-class people. It was a picturesque town, particularly from the river, which formed a natural harbour, with the sand dunes on one side of it, and the homes of the fishermen, with their pretty roofs, on the other. Further back on the land, the town was struggling to become a fashionable sea-side resort, indeed, already on the southern cliff had sprung up a large and modern hotel, built in red brick, and run on all the latest lines by an enterprising, if inartistic, company.

Millicent Cresswell and her father had taken a tiny cottage on the cliff for six months, to restore the latter to health after a long and serious illness. He was now a great deal better after some weeks of the bracing East coast air, and his daughter felt free to avail herself of the kindness of her neighbour's invitations to call upon them.

Digitized by Google

She had joined the Rectory work-party, going to it whenever she thought her father was well enough to be left for a whole afternoon. She had been obliged to miss two Fridays lately, having been confined to the house with a cold, and one day her father was not so well.

Meanwhile slander had been busy with them both, and was doing her best to make up a nice little history which, if Millicent and her father could have heard, they would have laughed at, and gone their way untroubled.

But they heard nothing; consequently, about a fortnight later, Millicent presented herself at the Rectory door and was admitted to the drawing-room, all unconscious of the chilly atmosphere in which she would find herself.

The girl looked like a summer butterfly flown by mistake into a winter garden filled with everlastings. Her fair young freshness contrasted so strongly with these worthy townsfolk who considered themselves smirched if they should so much as touch the hem of her garment. For the weed of scandal had flourished like a green bay-tree, and Millicent Cresswell was now designated as "that dreadful girl."

Mrs. Spinks came forward to greet her as she entered. There was a certain nervousness in her manner, and her cheek were a little flushed as she led her to a seat in a far corner of the room by the window.

"You will get a better light there." she said as she glanced round in an appealing way at the rest of her workers.

There had been somewhat of a hot discussion before Millicent had come in.

"I will not be in the same room with her," asserted Mrs. Brown. "I consider that persons of her sort should be shown that respectable people cannot associate with them; that at any rate Geddesdon-on-Sea will not lower its standard," and she gave her usual sniff, jerking her thread so sharply as to break it.

However, Mrs. Spinks had held her own, having refused to give the maid any directions as to the non-admission of Miss Cresswell.

Now, the girl was here, in her drawing-room, and nearly half of her workers were packing up their garments, prepared to guard their morals and leave the Rector's wife in the lurch.

"It was her own fault," they said as they let themselves out at the hall door, whilst every nose showed in its own particular manner the excessive virtuosity of its owner.

The working party was now much reduced in numbers, but Millicent was quite unconscious that she was the cause of the sudden exodus. She and the rest enjoyed a very pleasant afternoon.

Somehow the atmosphere of the room seemed lighter and freer now that Mrs. Brown was not in it. Mrs. Spinks thought so at any rate; therefore, when her husband came in at five o'clock, he found a very happy party, and after prayers they had the merriest tea imaginable, though the rector, who of course knew all about it, was grieved to find that so many of his parishioners lacked the charity which thinketh no evil.

That evening, the Rev. Spottiswood and his wife put their heads together. It was a terrible scandal, which must either be recognised and the Cresswells given to understand that their society was no longer appreciated, or it must be stamped out.

"I do not believe that there is a word of truth in the whole story," said Mrs. Spinks indignantly. "Mrs. Brown is a born scandal-monger, and her brother is as bad, and all the other old women are cats, who follow their leader."

"Hush! hush! my dear," interposed the rector through a smile that belied his words. "Cats or not, they are my parishioners, and must be propitiated. Let us sleep over the matter. No doubt we shall come to a solution of the difficulty in the morning."

But woman-like, Mrs. Spinks could not leave the matter alone until she had hit upon some plan. She lay still, thinking hard for some hours, when with scant mercy she awoke her sleepy spouse.

"Spottiswood," she said, "Spottiswood, do wake up; I've got an idea."

With a groan her husband moved.

"Eh? What? An idea? Have you, my dear? Ah! alright," and soon he was once more snoring peacefully.

This was not sympathetic, as Mrs. Spinks felt, but with the satisfaction of a difficulty solved, she, too, turned over to enjoy the sleep of the just.

In the morning Mrs. Spinks rose rather early, got through her household duties, donned her medium best gown, and set out to visit Millicent at the cottage on the cliff. She was shown into the little drawing-room, sweet with the scent of narcissi and daffodils, and whilst waiting, took up an odd volume lying on the table.

Glancing through carelessly, she let fall an envelope, which had evidently been slipped in between the leaves. Thinking it might be a mark, she picked it up hastily and was just going to replace it when the address caught her eye:

"LADY MILLICENT CRESSWELL,
"THE TOWERS,
CONSTON, LEICESTERSHIRE."

Mrs. Spinks' eyes opened wide as she read. What did this mean? Lady Millicent Cresswell!

Was it possible that the girl of whom such terrible things were being said, was none other than one of the Cresswells of the Towers, of whom everyone knew, and whose family had for ages done their work in England's glorious history!

The poor little woman was almost transfixed with horror.

What idiots these Geddesdon women had made of themselves! What a mercy that she had come up to see what she could find out!

She started as Millicent touched her on the arm.

"Oh, my dear," she said, "I beg your pardon, but is this you?" and she held the envelope out dramatically to the astonished girl in front of her.

"Why, yes, of course," she laughed. "So you have discovered our secret? Come and sit down, Mrs. Spinks; I will tell you all about it. You know papa has been very ill, and he thought he would like to come here as just 'Mr. Cresswell.' You see," she continued, "we know the Burtons and Oxtons and a good many others, so that if we had come as ourselves, we should have had no peace. However, we are so soon going home now it does not matter. I fear papa will have to give up his hobby of coaching young men at Notting Hill, for the doctor says he must not spend another winter in England."

"Used he to coach young men, Miss—Lady Millicent?" asked Mrs. Spinks somewhat diffidently.

"Yes, Mrs. Spinks. My father loves teaching, and has made it quite a hobby to teach young fellows who cou'd not afford a proper course."

The mystery was solved, and with a light heart Mrs. Spinks set off home. She had told Millicent the whole

Digitized by Google

story, and together they concocted a small revenge on the ladies of Geddesdon-on-Sea.

Directly Mrs. Spinks had left Millicent sat down to write to the Burtons and Oxtons, saying that she and her father were spending a short time at Geddesdon, and that if they did not consider it too far to go, she hoped that they would meet at the Rectory garden-party, which she heard was to take place within the next fortnight.

It was the first Thursday after Easter, which was unusually late that year. Already the trees had clad themselves in their fresh young green. The sun, too, had the promise of summer warmth in it, and everything looked bright and glad in the balmy geniality of late spring.

The Rev. Spottiswood and Mrs. Spinks stood waiting for their guests. It was not quite three o'clock, but in Geddesdon people generally arrived about ten minutes before they were invited; it was one of the unalterable ways of the little town. Therefore there was a goodly gathering assembled before Millicent and her father made their appearance.

As they crossed the lawn it is a wonder that they did not sink beneath the glances of surprise and disapproval levied at them. But they passed on quite untroubled, and pretended to be oblivious of the curious amount of backs presented to them as they turned to greet their neighbours. For some minutes Mrs. Spinks' unprecedented behaviour formed the chief topic of conversation. How could her husband have allowed her to do such a thing? It was preposterous, inexcusable, and so on.

Soon however their attention was attracted by the names of the county people being announced. It was only on such occasions as the present that they had the felicity of criticising their country neighbours.

"There is actually old Lady Hancock," whispered Mrs. Brown to Mrs. Hobbs. "What would she say if she knew whose company she was in? There's her ugly daughter, too. Oh! my dear,"—and she clutched Mrs. Hobbs' arm—"just look! there is Lady Hancock going up to that dreadful girl! Can Mrs. Spinks have introduced her? Why—" and her voice rose a little—"she—she is positively kissing her! What an extraordinary thing! My dear Mrs. Hobbs, I ask you, look!"

Mrs. Brown was almost faint from surprise and chagrin, for Lady Hancock, who had not even so much as given her a glance, was walking down one of the primrose-covered paths with her arm affectionately tucked into that of Millicent Cresswell's.

Mrs. Hobbs said nothing, but looked at Mrs. Brown with something of misgiving and annoyance in her eyes.

"You had better come and sit down," she said, "you are looking very hot and uncomfortable."

"It is enough to upset one to see an old lady taken in by an impudent hussy like that," gasped Mrs. Brown, fanning herself vigorously.

"I think I should say no more about that, if I were you," said Mrs. Hobbs significantly. "I am going to talk it over with the others," and rising, regardless of Mrs. Brown's entreaties, she crossed the lawn to Mrs. Spinks. Drawing her aside, she asked boldly:

"Who is Millicent Cresswell?"

Mrs Spinks smiled.

"She is Lady Hancock's great-niece, dear Mrs Hobbs. Lord Conston and Lady Millicent have been staying here quietly as Mr. and Miss Cresswell, but now he is so much stronger, they are taking up their own position again, and it is as pleasant a surprise to their friends to find them here, as it is to us to have been the means of their meeting."

Mrs. Hobbs took a page out of her note-book, on which she scribbled a few words. She then gave it to an under-gardener whom she found busy in one of the gardens, with a request that he would find Mrs. Brown and deliver it to her.

What the words were I cannot tell you. All I do know is that Mrs. Brown's ample figure was seen disappearing out of the vicarage gate before tea had been announced, and no one made any effort to recall her. And somehow I do not fancy that since the Brown-Cresswell episode, scandals have been quite so rife in Geddesdon-on-Sea as before.

GRACE COMBE.

MRS. YOUNG WIFE: "You are sure there are five pounds of sugar in this package? It seems very light."

Grocer: "That, madam, is because it is entirely free from sand."

LIVERIED MENIAL: "Me lud, the carriage waits without."

Lord Fitz-Josher: "Without what?"

Liveried Menial: "Without horses, me lud; 'tis a motor-car."

THE other day a gentleman entered a restaurant, and ordered a chicken. The chicken was evidently tough, for, when the waiter came in, he beheld the gentleman with his coat off and in a great state of perspiration.

"Waiter," he said, "this chicken is very tough."

"Very sorry, sir; but, you see, that chicken always was a peculiar bird. Why, when we came to kill it we couldn't catch it, so at last we had to shoot it. It flew on the housetop, and——"

"Then you must have shot the weathercock by mistake."

TWO BOOKS TO TAKE ON HOLIDAYS.

ADVENTURES OF CAPTAIN KETTLE
AND THE
FURTHER ADVENTURES OF
CAPTAIN KETTLE.

By C. J. Cutcliffe Hyne. Illustrated by Stanley L. Wood.

Crown 8vo, Price 6s.

"His adventures are of a most startling kind, and his resource, energy, and fighting propensities carry him safely through them all. It is impossible not to admire the energy and courage of the viperish little man, and one is pleased to know at the end that he finally makes a lucky hit, which enables him to attain the great object of his ambition and to settle down on a farm with his wife and children."—*Standard.*

C. ARTHUR PEARSON Limited, Henrietta Street, W.C.

Digitized by Google

MISS JOHNSON'S PLAN.

ONE of the most striking characteristics of woman is her cheerful perseverance is looking under the bed for a thief. No man in his senses ever looks under his bed for a burglar, but there are millions of women in this country who would find it quite impossible to sleep in any bed under which they had not previously searched for a concealed man.

Experience is lost upon them. The average unmarried woman, of forty years of age, has usually looked under the bed at least 7,500 times, without ever once finding the expected man; but she is not the least discouraged by so long a course of failure, and it would be easy to find women, eighty or ninety years old, who still nightly search for the man they have never found.

Miss Johnson will hereafter be famous as a woman whose long perseverance has been signally rewarded. It would be indelicate to inquire into her precise age; had she not described herself, in a recent affidavit, as having been born in the year 1848? And we may therefore take it for granted that she is at least fifty-two years old.

If we presume that she began to look under the bed at the age of fifteen, it follows that she has performed that ceremony more than 14,000 times.

Until the other Friday night, she never found the smallest fragment of a man under her bed; but on that eventful night her perseverance was rewarded, and the long-sought man greeted her astonished gaze.

Miss Johnson, being an unmarried lady, not wholly unconnected with the milliner's trade, and full of womanly independence, resides entirely alone, in a small house containing but three rooms—a kitchen, shop, and bedroom.

Dogs she despises, and cats she mistrusts; while, as for men, she regards them as poor creatures who may possibly have their uses in the time of hard frost, when water must be carted from the nearest stream, but who, as a rule, make more trouble about a house than their necks are worth.

Holding these views, it naturally follows that Miss Johnson lives alone, and the cool bravery with which she locks up her house at night, and seeks her solitary couch (no matter if a first-class thunderstorm is in progress) has for years been the admiration of the more timid of her sex.

It was about eleven o'clock on that Friday night when Miss Johnson stooped down and looked under the bed for a possible man, precisely as she had done on 14,000 previous nights.

Whether she was or was not astonished at perceiving a large-sized man lying under the bed, with the back of his head towards her, will never be known, but at any rate, she gave no sign of astonishment, and did not even inform the man that she saw him.

On the contrary, she resumed with great deliberation the nocturnal twisting of her back-hair, and even softly hummed "Come into the Garden, Maud," with as much distinctness as could be expected of a woman while holding a comb between her teeth.

Her back hair being finally finished, she opened her window, turned down the lamp until it gave forth a dim and modest light, and then stepped gracefully into bed, but not to sleep.

The sagacious woman was perfectly aware that the man under the bed, not suspecting that he had been discovered, would creep forth with a view to plunder so soon as he thought that she was asleep.

The bedstead stood in a corner of the room, and from the position of the man it was plain that he would creep out at the side of the bed. Miss Johnson, therefore, changed her usual manner of composing herself to rest, and lay, as she subsequently expressed it, "flat as a pancake," with her head projecting over the side of the bed at the precise locality where she expected the man to appear.

For at least half-an-hour she lay perfectly still, watching for the man with a stealthy vigilance that would have done credit to an astute and experienced cat.

Not a muscle or a hairpin on her frame moved, and her breathing was as slow and regular as that of a profound sleeper. At length the man, confident that she was asleep, softly began to worm himself from under the bed.

Little did he imagine that a pair of pitiless grey eyes were waiting for the appearance of his head, while a pair of lithe and nervous hands were ready to pounce upon his ears.

It was not many minutes, however, before each ear was suddenly caught in an inexorable grasp and his head began to oscillate with remarkable speed between the floor and the edge of the bedstead.

Von Moltke himself could not have surpassed Miss Johnson's tactics. She had the man completely at her mercy, and he was as helpless as though his head were in the stocks.

At first his captor maintained a grim silence, but after she had bumped him sufficiently to ease her mind she addressed him on the wickedness and folly of seeking to rob her.

In vain did the man protest that his motives were innocent, that he had mistaken the house, and had merely intended to take a quiet nap under his own bedstead where the flies could not find him out.

Miss Johnson sternly told him that he could not make her believe any such nonsense, and that she would "let him know," and would also "show him."

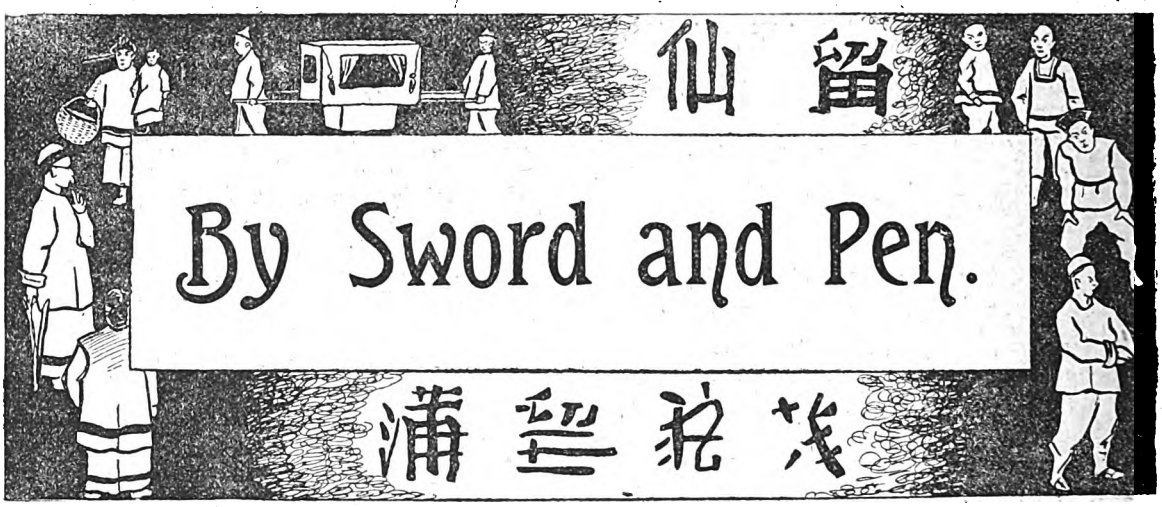
These threats were carried out by a renewal of the bumping process, until the man yelled for mercy so loudly that the neighbours were aroused, and rushed to Miss Johnson's house with the firm conviction that a gang of burglars had murdered that excellent woman and were quarrelling over the division of her spoils.

It was not until a strong force, armed with clubs and hatchets, had recklessly entered the room, that Miss Johnson surrendered her captive, with the remark that the sooner they took themselves off the better, and that if any other man would like to hide under the bed, she was quite ready to knock a little sense into him.

Thus the intrepid woman not only defended herself with the most signal success, but she pointed out the true way to deal with a man under the bed.

F. P. W.

Digitized by Google



"GALLANTLY done!" said General Galway as the tail end of Captain Murchison's kilt disappeared over the hedge of the zareba.

Our troops had been exposed to a galling fire in approaching this troublesome redoubt, and when at last the word "Char-r-rge" sounded like thunder from the stentorian voice of the officer commanding, the men hesitated for a moment on account of their heavy casualties.

It was at this critical moment (for, paradoxical as the remark may appear, armies are something like women! —they who hesitate are lost) that Captain Murchison, brandishing his claymore high over his head shouted:

"No. 1 Company, Skeandhu Regiment—follow me."

The men were at once electrified by the voice of the charmer, for wherever Captain Murchison would lead, his men were sure to follow, even to the gates of the ill-reputed habitation whose pavements are not inlaid with jasper. But burdened by their rifles and ammunition, their beloved centurion was far away in front of the fastest of them, and jumping over the frowning barrier before a single bayonet could come up to his support.

"Heaven preserve the brave fellow," was the very natural remark of those of us on the staff who were witnesses of the scene, as we watched the daring-deed and thought of the almost certain death awaiting for Murchison inside.

But the Skeandhu Regiment was never wanting in dash or daring, and before the Dervishes could recover from their surprise at this flying woman flopping down so suddenly among them, as if from the blue, in all her glory of tartan petticoats, the men of No. 1 Company Skeandhu Regiment were tearing with their bare legs through cactus and thorn, as if they were as inocuous as weeping willows.

There are few people braver than the Dervishes of the desert, more especially at close quarters. Here, however, they had met their match. It was bayonet against spear.

But though the latter had much the advantage in both length and hurling power, the formidable "point" of the British weapon, with the furious "h-i-s-s" that drove it home, was a little too much for the Dervishes. And so, after stubbornly contesting the ground for a space, they broke precipitately, as if pursued by the feminine fiends of their own Gehenna, turned white for the purpose.

"Poor beggar," said the General, kindly, after the fight was over and we were making up the butcher's bill. "He's gone at last. I always feared that this would be the end of him; he was so altogether reckless in his courage."

"I'm not dead yet, sir," replied the corpse in a weak ghostly whisper that startled the General, brave though he was.

It was the voice of Captain Alastair Murchison, recovering from a dead faint, the result of gaping wounds and loss of blood.

"Heaven be praised, my boy," with deep emotion replied the warm hearted General. "It's a Victoria Cross for you, dead or alive, or any recommendation of mine is not worth much."

* * * * *

The scene was changed.

In a small provincial town not a hundred miles away from Charing Cross might be seen a soldierly figure, with a wooden leg and a cramped left forearm.

He lived in a small, self-contained villa whose outward appearance betokened respectability, but which was but scantily furnished within. It was the property of Mr. Abraham Grabb and the new home of poor Captain Murchison of the Soudan zareba.

"Never mind, my dear," he cheerily remarked to his wife, on first taking possession, "I was formerly in the habit of dallying with Literature for amusement, but I shall now woo the coy dame for the sake of her siller. Now don't be jealous, darling," he continued, "that's a good lassie," as he playfully patted his partner in life on the shoulder.

He glanced at his maimed members, though, with an air of sadness that was far from his natural disposition.

"See," he went on with a somewhat forced smile, "though I have lost a leg and lamed an arm, my head and my right hand are as dexterous as ever."

"Thank Heaven they are, darling," returned his wife with tears in her beautiful eyes, "and your heart also is as warm and true."

"Why not?" he rejoined; "fickle hearts are only made for fair weather."

Yet Captain Murchison's heart had not a little reason to feel sour and disappointed.

Having served his country for many years, and on

Digitized by Google

several occasions distinguished himself by his gallantry, he had now been shelved with but little compensation, as of no further use.

Blessed with little or no private means of his own, like many others of his kind, he had received from the grandmotherly Goverment the miserable pittance of a half-pay Captain *plus* the mite of compassionate allowance on account of his irreparable wounds. And so, with this dole, he was allowed to sink or swim without any further consideration.

True, in addition to this, the Victoria Cross brought him the magnificent honorarium of £10 sterling a year. For I am now speaking of a period before the doughty Piper Findlater of Dargai fame conferred a real boon on his brother Croziers by opening the eyes of Whitehall to the very obvious fact that disabled heroes cannot like chameleons live on air, but must feed and fare like other folk.

He forced, in fact, the powers that be, to raise the yearly honorarium to the more substantial sum of £50, in order to save the said occult powers from the spectacle of witnessing their national heroes tramping the country in funny little groups as strolling players, with their vaunted decorations dangling on their breasts!

To make matters worse, Murchison commuted a great part of his pension, and with the small capital thereby obtained, ventured on business with the old incautious courage and—with the old and usual results.

The promoters of the Hubble-Bubble Company were far too 'cute for the chivalrous soldier. Moreover, like many other aspirants to literary wealth and fame, the labours of Captain Murchison were more earnest than lucrative, till he began to realize like the poet Gray, that:

> Too poor for a bribe and too proud to importune
> He had not the method of making a fortune.

Morning after morning he had the mortification of listening to the "flop, flop" of his typed manuscripts as the post passed them through the panel of the front door which was only, alas, too close to his very modest study.

And though all of them were "returned with thanks" from the very polite editors, it was but poor consolation for the struggling would-be author. Indeed, these flops on the floor became gradually to sound more like popguns to his ears, and to grate on his nerves more than the fusillade of his enemies used to do in more stirring times.

"Here they come—flop, flop—" he would say to his wife at the simple breakfast board, as the typical knock of the postman and the equally typical flop of the manuscripts almost reached their ears together. "But never say die; people will read me some day in spite of them."

He was a man of wide travel, varied adventure, rich fancy, and a dauntless determination that was not easily disheartened.

On a certain morning, as he was sipping his cocoa in the usual way, he picked something out of one of the familiar foolscap envelopes and threw it on the table before his wife.

"There, Grace," he said, with a perceptible tremor in his voice, "*there*, I told you so. Perseverance surmounts difficulties and the copy-book maxims are true after all."

It was the proof for correction of his very whimsical story of *Venus and Bellerophon* which had been rejected, with kindest thanks, of course, by at least half-a-dozen mediocre periodicals, but was at last accepted by none

Mr. RUSSELL has much pleasure in calling attention to the following Press Notices that have been recently published in the leading newspapers. Copies of the journals containing the Original Notices, and many hundred others, are on view at Woburn House.

A SLANDER ON FAT PEOPLE.

OBESITY IS NOT THE RESULT OF GLUTTONY.

CAN OBESITY BE REMOVED?

"It is high time that the old and false idea that excessive corpulency is a thing to be endured because it cannot be banished without danger to the general health should be got rid of once for all. Equally pernicious is the idea for which some of our comic poets and humourous painters are partially responsible, that too much rotundity of figure adds either to the dignity of the person or the cheerful aspect of its owner. . . . These very practical considerations are suggested by the perusal of an excellently written and most suggestive little volume, entitled 'Corpulency and the Cure.' The book is in its eighteenth edition, and the reason of this popularity is not far to seek. Its author, Mr. F. C. Russell, of Woburn House, Store Street, Bedford Square, London, W.C. (who will send a copy to any applicant who encloses 4d. in stamps), has devised a method of treatment which he clearly describes, giving, in fact, the actual formula of the remedy which he prescribes. A work of this sort is naturally being largely recommended by persons who have benefited by its treatment to others who are still sufferers from adiposity. Mr. Russell asks all who are experimenting with his remedy to weigh themselves carefully every day. For the results he appeals not to the fancied feelings of the patients, but to the hard testimony of scales and weights, which cannot be suspected of any prejudice in favour of Mr. Russell's system. Such tests show, as a matter of fact, the loss of from 1lb. to 2lb. per day, directly the remedy begins to be used. This is a perfectly harmless decoction, prepared from a few herbs which one can find in the rural lane."—*South Wales Daily News*, June 15th, 1900.

MARVELLOUS RESULTS IN CURING CORPULENCY BY THE "RUSSELL" TREATMENT.

"'Corpulency and the Cure.'—This is the title of an interesting volume (256 pages) which has been written by Mr. F. C. Russell, of Woburn House, Store Street, London, W.C., and it deals in a commonsense fashion with a subject which is of considerable moment to a large number of people. Mr Russell has devoted more study than perhaps any other medical expert to the question of obesity, and his unique experience in the treatment of the thousands of cases that have come under his care has conclusively shown him the falsity of the idea that excessive corpulence is a thing that must be endured because it cannot be banished without danger to the general health. He has proved that quite the contrary is the case, and the hundreds of testimonials which are given in the book constitute an unanswerable testimony to the efficacy of his remedy. Mr. Russell handles his subject with the skill of a master, but withal he uses such simple language that all may understand, and his book is full of useful information. He points out that in most of the so-called remedies for adiposity the administration of deleterious compounds is advocated, or that adherence to some more or less objectionable or stringent forms of dietary or abstinence is insisted upon. Having given the subject constant attention for many years, Mr Russell has succeeded in producing and perfecting a purely vegetable preparation which is guaranteed to be perfectly harmless, while he claims that it reduces superfluous fat in such an unerring manner that 2½ hours is usually a sufficient time to test its efficacy by stepping on a weighing machine. In short, the advantages of Mr Russell's method may thus be summed up: the compound is purely vegetable and perfectly harmless; it does not demand those semi-starvation dietary restrictions which are so weakening to the system; it is most efficacious in reducing fat without injury; and it aims at the radical cure of obesity, so that when persons under treatment have been reduced to their normal weight the incubus may not return. Moreover, the treatment is an exceedingly pleasant one. The medicine which is prescribed is an agreeble, refreshing, cooling, invigorating tonic, and allays thirst in a marvellous manner. It is purely vegetable, contains no poison, has no pernicious effect on the most delicate subject, is free from objection of any kind, and is neither aperient, constipating, weakening, nor sickly. It is sufficient that Mr Russell's book has reached its eighteenth edition, and is certainly well worth reading. It can be obtained by sending four penny stamps to the address as above. Amongst the numerous unsolicited letters which Mr. Russell is daily receiving, mention may be made of one from Mr. F. Upton, of Brazil, who says: 'I have over 100 persons here under your treatment, and, without one single exception, all with most satisfactory results.' This is testimony indeed."—Extract from *The Bristol Mercury*, June 16th, 1900.

Digitized by Google

other than the *Hurry-up Magazine*, the very tip-top of the whole caboodle.

His heart bounded with joy.

"Dada, dear," said a little boy beside him, "me get new boots now."

The appeal of his little son suddenly roused him to a sense of his downfall, and he was for a moment almost bursting into tears.

But recollecting himself, he caught his son passionately in his once powerful arms and nearly smothered him with kisses.

"Yes, Charlie, that you will, my boy, and at no distant date."

The date was more distant than he expected.

The greedy Mr. Grabb was clamouring for his rent, and the overdue taxes were also to pay. Moreover, the inimitable story of *Venus and Bellerophon* took an unconscionable long time to appear in the coveted columns of the great *Hurry-up Magazine*, and other contributions that were being tardily accepted by other periodicals seemed to share the same fate, till hope deferred was enough to make him feel sick at heart in earnest.

Little Charlie was still without his boots, and the rent was still to pay, though Mr. Grabb was getting more and more abusive.

"I 'ave 'ad hexperience o' the likes of yer before," the latter went on one fine morning, "gintlemans as 'ave plinty of pride and hempty pockets. But I'll manage yer, and out of this 'ere 'ouse ye'll trouse or my name ain't Mister Abraham Grabb."

Murchison once upon a time would probably have trounced if not "trousedˮ Mister Abraham Grabb on the spot for his insolence. Yet here was this ursurer, who would probably run into a hole if he were ever shown the muzzle of a musket—here, I say, he was feeding on the fat of the land, and actually at that moment more capable on his legs than the Victoria Cross hero, who had practically lost his all in the cause of his country.

Yes, the house of Mister Abraham Grabb, though jerry built withal, and not at all free from rats, was a little too luxurious for the very modest means at their disposal. They must go seek diggings somewhere else, and as the rent due to Mr. Grabb was still to pay, these same quarters must be of the humblest description.

It was indeed painful to watch the poor Captain, as jog, jog, went his noisy wooden leg when ascending the bare wooden staircase which led to the upper story, where they had been compelled to take refuge from the importunate Mr. Grabb.

For the first few days the disabled officer was occupied in setting his little curiosities in order. But no sooner was that done than he began again to crave for literature.

It was then that he first missed the sound of the dull thud of his returned contributions in the early mornings; and it struck him all of a heap that they were still undergoing the same process through the door of his late dwelling.

His appeal to the previous landlord was no use whatever, for the latter had already locked the premises, and was not likely to open them again for his late tenant.

"Fork out yer tin, yer loafer," was that gentleman's reply. "But fork or fork no, yer niver see the hinside of that 'ere 'ouse again."

What could be done?

Captain Murchison had no lien whatever on the house—quite the contrary; and no legal power could therefore compel the ruthless landlord to yield. Yet the thing must needs be done. On the principle, therefore, that "necessity knows no laws," Murchison for the first time in his knowledge deliberately broke the laws of his country, *à la* Bill Sykes.

And except for the gravity of the occasion, it would have been a truly ludicrous sight to watch him on a certain night creeping through the window, with his helpless wooden leg literally *sticking* out behind him!

There at the back of the door he found the floor strewn with returned manuscripts, accepted proofs, and, (oh, glorious sight!) a copy of the premier *Hurry-up Magazine*, with his wonderful tale of "Venus and Bellerophon" occupying the place of honour in its coveted pages.

The man that never trembled in real danger did so here from a curious amalgam of joy and—fear of the policeman!

It had been a drizzly night, however, and good Mr. Bobby of the Beat was at this particular time being gaily regaled in a neighbouring kitchen, and quite oblivious of the presence of the amateur burglar.

And most marvellous sight of all, as he opened a certain brown envelope, lo!——

"A cheque or I'm a Dutchman," he gasped, as he anxiously looked at it in the dim light of the candle he had brought with him. A reaction was his when on looking more minutely he discovered that like most of the other papers, the cheque had been so gnawed by the rats that it was—not negotiable.

In much trepidation (and fear of the policeman) he threw everything into his handbag, put out the candle, cautiously crept out through the window, and hurried home.

There was joy in that upper storey that night, for though the cheque was not negotiable in its present tatterdemalion state, it required only a little time to return it and get another in its place. The tale of "Venus and Bellerophon" became quite the rage of the silly season, and was the very making of the gallant Captain in his new sphere.

He got his innings at last, and so stuck to his stumps, that he is now as famous for his pen as he once was for his doughty claymore.

Lieutenant-Colonel John Macgregor.

YOUR PHOTO ENLARGED FOR SEVEN SHILLINGS.

If you have a relative who has passed away either at home in peace or abroad in war, send his photograph—which you probably cherish—and we will enlarge it to a beautiful India ink and crayon portrait, 15in. × 12in. mounted on plate sunk mount 24in. × 19in.

Relatives of soldiers at the front may obtain one of these enlargements for 6s.

Other photos will be enlarged for 7s.

Full particulars appeared last week, and will appear next week. They also appear in the current issue of the

Illustrated Weekly News,

and the coupon from that paper must accompany each order.

Digitized by Google

HAVE YOU ECZEMA?

Or anything the matter with your skin? If you have, do send to the Antexema Co., 83 Castle Road, London, N.W., naming this paper, and enclosing one stamp for postage for a free trial sample of "Antexema."

This wonderful outward remedy has been the means of curing a very large number of cases of Eczema and Skin Diseases. The secret of its successful action is told in a little book called "Skin Troubles," which is sent free with each trial sample.

Hear what a nurse says about "Antexema." Nurse E. F. Brown, of 3 Ullswater Road, West Norwood, writes: "I am a nurse and have used your "Antexema" for some time and recommend it to my patients. All who have tried it are equally pleased with the results."

USE "ANTEXEMA."

We wish to urge all readers of this paper who suffer in any way from skin trouble to give this standard Skin Remedy a trial. There is no need to spend anything beyond postage until its efficacy has been proved.

"Antexema" is sold by chemists and stores (please avoid substitutes), or will be sent per return and packed free from observation for 1/3 or 2/9 by the ANTEXEMA CO., 83 Castle Road, London, N.W,

Neuralgia Positively Cured!

Free Test Offered.

The annexed cut presents in the prominent white lines the nerves most liable to attacks of Neuralgia. Sufferers will know only too well the pain tracks, and will be glad to know of a Simple and Sure Remedy. The proprietors will send Free two sample Zox Powders to any reader of *Short Stories* sending stamped envelope to ZOX CO., 11 HATTON GARDEN, LONDON E.C.

SEND FOR

DR. EVANS'S (U.S.A.)

Pamphlet on Nervous Diseases of All Kinds. THIS PAMPHLET describes all the symptoms which arise from Diseases of the NERVOUS SYSTEM. It is up-to-date, having been compiled after years of labour and experience in the Treatment of these Maladies. It is complete, practical, and can be readily understood and acted upon. It gives pure and simple advice to Sufferers. Send stamped addressed envelope to GEORGE WRIGHT, Esq., Colne House, REMBRANDT ROAD, LEE, LONDON, S.E. (*Name this Paper.*)

KEATING'S POWDER

KILLS BUGS FLEAS MOTHS BEETLES

TINS 3D 6D & 1S

THE NEW BELLOWS 9D

ALL FAT PEOPLE

can safely **Reduce Weight and cure Corpulency permanently** by taking **TRILENE TABLETS** (Regd.) for a few weeks. They are small, agreeable, harmless, and never fail to IMPROVE both HEALTH and FIGURE without Change of Diet. An English Countess writes: "*Your Trilene Tablets act admirably.*" Send 2s. 6d. to **THE TRILENE CO.**, Sole Proprietors, **66 Finsbury Pavement, London.**

SAMPLES OF TESTIMONIALS.

Princess Liechtenstein writes from Landsberg, Austria: "Pray send your excellent tablets directly." Mr. Canham, 87 Alexandra Road, Norwich: "Tablets cured my wife of extreme stoutness; it has never returned." Mrs. H. Cox, 28 Watnall Road, Hucknall Torkard, writes: "The Tablets reduced me 14 stone." Mrs. S. Alexander, 102 Dixon Street, New Swindon, says: "They reduced me 24lb., and I am cured." Mrs. Darnley-Smith, of Landscove Vicarage, Ashburton, says: "Tablets have reduced me very much." Mrs. Crossley, of Rose Hill, Torver, Comston, says: "I weigh much less and can breathe so much easier; I am delighted."

DRUNKENNESS

CURED. This can be done with or without patient's knowledge. Send me a stamp and I will tell you how. (Send no money.) Address, in confidence, Mrs. C. H. (Room 8), 195 Oxford Street London, W.

JUNO CYCLES FOR LADIES AND GENTS.

FREE OR FIXED WHEELS.

THE VERY BEST.

Carriage Paid. Discount for Cash.

Monthly

£8 10s.	... 14/2
£10 10s.	... 17/6
£12 ...	... 20/-
£12 12s.	... 21/-
£14 14s.	... 24/6
£15 15s.	... 26/3

Road Racer ... £10 0s. 16s. 8d. Monthly. Write for New Light Roadster, £10 10s. 17s. 6d. Monthly. Season's List of JUNO Cycles and Accessories, over 100 pages, sent post free. Scorcher Brake, 1/-. Standard Cyclometer, 10,000 miles, 1/10

METROPOLITAN MACHINISTS CO. Ltd.

Juno Cycle School & Works, 75, 76, Bishopsgate Street, Without, E.C., and Piccadilly Circus, London, W.

KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR

KAPUTINE

SAFE REMEDY CURES

HEADACHE and NEURALGIA

IMMEDIATELY,

And is sold by all leading Chemists in Packets of 18 Doses, 1s.

To ANYONE HAVING THE LEAST DIFFICULTY, it will be sent post free for 12 Stamps by "KAPUTINE Ltd.," Huddersfield; or, on receipt of a stamped addressed envelope, A. M. Kaputine, Huddersfield, you will receive a free sample.

The fact that "KAPUTINE" is recommended by many leading Medical Men, and is used in National Hospitals and Infirmaries proves that it is THE, THE recognised SAFE REMEDY FOR HEADACHES.

Refuse Substitutes and demand "KAPUTINE," the Safe Remedy. There is no substitute "LIKE IT"; nothing "AS GOOD"; nothing "SIMILAR."

KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR

Digitized by Google

The Brain Gymnasium

In these competitions a prize of £2 will be awarded each week to the competitor whose attempt we receive giving the correct solutions of all the puzzles. If more than one is absolutely correct the prize of £2 will be given to the first correct attempt dealt with.

If no lists of absolutely correct solutions are sent in the first prize will be awarded to the competitor whose attempt is first dealt with showing the fewest mistakes.

Each week we shall award in addition to the above, either ten of our silver plated pencil-cases or ten popular six shilling novels, to be distributed amongst the competitors whose attempts are absolutely correct and have failed to win the first prize, or, if no complete lists of correct solutions are received, to those whose attempts show the fewest mistakes.

Write all your solutions on one sheet of paper, putting the number against each. Post the batch in an envelope marked "Brain Gymnasium," to reach the Editor, Short Stories, 18 Henrietta Street, Covent Garden, W.C., by first post on Monday, August 27th, 1900.

Readers are invited to submit puzzles, acrostics, conundrums, word-squares, etc., for publication on this page. A gold-plated pencil-case will be given to each reader whose attempts are used. All attempts must be vouched for as original, and, of course, it is distinctly understood that the sender of a puzzle must neither compete in the competition nor divulge to anyone the solution. Any reader found infringing this rule will be severely dealt with.

No. 193.

I am the beginning of creation and the end of the world, but also the middle of now. What am I?

No. 194.

Re-arrange the figures 1 to 16 so that the columns, added upwards, horizontally, and diagonally, each make 34.

No. 195.

Form a word-diamond from equivalents of the following: A consonant; to place; a fruit; an adverb; a consonant.

No. 196.

The following letters, when re-arranged, will form a double word-square, the connecting word of which is an English town:

AAAA B DDD EEEEEE M NNNNN OOOOOO RR T VV W Z.

No. 197.

Befrilled and fair, my FIRST appeared;
You scarcely would have dreamed
That from the brine and densest smoke
The FIRST had been redeemed.

My next, at best, a counterfeit,
Though real it may appear;
It also means: to ridicule,
To disappoint, or jeer.

My WHOLE in summer's often found
'Neath shade of spreading trees;
Affected much by those whose home
Is on the rolling seas.

No. 198.

The following is a grammatical sentence. What is it?

C
TEMPT
SA SA

RESULT OF BRAIN GYMNASIUM.

Nos. 175 to 180.

The prize of £2 has been awarded this week to Mrs. Cooke, of Portswood House, Kew Gardens, whose solution was the first correct one dealt with.

A copy of "At a Winter's Fire," by Bernard Capes, has been sent to:

F. G. Melville, Totterdown.
H. B. Thompson, Bracknell.
H. Quinton, Southampton.
Mrs. Bowden, Battersea, S.W.
J. S. Ryan, East Ham, E.
D. G. Jelley, Plumstead.
W. J. Barter, Cork.
Miss G. Nash, Brixton Hill.
F. J. Turner, Wolverhampton.
J. H. Heeley, Seaforth.

SOLUTIONS TO PUZZLES.

Nos. 181 to 186.

No. 181. When it is $\frac{2}{7}$ of S—IX—TEEN.

No. 182. Eleven seconds.

No. 183. Brook, rook, hook.

No. 184.

B L E W
L A V A
E V E R
W A R D E N S
E V E N
N E R O
S N O W

No. 185. Nowhere.

No. 186.

PORTSMOUTH.
P ortugal
O use
R embrandt
T ay
S icily
M oscow
O porto
U ral
T iber
H ull

SHORT STORIES ADVERTISEMENT RATES.

Single column, per inch, per insertion	£0 10 0
Double ,, ,, ...	1 0 0
Full page inside, facing page of matter, either white paper or 2nd or 3rd page of cover, or back page, per insertion	10 0 0
Half-page ,, ,, ,, ...	5 0 0
Quarter-page ,, ,, ...	2 10 0
Eighth-page ,, ,, ...	1 5 0
Front page, whole ,, ,, ...	12 10 0
,, half	6 5 0

All spaces above one-eighth of a page are charged at per page rate.

Series discount: 5 per cent. for 13, 10 per cent. for 26, 15 per cent. for 52 insertions.

Black blocks are charged 25 per cent. extra. All advertisements are subject to approval. All copy must be sent in by Noon on Tuesday, August 22nd, if intended for the issue on sale Sept. 4th, and dated September 8th. The Proprietors reserve the right to hold over or suspend the insertion of any advertisement without prejudice to other insertions on order. All communications should be addressed to the Advertisement Manager, "Pearson's Weekly" Offices, Henrietta Street, London, W.C.

Printed and Published by C. Arthur Pearson Ltd., at Pearson's Weekly Buildings, Henrietta Street, London, W.C.

Digitized by Google

EVERY GOOD NURSE USES AND RECOMMENDS

HOLLOWAY'S PILLS and OINTMENT.

THOUSANDS of WRITTEN TESTIMONIALS— FROM ALL QUARTERS OF THE WORLD— BEAR WITNESS TO THEIR

UNFAILING AND MARVELLOUS EFFICACY

IN EVERY FORM OF KNOWN DISEASE.

Manufactured only at 78 New Oxford Street, London; sold by all Chemists and Medicine Vendors. Advice gratis, at above address, daily (Saturdays excepted), between the hours of 11 and 4, or by letter.

WIVES AND MOTHERS SHOULD NEVER BE WITHOUT THEM.

BAD FEET.

FREE. A gentleman who has been cured, will send particulars of a simple remedy that gives instant relief, and prevents all unpleasant smells. Stamped envelope to "H.," No. 50 Office, 76 Finsbury Pavement. E.C.

TOO STOUT.

I was for years; by chance I came across a simple home remedy that reduced me from 17st. to 10st. 12lbs., and I will willingly send particulars **free** to any sufferer enclosing stamp. Mrs. L. E. Fell, 195 Oxford Street, London, W.

VARICOCELE.

Every man suffering from Varicocele and the allied troubles, should send for treatise, describing their Causes, Symptoms, Results, and Successful and Painless Treatment without surgical operation or the use of cumbersome trusses and electrical appliances. Will be sent sealed, post free, three stamps.

S. S. MURRAY,
7, Southampton Row, London, W.C.

A MAGNIFICENT COMPLEXION . . GUARANTEED . .

By the free use of LILLIE POWDER. It nourishes, heals, soothes, and brings Health and Beauty.

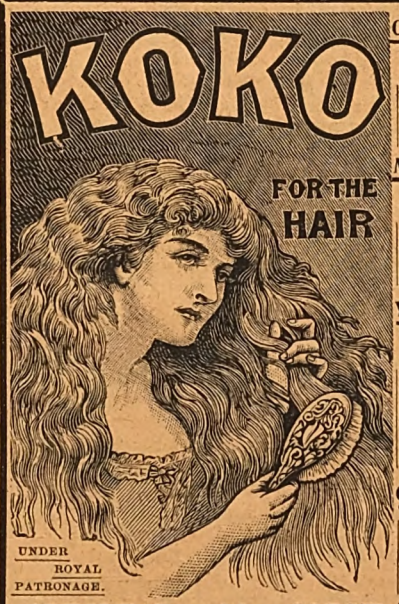
Prepared from the original recipe invented by Mrs. Langtry, under the strict supervision of Her Majesty's Perruquier, Mr. W. Clarkson.

Order it of your Chemist and refuse all substitutes, as they may be injurious.

Three Tints: BLANCHE, NATURELLE, & RACHEL. Of all Chemists, Hairdressers, Stores, etc.

THE LILLIE SYNDICATE, 3 HENRIETTA ST., LONDON, W.C.

KOKO FOR THE HAIR



UNDER ROYAL PATRONAGE.

OLD PEOPLE LIKE IT

for its wonderful power to *invigorate decayed hair*, and induce an entirely new growth when that is possible.

MIDDLE-AGED PEOPLE LIKE IT,

because it *prevents them from getting bald*, keeps dandriff away, and makes the hair grow thick and strong.

YOUNG LADIES LIKE IT

As a dressing, because it gives the hair a *beautiful glossy lustre*, ensures a *luxuriant growth*, and enables them to dress it and keep it in any style that may be desired.

CHILDREN LIKE IT,

Because it keeps the hair and scalp cool and clean, *allays irritation*, and keeps the hair in whatever position desired.

KOKO for the HAIR is a tonic, cleansing, invigorating preparation, it eradicates scurf and dandriff, prevents hair from falling or turning grey, promotes growth, contains no dye or greasy substance, is the most cleanly of all hair preparations and invariably gives satisfaction.

THEY ALL LIKE IT,

Because it is as *pure as crystal*, perfectly colourless, contains no poisonous substance, no sugar of lead, sulphur, nitrate of silver, or grease, and does not soil or colour *the scalp, face, or the most delicate fabric in clothing.*

1/-, 2/6, and 4/6, of all Chemists, Hairdressers, &c., everywhere

Advertisements should be sent to "Short Stories" Advertisement Department, Henrietta Street, London, W.C.

Digitized by Google

A.B. CYCLES.

PHENOMENAL TESTIMONY OF SUPERB VALUE BY

ACTUAL RIDERS

THAT A.B. CYCLES ARE WELL WORTH THE PRICE WE CHARGE—£15.

"Am very pleased with it. I thank you very much. I quite think this one **worth the £17.**"—H. Hitchcox, Denton Harleston, June 24th, 1898.

"It is a lovely machine, and **well worth the advertised price of £23.**"—R. Oliver Jones, Rhayader, October 29th, 1898.

"I have asked a practical cyclist to examine it, and he tells me it is quite **worth your listed price (£23).**"—J. H. Alves, Spalding, February 6th, 1899.

"According to the views of several experienced cyclists, it is **fully worth the fifteen pounds.**"—J. W. Swindale, Motherwell, March 2nd, 1899.

"The machine is a real beauty, and **well worth the advertised price (£23).**"—J. Dawson, Blackpool, July 17th, 1899.

"I am exceedingly pleased with the bicycle; it is a first-class machine, and **well worth £18,** and is much admired by everyone."—F. Cowell, Llanfairfechan, September 17th, 1899.

"If ever I want another, and **it cost £26,** I should have the same kind."—Mrs. J. C. Gadsby (Lincs).

"Three years ago I bought one of your machines **(£18 10s.),** and I cannot speak too highly of it."—Samuel Dennels, Crewe.

"I have paid as much as £18, wholesale price, for one, but it did not come up to this. In my opinion it is **good value at £20** to any one." Alex. Scott, Callander. N.B.

"This machine you have sent me is a great deal better than one by a very well-known firm for which I gave **£16.**"—Rev. W. G. Edwards, Southampton.

The machine is **well worth £18 cash.** All the people here are astonished."—W. Bullock, Lydney.

"I have shown it to several cycling friends, and they all think it **well worth £15.**"—L. F. Glynn, Slough, July 10th, 1900.

EXPERT CRITICS

THAT A.B. CYCLES STAND CRITICAL EXAMINATION.

"One gentleman, who has been **an agent,** says it is equal to any £20 machine, and I may say that he has never seen an A.B. machine before."—Geo. Burgess, Stockport, May 9th, 1899.

"It was sent to a **large cycle agent** near here to be looked at, who did not know of your cycles, and the manager greatly praised it."—Capt. Walter Poynder, Southsea, February 28th, 1899.

"I have experience of many makes of machine, being a **district agent** of the ———, and having business transactions with R— W—, R—, H—, S—, and other companies, but a chance ride on one of your machines has convinced me of their superiority."—P. Shanahan, Killucan, West Meath.

"**An expert** who has overhauled it expresses a high opinion of it."—Rev. S. H. Smith, Berks.

"I am happy to inform you that your bicycle met with his decided approval, although he builds bicycles himself."—E. Robson, Northumberland, December 23rd, 1898.

"**Several experts** were looking at it, and they express a very favourable opinion of it."—W. Browne, co. Down, February 21st, 1899.

"One of the oldest riders in our club examined it yesterday. He has several makes himself, he is an **expert engineer,** and he was very much pleased with the fittings and bearings."—Jno. H. Worthington, Preston, April 26th, 1899.

"I have seen and examined the cycle you supplied to Mr. G. Oakley, and am delighted with it."—A. Whitworth, **Cycle Agent,** Deepcar, Sheffield, April 20th, 1899.

"A rider of several years' standing, after **critically examining** the machine, told me it is as perfect as it is possible to build a machine."—E. T. Brickwell, Scarborough, May 25th, 1899.

"I called in **an expert,** asking him to go over it carefully, and note any fault he might detect. His verdict was, for easy running, good material and high finish, it could not be beaten."—William Ostler, Weston, September 20th, 1899.

ORIGINALS AND HUNDREDS LIKE THEM WILLINGLY SHOWN TO ANY LADY OR GENTLEMAN FAVOURING US WITH A CALL.

During the last few days we have taken on 78 extra men and another overseer at the factory, besides two additional offices and six extra clerks in London. We are working every day till midnight.

NEVER HAVE WE BEEN SO BUSY.

Our Machines are the Acme of Perfection. It is Absolutely Impossible to build better ones.

A.B. CYCLE CO. Ltd., 59, 60, 67, 68, 69 Chancery Lane, Holborn, W.C.

Advertisements should be sent to "Short Stories" Advertisement Department, Henrietta Street, London, W.C

Digitized by Google

THIS IS THE PAPER YOU ARE LOOKING FOR!

SHORT STORIES

A WEEKLY MAGAZINE FOR HOME AND TRAIN

No. 608. FOR WEEK ENDING AUGUST 25TH, 1900. [ONE PENNY.

TAKE CARE

when drinking Cocoa to have the pure article only, as many so-called "Pure" Cocoas contain added matter that is not only unnecessary, but often positively harmful.

CADBURY'S

COCOA

IS ABSOLUTELY PURE

And untampered with, and can be taken with the greatest benefit in Childhood, in Youth, or in Old Age.

THE BRITISH MEDICAL JOURNAL—Article on "Drugged Foods," June 4th, 1898—says:

"There is a general concensus of opinion that the addition of active drugs, belonging to the classes of nervine stimulants to beverages and articles of dietary in ordinary domestic use is not for the benefit of the community, and is likely in time to produce a deterioration of the public health. . . At the present moment we are beset by another danger arising from the addition of kola to certain articles of food. . . Kola has been found on analysis to contain 2·13 per cent. of caffeine. Caffeine is undoubtedly a useful drug when employed in suitable cases and in appropriate doses, but if taken habitually in large quantities it is capable of inducing an undesirable condition of over-stimulation of the nerve centres."

When asking for Cocoa, insist on having CADBURY'S—Sold only in Packets and Tins—as other Cocoas are sometimes substituted for the sake of extra profit.

Advertisements should be sent to "Short Stories" Advertisement Department, Henrietta Street, London, W.C.

Digitized by Google

"WORTH A GUINEA A BOX."

BEECHAM'S PILLS

FOR ALL

BILIOUS & NERVOUS DISORDERS,
Sick Headache, Constipation, Wind and Pains in Stomach, Impaired Digestion, Disordered Liver, and Female Ailments.

SALE OVER SIX MILLION BOXES YEARLY.

In Boxes, 1s. 1½d. and 2s. 9d. each, with full directions.

Prepared only by the Proprietor,

THOMAS BEECHAM, St. Helens, Lancashire.

Sold by all Druggists and Patent Medicine Dealers everywhere.

ORDER BY PARCEL POST WITH

JOHN NOBLE LTD.

The Largest Costumiers and Drapery Warehousemen in the World.
All Orders Promptly Executed and Satisfaction Guaranteed.

A NEW AUTUMN DESIGN.

MODEL 255

Fashionable Coat and Skirt. The smartest Half-Guinea design before the public, and Better Value than the best of other makers. Consists of double-breasted Tailor-fashioned Coat stitched round Edge with White or **10/6** Collar, Cuffs and Black as desired. Skirt of latest shape with box-pleat back. Produced in John Noble Cheviot Serge or Costume Coating. Price complete only **10/6**; carriage 6d. extra. Skirt alone, **5/6**; carriage 5d.

HAT, as sketch, **8/6**; carriage 6d. extra.

PATTERNS (and New Season's Catalogues) **SENT POST FREE** of the two very durable cloths in which the Costumes are made:
The John Noble Cheviot Serge and **The John Noble Costume Coating.**

A Full Dress Length of either Cloth (6 yards 52 inches wide) for **7/6**; carriage 8d.

Colours: Black, Navy, Brown, Myrtle, Fawn, Khaki, Grey, and Royal Blue.

Sizes in Stock of Ladies' Costumes are: 34, 36, 38 in. round bust (under arms); Waists 24, 26, 28 in.; Skirts being 38, 40, 42 in. long in front. Any other size made to measure, **1/6** extra.

Please mention "Short Stories" when writing.

JOHN NOBLE Ltd.
BROOK STREET MILLS, **MANCHESTER.**

TO THE QUEEN PURVEYORS

CROSSE & BLACKWELL'S

GREEN PEA, GRAVY, JULIENNE, MULLIGATAWNY, TOMATO, HOUSEHOLD, CRESSY, &c.

SOUP TABLETS

OF ALL GROCERS ETC. THROUGHOUT THE WORLD

DRUNKENNESS

CURED. This can be done with or without patient's knowledge. Send me a stamp and I will tell you how. (Send no money.) Address, in confidence, Mrs. C. H. (Room 8), 195 Oxford Street, London, W.

SULPHOLINE LOTION,

For clearing the skin from Spots, Blemishes, Redness, Roughness, giving a Beautiful Complexion and pleasing appearance.

SHILLING BOTTLES.

A SUM of from 12s. to 25s. per week can be earned in spare hours or evenings by either sex everywhere.—Send addressed envelope for particulars to Box 24, Eclipse Works, 89 Aldersgate Street, E.C.

WHY BE FAT?

When a lady, who has discovered a simple means of Self-Cure will be happy to send particulars of same to any sufferer from this distressing complaint. Free on receipt of stamped addressed envelope. ADDRESS:

Mrs. TREVOR WELLS,
63 *HIGH HOLBORN, LONDON, W.C.*

HAIR DESTROYED.

Send me an envelope (stamped and addressed) and I will tell you how to remove all superfluous hair **free of charge.** (Send no money.) Address, in confidence, Miss E. V. (Room 3), 195 Oxford Street, London, W.

ESTABLISHED 1851.

BIRKBECK BANK

Southampton Buildings, Chancery Lane, London.

2% on CURRENT ACCOUNTS, on the minimum monthly balances when not drawn below £100.

The BIRKBECK ALMANACK, with full particulars, post free. FRANCIS RAVENSCROFT, *Manager.*

Digitized by Google

SHORT STORIES

No. 608. Price One Penny.

Week ending August 25th, 1900.

Baron Steiner's Great Discovery.

A NEW ZEALAND STORY.

ONE evening, in the summer of 1886, a number of tourists and visitors were sitting on the balcony of the Thermal Hotel, Rotorua, watching the rapidly changing beauty of the lake which lay spread out beneath them, whose waters were touched with the subdued and fleeting tints of the dying day. Beyond the lake the distant hill tops were bathed in the gorgeous effulgence of the setting sun. In the foreground, the little native village of Ohinemutu nestled amid innumerable tiny columns of steam which rose from a multitude of hot springs, charging the evening air with the pungent odour of sulphur.

To the majority of those on the balcony the scene was new and strange. Most of them had come from other lands; some in search of health, others again in quest of change and novelty.

The gentlemen were standing about in various attitudes, enjoying an after-dinner cigar or pipe; the ladies were clustered in little groups, discussing the day's programme and comparing notes of the places they had visited.

Through the open French windows of the drawing-room came the sound of music. A young girl was playing a Hungarian air on the piano, a low and tender melody whose plaintive cadence harmonised with the softness and witchery of the fading sunset.

"And you have not yet visited the Terraces," a stout and showily-dressed lady was saying to her companion, a thin, pale-faced little woman, evidently an invalid. "They are a dream. I have never seen anything more lovely, and Charles and I have been everywhere. They say it must have taken millions of years to form them. They are made with something that is in the water. Charles," she exclaimed, suddenly, raising her voice and addressing a portly, elderly gentleman who was standing at the end of the balcony in conversation with a

All rights reserved.]

Digitized by Google

"Do you not think, Mrs. Egerton, you ought to have your shawl?"

short and foreign-looking tourist, "what do they call the stuff that the Terraces are made of?"

"Silica," replied the individual addressed.

"Yes, that's it, my dear," she went on, taking up the thread of her conversation, "silica; it's wonderful. Of course, you will see them?"

"I am not sure," answered the invalid, in a doubting tone. "I am still very weak, and the doctor tells me I must avoid all exertion."

"You poor sufferers," said the stout lady, compassionately; "how I pity you. It would kill me to be cooped up all the time in this evil-smelling place and unable to fly about and enjoy myself. I must be always on the go. We are off to-morrow to catch the 'Frisco boat."

"Health is a precious gift," remarked the invalid, "but I do not find it at all dull here. One is always seeing new faces, and new faces interest me."

"It is as well," said the stout lady, "that you can find some pleasure in watching others enjoying themselves, but if I were in your place I should feel utterly wretched and lonely."

"I suffer a good deal," said the invalid quietly, "but I am not wretched, and I am not lonely. My son comes up from town very often, and Theresa—Miss Steiner, you know—is like a daughter to me. We spend many afternoons together when all the others are absent."

"Charles tells me her father, the Baron, is a very learned man, but a little eccentric."

"He is a student," replied the invalid, "and his hobby is the study of Maori life and customs."

"Are they Germans?" asked the stout lady. "I heard him speaking to his daughter to-day in what sounded like German."

"No," answered the invalid, "they are Austrians, I believe—at least, they come from Austria, but they have resided in England for a long time."

"One never knows," said the stout lady, "what importance to attach to a foreign title. An English baron is, of course, a member of the aristocracy, but your French counts and German barons don't impress you in the same way, do they?"

"I believe," said the invalid, "that Baron Steiner belongs to a very ancient Austrian family, but that through political troubles he lost his estate and had to leave the country."

"How romantic!" exclaimed the stout lady. "It is like the sort of thing one reads of in novels or sees on the stage. But what a strange idea," she added, "for a foreigner to come out here to study the Maoris. I think them abominable. The men are lazy and dirty, and the women are fat and ugly."

At this moment the music within ceased, and the player, a young girl, dressed in white, came out on the balcony.

Though her face proclaimed that she was yet in her teens—she was, indeed, little more than eighteen—her tall and graceful figure gave her a womanly appearance. In her mass of dark hair she wore a red flower. Though her features were pleasing they were not strikingly beautiful, but if they lacked somewhat the classic curve and perfect line, there was a winsomeness about her open countenance, an attractiveness in her bright dark eyes, a sweetness about the parted lips that could not fail to excite admiration.

She approached the invalid.

"Do you not think, Mrs. Egerton, you ought to have your shawl? The evenings grow chilly."

"Thank you, my dear," said the invalid, as the young lady placed a wrap around her shoulders. "This, Theresa, is Mrs. Tomlinson, the lady whose husband your father was speaking about."

Theresa bowed.

"Mrs. Egerton has been telling me how good you have been to her," said the stout lady, who felt absurdly embarrassed in the presence of this young girl, she knew not why.

"Oh, not at all," said Theresa, with a smile; "it is a mere nothing. We are left together, that is all, and Mrs. Egerton is not well."

"The Baron," said the invalid, in explanation to the stout lady, "is often absent for days."

"Perhaps you don't care to go with him," suggested the stout lady, addressing Theresa.

Theresa laughed a merry little laugh.

"He will not have me," she said. "He says it is not suitable for a lady. He is, you must know, an enthusiast. He is studying the life of the Maoris, and goes to their villages. He thinks I am better here looking after Mrs. Egerton; and, indeed, I think so too."

The invalid gave her a look of gratitude.

"I do not know what I should do without you, Theresa," she said.

Digitized by Google

At the other end of the balcony, Mr. Tomlinson and the Baron were holding an animated conversation about the story of Hinemoa and Tutanekai.

"It is," observed the Baron, who spoke slowly and with a pronounced foreign accent, "the most beautiful legend in Maori history."

"But," remarked Mr. Tomlinson, "it is not true, of course."

"All legend," said the Baron, "is based on some particles of truth. And what is beautiful I prefer to believe true as well."

"You should hear my wife's opinion about Hinemoa," rejoined Tomlinson, with a laugh.

"Mrs. Tomlinson is a lady of correct tastes," said the Baron politely, "fashioned in conformity with the proprieties of our civilised conventionalism. But the customs of native races must not be judged by the canons in vogue to-day. No young lady would now dream of doing what Hinemoa did; but, after all, Mr. Tomlinson, can we be quite certain that our modern maidens are so far above Hinemoa. But, excuse me, I see I am wanted by my daughter. You are really going then, to-morrow? Well, I wish you *bon voyage*."

And the Baron shook hands with Mr. Tomlinson and joined his daughter.

Baron Steiner and his daughter had been in Rotorua for two months, and his short, round figure, was well known to most of the natives in the district.

He was a man of fifty or thereabouts, square-shouldered, with a thick crop of fair hair surmounting a high and broad forehead.

He wore a carefully-trimmed beard and pointed moustache. Behind his gold-rimmed *pince nez* beamed a pair of keen blue eyes, fringed with shaggy eyebrows. His complexion was pale, and there were hollows in his cheeks; his mouth and chin showed that he was a man of determination and will.

The Baron and his daughter had been long settled in England; indeed, Theresa had but a dim recollection of their Austrian home.

When she was still a child her mother died, and shortly afterwards her father quitted his native country and took her to London. They had lived there ever since.

When she sometimes questioned him about the past the Baron would reply:

"My child, there are reasons which prevent your father from returning to his own country. Perhaps some day we will go back and you shall know everything. But, until then, let us be happy here in free and beautiful England. We are alone in the world. I have but you; and you, my child, have but me."

And he would kiss her tenderly and betake himself to his books.

The Baron lived in the style of one who had a comfortable income. He must, therefore, have been a man of means. He was a student and dabbled in science. His time was passed in his library and laboratory. Theresa was passionately attached to her father, and was happy in ministering to his wants and looking after the affairs of the little household.

One day the Baron surprised her by announcing that he had resolved to visit New Zealand.

"The voyage," he said, "will do you good. You will see many strange things; it will be a change. Besides," he added, "there are certain phenomena, my child, in that country which I desire to study. It is there that the great problem may be solved."

"What problem, father?" Theresa asked.

"My child," he replied, "you would not understand. All nature is a problem."

And Theresa was content.

She was not a philosopher, and grand enigmas of science, which she knew possessed a fascination for her father, did not trouble her. To love her father and to make others happy, that was enough for Theresa.

At Rotorua, she had been left much to herself, for the Baron was sometimes absent for days, and in this way she had come to know Mrs. Egerton, a widow lady from Auckland, who had been recommended by her doctor to try a course of the baths.

A warm friendship had sprung up between these two. They spent the greater portion of each day together, sitting on the balcony of the hotel, reading, or sewing, or in the grounds of the Sanatorium.

Mrs. Egerton had an only son, who occupied a position of trust in one of the Auckland banks. Walter Egerton was a quiet but manly young fellow, who, though only twenty-three, looked somewhat older.

He had stayed a week with his mother at Rotorua, and had on several occasions taken the two ladies for a row on the lake.

Theresa, who had been thrown little into the company of young men, thought Walter Egerton a pleasant companion and devoted son. He had, too, a rich baritone voice, and in the evening would sing while Theresa played the accompaniment.

In a short time these three came to feel that they had known each other and been friends for years, and Walter's periodical visits, though only brief, were looked forward to both by his mother and Theresa with keen pleasure.

The Baron, too, was drawn to the young man.

One day he said to Theresa:

"My child, if God had given me a son, instead of a daughter, I should have wished that son to be like Walter Egerton."

"Father," said Theresa, "you are neglecting me for your Maori studies."

Digitized by Google

And Theresa blushed and turned her head away.

The Baron's wanderings in quest of information concerning the Maori seldom took him, it was noticed, to the native settlements in the immediate neighbourhood of Rotorua. Where he went no one knew.

On one occasion he was seen camped at the base of Maungakakaramea, at the entrance to the Waiotapu Valley. At another time he was at Kouratara, a Maori village high up on the lofty Paeroa range which forms the western flank of the valley.

There is a track which runs from this village over the range, past the alum springs on the other side. This is a region full of interest for the geologist.

The Baron was both a geologist and a chemist, and appeared to find so much to study here that he determined to pitch his tent near to the alum springs. He spent a fortnight in this out-of-the-way place, exploring the numerous caves and fissures, and closely examining the character of the country. He became absorbed in his work. A native, one day, saw him emerging from an opening in the side of the range.

"What you look for?" asked the Maori.

The Baron started as from a dream. His head was uncovered, his eyes gleamed with a strange light. His dress was torn and bedraggled. He looked like one demented.

The Maori repeated his question.

"My friend," said the Baron, as if speaking to himself, "I am in quest of the unknown."

The native did not understand.

He thought the Baron was crazy and went on his way.

In this manner the weeks slipped past and the summer was drawing to a close, but the Baron did not talk of leaving Rotorua. On his return from his wanderings he would shut himself up in his room and pore over his books and pieces of rock that he had brought back with him from his rambles.

The tourist season had come to an end; nearly all the visitors had left. The only ladies who still remained at the hotel were Mrs. Egerton and Theresa.

"I cannot leave you here, my dear, by yourself," Mrs. Egerton had said, "after all your kindness to me. I shall stay until your father desires to leave."

But May had nearly gone, and the Baron had still made no sign. He had become strangely reticent and abstracted.

"Father," said Theresa to him one day, "you are neglecting me for your Maori studies. Have you not finished, dear. Is it necessary that we should stay here longer? I am growing home-sick."

The Baron regarded his daughter with a tender look.

"My child," he said, "it will not be for long. You must have a little patience. I have an idea. Hochstetter had a glimmer of it; but he did not hit upon the secret."

"Secret," repeated Theresa, "what secret, father? Why all this mystification? What is it you are trying to find out?"

"Wait," said the Baron; "you shall know, my child, soon."

The next morning the Baron again departed. He had left his tent near the alum spring, where he had already spent so much time in exploring the numerous caves on the range.

For a week he prosecuted his search with undiminished zeal.

The idea that had taken possession of his mind, which had occurred to him first after reading Hochstetter's work on New Zealand, was that here in this deserted spot, somewhere in the bowels of this riddled range, where the volcanic fires had blazed and smouldered, and smouldered and blazed for thousands of years, the great mystery of the origin of gold was to be solved. It was this haunting dream that had brought him to New Zealand—that had led him to undertake his solitary wanderings, under the pretence of studying the Maori.

And curious enough, the indications that he had succeeded in finding, had strengthened his belief that

Beneath him lay a mass of molten gold.

he was about to wrest from Nature one of her most jealously-guarded secrets.

He had discovered faint traces of gold on the walls of a cave, from the floor of which issued a thin jet of vapour. Beyond doubt, he said to himself, the gold was deposited by the vapour.

To find the source of the vapour was to find the source of the gold.

One day he stumbled by chance upon a new opening in the range. It was large enough to admit him without stooping, and looked like the mouth of a tunnel. He lit his lantern and entered without hesitation.

The walls were damp, and a peculiar odour filled the air. He felt a warm draught blow upon his face. He proceeded cautiously, for what hidden depths might not intercept his path.

Digitized by Google

Once before he had nearly stepped into a yawning fissure and been lost for ever. It was necessary, therefore to advance with care.

The passage which he was traversing had many windings, and he noticed that as he got further and further from the entrance it became narrower.

The sides were jagged and slimy. Strange and horrible things, shapeless creatures of darkness, dropped from the roof as if dazed and stunned by the light. Now and then a snake-like form would glide rapidly along the wall, and disappear in the inky blackness. Once a gigantic bat flew into his face. But the Baron heeded none of these.

On he went until at last he found he could proceed no further. The passage ended abruptly at a wall of rock. He examined it carefully, but found no opening. He was in a *cul de sac.*

Disappointed, he was about to turn, when he felt, standing here with his face to the rock, a warm current of air strike his face. Whence came it? There must be an opening somewhere.

Raising his lantern, he discovered what looked like a shallow opening between the top of the wall of rock and the roof of the passage. With some difficulty he raised himself, until he reached the spot. Yes, there was an opening, but so small that he could scarcely get his body into it, though lying flat on his face.

Should he attempt to venture into this narrow hole? He had left his lantern behind him, and was now in total darkness. The hot air which issued from the opening in which he lay nearly suffocated him.

For a moment he hesitated, but urged on by an irresistible impulse, he dragged himself a ong. He would, he said to himself, go just a little way. But the heat was becoming intolerable. His throat was parched. It was with difficulty he could breathe. Pungent fumes choked him, a faintness crept over him, and he felt he was losing consciousness.

By a supreme effort of will he threw off this feeling. He braced himself anew. He would, he resolved, go on or die. It is likely enough that the Baron's fate would have been sealed, and that he would have been heard of no more, had it not been that a few yards further in he found that the passage suddenly opened into a lofty and roomy cavity, where the air was less close and stifling.

Wiping his steaming forehead, he stood in the darkness collecting his scattered senses, and afraid to move lest he should lose his way and be unable to return. Striking a match he could make out that he was in a kind of chamber, the floor of which was covered with what looked like fine sand.

At last he determined to venture from where he stood and to slowly follow the wall of the cavern to the right. With one hand on the wall, and groping his way with the other, he advanced cautiously and timorously, making sure at each step of a footing.

Suddenly he felt that he had come to another opening in the wall, and at the same time he could discern a faint reflection at the end of this new passage.

He turned and slowly groped his way in the direction of the strange light. A peculiar noise also fell upon his ears. He listened. It seemed like the gurgling and splashing of a fountain.

After proceeding for some distance he could make out that the passage he was following led to the side of a wide and apparently deep pit, which was filled with a thin luminous vapour. As he approached the end of the passage he went down on his hands and knees, and carefully crawling to the edge, peered below.

The sight that met his gaze made his heart stand still and his brain grow dizzy. He felt as if he was fal ing through space. There beneath him, radiant with exquisite tints, lay a mass of molten gold, millions and millions of ounces of liquid gold, refined and purified in Nature's own mysterious retort. For some moments he could not believe his senses.

He had, he thought, become subject to a delusion. He rubbed his eyes. But they were not playing him a trick. There was still the gold. By the merest chance he had made a great discovery. He had stumbled into the very laboratory and workshop of Nature. He was gazing at a phenomenon that no mortal had ever looked upon before.

Then, as he thought of the enormous wealth that lay within his reach—wealth so stupendous, so incalculable that the millionaires of the world would be as paupers compared with him—his brain reeled.

He, yes he, Baron Steiner, the political refugee, the lonely exile, was the richest man in the whole universe. He laughed, he wept. He apostrophied the dancing dazzling lake of gold. He would leap into its fascinating glow and find a coffin and a tomb that ten thousand thousand Solomons in all their glory could not equal.

Then, as he grew calmer, he thought of Theresa. His child, his darling Theresa, who was so patient, who was becoming home-sick, she should have diamonds that queens and empresses could not purchase. She should live in Aladdin's Palace. Theresa, who was only happy when making others happy, would scatter joy and plenty all around her. She would banish poverty.

The poor would live in clean cottages, standing in sweet smelling gardens. There would be no more slums, no more misery. Privation and sorrow would be driven from thousands of homes. The hearts of the oppressed would rejoice. This untold wealth that God had given him must be used in the service of mankind.

And the Baron sat lost in dreams—glorious and magnificent dreams, lofty dreams which only come to great and good souls.

"Father, you have news for me?" said Theresa, when some days later the Baron returned to Rotorua.

His face was radiant with the light of a great joy.

"My child," he said, taking both her hands in his and kissing her lovingly, "you shall know now. I have succeeded at last. Look at me, my little Theresa; your father has been in Hades. I have burrowed like a mole in the bowels of the earth. But, my darling, I have discovered a great thing. I have seen a subterranean lake of liquid gold. You are, my child, the richest woman in the world."

Theresa drew back in amazement and fear. She regarded her father attentively. A terrible dread entered her soul and froze the blood in her veins.

Had his ardent studies, his long and solitary seeking for the solution of the problem he had so jealously guarded, turned his brain? Was her father losing his reason?

The Baron was quick to divine her suspicions.

"My child," he said, "listen. I am not mad. Look at me; I am quite calm. It is true, all that I have said."

Then he told her of his search; how, under the pretext of investigating the customs of the Maoris, he had all the time been seeking to discover the origin of gold, and how he had in so unexpected a manner come upon an enormous cauldron of the precious metal.

But Theresa did not receive the news with gladness. It did not elate her. On the contrary, it troubled her.

Digitized by Google

She felt a dull weight at her heart, a sense of impending evil.

"I wish, father," she said, "we had not come to New Zealand; we were happy in England. Let us go back; do not seek to gain possession of this gold. It will bring misery. It belongs to the Evil One."

The Baron laughed.

"My poor child, my little Theresa, you know not what you say. To-morrow, little one, we shall go together to my lake of gold. I shall bring you some of it out of the bowels of the earth. You shall see with your own eyes how beautiful it is."

That evening the Baron was in high spirits.

There were now only four guests in the hotel—Mrs. Egerton and her son, who had come up on the previous day, and the Baron and his daughter. They were seated in the drawing-room, where a bright fire burned, for the night was cold and wet. Theresa played and Walter sang. The Baron and Mrs. Egerton were engaged in a game of cribbage.

The evening passed quickly and pleasantly. They were a quiet and happy party. Before they separated for the night the Baron said to Mrs. Egerton:

"We are leaving here on Monday next. I have finished what I had in hand."

"We shall return to Auckland together," Mrs. Egerton replied. "I shall be glad to leave Rotorua. I feel the cold."

"Good-night, all," cried the Baron, gaily; then, as if seized with a sudden thought, he called Walter to him. "I want to ask you a question," he said. "Supposing someone were to leave you a large fortune, what would you do?"

"Do you want to know really?" he asked.

"Of course," said the Baron.

"I would ask you," replied Walter, in a low voice, "for the hand of your daughter."

Walter ran across the room and, drawing the curtains, looked out of the window.

"I thought as much," said the Baron. "Well, who knows? The age of fairies is not past yet. Good-night."

The Baron opened the window and went on to the balcony. The rain had ceased and the stars were shining, but a cold wind blew over the lake. No lights were visible in the native settlement. All was silent and peaceful. He returned to the drawing-room, closing the window behind him.

Theresa was standing in front of the fire waiting to receive her good-night kiss.

"It is freezing to-night," said the Baron, shivering; "run to bed, little one, and God bless you."

That was destined to be a memorable night in Rotorua. Soon after midnight everyone in the hotel was awakened by the violent shaking of the building, caused by an earthquake.

Theresa sprang out of bed and lit her candle. It was her first experience of an earthquake, and she thought the hotel was about to collapse, burying everyone beneath it. Slipping on her dressing-gown, she rushed to her father's room and rapped loudly at the door.

"Father?" she called, "Father?"

"My dear," answered the Baron calmly, "don't be alarmed. It is nothing. There is no danger. Go back to your room. Have no fear."

On the way back, somewhat reassured, Theresa met Mrs. Egerton, who was also nervous and anxious.

"Father," said Theresa, "says there is no danger."

The two women went to Theresa's bedroom.

A second shock again caused the windows to rattle, and the pictures on the walls to move. After this other but less violent shocks came in quick succession.

Clinging together in bed Mrs. Egerton and Theresa heard servants moving about, and the sound of Walter's voice at the door. He affected to treat the matter lightly.

"This is a pretty how-do-you-do," he called out to

Digitized by Google

them cheerily. "How do you like being shaken by an earthquake, Miss Steiner?"

Theresa did not like it at all. However, the shocks became less frequent and less severe, and the terrified sleepers were beginning to hope that they were at last passing away, when one, more violent than any before, almost hurled them from their beds.

Then a roar, deep, prolonged and fearsome, startled the most courageous. Something unusual had occurred. Was the earth about to open and swallow them. There was now a general rush for the street.

Mrs. Egerton and Theresa, wrapping a blanket each around them, ran long the corridor, meeting the Baron and Walter, who were on their way to fetch them.

"I fear something dreadful has happened," said Walter, hurriedly. "It will be better for us to leave the building in case of danger."

The Baron did not speak. He appeared dazed and confused.

As they passed the drawing-room door a reflected light filled the room.

"Surely there must be a fire somewhere," remarked Mrs. Egerton, standing at the open door.

Walter ran across the room and, drawing the curtains aside, looked out of the window.

"Great heavens!" he exclaimed in a tone of awe. "Come here!"

They went to where he was standing staring, spell-bound. A magnificent but an appalling sight met their gaze. Far off, but apparently close, Mount Tarawera was shooting up balls of liquid fire into the black sky, where they burst into millions of brilliant stars; and out of the inky cloud of smoke and dust, which hung above the roaring mountains, flashed and darted in all directions ten thousand tongues of vivid lightning of all conceivable colours.

"Heavens!" exclaimed the Baron, "it is a volcanic eruption and I am lost."

The women shrieked in terror.

"Let us hasten from here," said Walter, taking his mother and Theresa by the arm and hurrying them from the hotel.

On getting outside they were swallowed in darkness. Fine dust was falling, and the atmosphere was filled with sulphurous fumes. They could hear the shouts of human voices. Everyone was fleeing, panic-stricken Europeans and natives, men, women, and children, most of them scantily dressed.

"Get on the Oxford Road," a man shouted to them, as he ran past. "Whakarewarewa will go next."

He carried a lantern and they followed him as well as they could, moving with the stream of panic-stricken fugitives, being jostled and knocked about by those wild with fear, who thought only of their own safety.

After they had gone a mile or so Mrs. Egerton stopped. She could, she said, proceed no further. She was exhausted, and her feet were cut and bleeding.

Theresa, too, was suffering great agony. There were little groups all around them—women in hysterics, and children crying and strong men chafing at their own helplessness.

Suddenly Theresa discovered that her father was not with them.

In the excitement and confusion of their hurried flight in the darkness and din which prevailed, the absence of the Baron had not been noticed before.

Theresa was inconsolable.

"I must go back," she said; "I must find him."

"That would be madness, Theresa," said Walter, unconsciously addressing her for the first time in his life by her christian name. "You must remain here until it is light."

The hours passed with agonising slowness, but at last the welcome dawn came, restoring courage to the huddled fugitives by the roadside. The air was full of smoke, but Rotorua had not been destroyed. All the buildings were still standing.

There was, however, no sign of the Baron, nor did they see anything of him on their way back to the hotel. Here dreadful news awaited them.

The Baron shortly before their arrival, had been picked up from beneath the balcony in an insensible condition. He must have lost his presence of mind, and, instead of following the others, had tried to effect his escape by means of the balcony, and had fallen on the concrete pathway below.

The sad news was broken gently to Theresa by Mrs. Egerton. Theresa insisted on being taken to her father at once.

The Baron was lying in his room. His face was covered with blood. He appeared to have fallen on his head.

"My poor dear father," cried Theresa, falling on her knees by his side; and burying her face in her hands she sobbed piteously.

They led her away, gently and sorrowfully, and on reaching her room she swooned in Mrs. Egerton's arms.

When the doctor arrived he pronounced the Baron's case hopeless. He had sustain a double fracture of the skull. The Baron did not regain consciousness. He lingered until noon, when he died.

Theresa received the news with preternatural calmness. She did not speak; she did not weep. She sat with fixed gaze and rigid face, every line of which expressed intense suffering and grief. Next morning she was delirious, and in a raging fever.

* * * * *

It was late in the Spring, and the weather was warm and beautiful. Already the flowers were bursting into bloom.

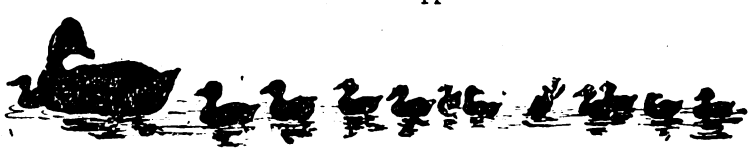
In a pleasant garden ovelooking the Waitemata, Theresa was sitting in an arm-chair, her head resting on a pillow. A rug was wrapped round her knees. She was looking pale and thin, and showed signs of recent suffering and illness. Mrs. Egerton occupied a seat beside her.

"Yes," Theresa was saying, "I have promised, and Walter has promised. He will not seek to find the gold poor father told me of. If it exists there is a curse upon it. It is a destroyer."

"That's the compact, mother," said Walter, who joined them as she finished speaking. "And yet Theresa might be the wealthiest woman in the world."

"I prefer," said Theresa in a low sweet voice, looking up into the manly face of her lover, "to be the happiest."

M. T. Leveson.



Digitized by Google

The Making of a Lady.

THE cabin was built of logs, time-stained and decaying, the moss of fifty years upon its roof. It lay back among the blue gums at the very foot of the mountain, where the river ran shallow through the gulch.

For half a century it had weathered the storms of winter and the heat of summer, for it was a "forty-niner," as was also Jacob Wainright, who had hewn the logs and built it with his own sturdy hands when the gold excitement was at its highest in Australia.

He had camped on the creek and slept on the ground when he first came to the gold regions. Camping had been good enough for the hardy young prospector. But when Margarita dawned upon the horizon of his life it became a different matter. The cabin had been built for Margarita.

Jacob Wainright had not been one of fortune's favourites, who awakened penniless and before sunset found himself a millionaire—at least not during the time when such instances were a frequent occurrence.

The fickle goddess had proved a laggard as far as he was concerned, and for several years refused to smile upon his efforts. But Margarita was as happy as the sunshine that drifted into the canyon and flooded the doorway. She sang as gaily as the mocking bird in the gums at the back of the cabin.

When the little Carlotta came she sang more joyously than ever. In Jacob Wainright's opinion her sweet voice far out-rivalled the birds. He made good wages out of the dirt he panned, if he did not gain wealth, and with health and happiness a man would have been an ingrate to worry.

"It will come some day," he used to tell Margarita. "It will come in plenty of time to make a lady of Carlotta."

For Jacob Wainright and his faithful young wife had but one ambition, and that was to make a lady of their little girl.

When, after a few happy years of life together, Margarita was laid to rest under the shade of the gum trees and her brief bright life was only a beautiful memory, Wainright had but Carlotta to think of and plan for. She was his one thought, his constant companion, his heart's idol. It was then that the thirst for riches took full possession of him.

Gold! Gold! He thought of it night and day; he saw it glittering and yellow in his dreams. He must have it. The mountains must yield their hidden treasures—all for Carlotta.

With her he tramped over the mountains on long prospecting tours, hoping that each day would bring him Carlotta's fortune. It was when he was not looking for it that his good luck came to him.

They were walking down the gulch one afternoon not far from Wainright's cabin, when he suddenly dropped Carlotta's hand and went down on his knees, digging in the ground with his hands where the rocks lay broken and crushed. He seemed like one who had lost his senses. Then he sprang to his feet, his eyes black with excitement. In his toil-hardened hand were several lumps of yellow ore.

"I've struck it, Carlotty!" he shouted. "I've struck it rich, honey! Hooray, little 'un; we'll make a lady of you now!"

Later, when Carlotta was old enough to be sent to school, he took her to Paramatta and placed her with the Sisters at Notre Dame. It was a great wrench to Wainright to give her up, but nothing should stand in the way of Carlotta's future.

Once a month he went to Paramatta to see her. His increasing wonder and delight over the advancement of the pretty little girl in fine frocks, with a manner that awed Wainright, was touching to witness. He seemed half afraid of the dainty little maid and would take her small hand in his and stroke it with his big roughened

Digitized by Google

finger, or, lifting her cautiously to his knee, would pass his hand bashfully over her dark curls.

"Who'd a thought it?" he would say proudly. "A awkward, no 'count feller like me havin' a little gal like Carlotty! Ain't she a comin' on, though? Why, she'll be a lady in no time!"

Four years later she went to Sydney to one of the best schools, and when the time came for her to graduate, Wainright donned his best suit of clothes and went to see his little girl in all her glory. Afterward he watched her depart with a party of wealthy people from Sydney for Europe.

He stood on the wharf and waved his handkerchief as long as he could see the steamer. Carlotta returned his farewell by waving a dainty bit of lace and linen once or twice, but she was talking with the kid-gloved scion of a prominent Sydney family, and the commonplace, rugged-faced man, with "the decidedly Western look," as her friends had described her father, standing alone on the wharf in the great city full of strangers was soon forgotten.

Wainright had coughed a little over a lump that rose in his throat when he found his parting salute no longer returned. He ceased to wave his bandana and rubbed it hastily across his eyes.

"By gum!" he muttered. "I'm a low down sort of creature. I want to keep that little gal of mine from everybody. There's selfishness for you!"

Carlotta had remained abroad two years. When she returned to Australia she was a highly accomplished young lady. It had taken a small fortune to supply her needs while abroad, but Wainright never stinted her. Nothing was too good for his "little gal."

Immediately on her return to Sydney she was married to an immaculate person belonging to one of the most aristocratic families in the place. This was why she could not come home, she wrote. She sent her father the wedding cards and begged him to come and attend her wedding. But they did not arrive till after the date of the marriage.

Wainright grieved greatly that he should have missed the pleasure of his little girl's grand wedding. But he read it in the papers until, to use his own words, "he knew it by heart," and could repeat it word for word in the dark after he went to bed.

He went to see Carlotta once in the lovely house he had given her as a wedding present. But his visit was not a long one. He felt out of place in the elegant house. Carlotta's distinguished-looking, aristocratic husband was a being he could not come in touch with. Wainright stood in great awe of him, regarding him with an unmixed admiration at a distance. It is doubtful if the compliment were returned. Carlotta's husband was too well bred, however, to treat his wife's rich father with anything but courtesy. He explained to his friends that his father-in-law was immensely rich and a well-meaning man, but "distinctively Western."

Wainright made a short visit; somehow he couldn't breathe in the imposing Sydney home. He was anxious to get back to the backwoods.

With a promise from Carlotta to visit him in the old home the next year, he returned to the mine and his beloved mountains.

"It's the place for an old feller like me, I fancy," he said, soberly, and fell into thoughtful silence.

But Carlotta did not come the next year—nor the next. The years sped by and children came to her home, but there was always some reason why she could not visit the far West.

Her husband was not a financier, and Carlotta had many needs for money. As the children grew up the needs increased. Carlotta always had needed a great deal of money.

Wainright remembered. It was the joy of his life that he had it to give her. He sent it generously and never questioned what she did with it. And so the years passed and half a century had rolled over Jacob Wainright's head since he built the log house under the gum trees.

Recently a new mine had been developed near his old claim by an enterprising British company. The old man did a little placer mining to supply his simple wants for his fortune was almost gone, and he hoarded the remainder religiously for Carlotta.

When he was not at work he was generally to be found at the new mine. Several stamp mills had been put in and were already at work, and everything was life and stir. It was like the old days to the pioneer of '49. He spent hours at the mine talking to the men, telling yarns of the old days and about the time he made his pile. The boys all liked him and list ned good-naturedly to his glowing stories of his little girl Carlotta.

"The finest lady in Sydney, sir! Why, that gal of mine has trains a yard long to her gowns, and diamonds that 'ud dazzle a fellow blind, but they ain't too good for Carlotty."

Everybody in camp was glad when it was said that old Wainright's daughter had all her plans arranged and was at last coming to visit him. He had written her of his failing health and she had promised that nothing should hinder her coming.

At last Carlotta was coming! Wainright sat in front of the door, smoking and thinking it over. He was bent and feeble, his weather-beaten face seamed with wrinkles. He removed his pipe frequently to cough.

"Fifty year!" he said musingly. "Fifty year since I built this here house. Pretty near that long since I laid Margarita to rest back of the cabin there. Goodness! how pretty she looked a-layin' in her coffin with the posies in her little white hands!" He brushed his trembling hand across his dim old eyes. "I'm gettin' to be an old man—seventy-seven; that's gettin' along—and with this cough a-rippin' the inside of me it ain't likely I'll last over long.

"That's what I wrote Carlotty," he continued, after a few pulls at his pipe. "It seemed as if I just couldn't throw up the stakes without seein' my little gal once more. There's been a gnawin' pain in my breast for years—a heap wuss 'an this cough gives me—an' it's just this everlasting waitin' an' longin' to see Carlotty. I couldn't stand it much longer, no how—I ain't got the grit I used to have. Fact is, I'm too selfish where Carlotty is concerned—I always was."

He chuckled to himself over the last observation, as if the idea pleased him.

"Yes, yes," he murmured smilingly, "I always was a selfish old cuss. I could have fought that Sydney feller when he married my little gal. By gum! she married a swell, though—Carlotty did! They ain't a grander lady in Sydney than my little gal is. Don't seem as if she could be a woman of forty-six. Why, it seems only yist'day she was a-settin' on this here very stone, her black eyes shinin' like stars, a-holdin' out her little hands for the yaller stuff, whilst I was pannin' the dirt."

The old man filled his pipe again.

"Carlotty was born for gold. She took to it naturally it seemed as though she just loved the very glitter of it.

Digitized by Google

I knowed it was the yaller stuff that was to make a lady of my little gal—an' I didn't care fer nothin' but to git it fer her. Bein' a fine lady hain't spiled Carlotty. She's a-comin' all the way from Sydney just to see her old dad! Think of that—and me so selfish I haven't been to see her in all these years! But, bless the little girl she's a-comin' to see her old father an' make this here cabin bright as glory.

"Of course, she's a-comin'—I always knowed that she would as soon as she could. She hain't her own mistress like she was with the old man, an' then she has the children to look after. Nothin' ain't a-goin' to hinder her this time, because her poor old dad is ill—wearing out, that's all that ails him—but, for the love of heaven, you couldn't make Carlotty believe it!"

He took a letter from his pocket, and between fits of coughing read it again, his eyes dim with happy tears.

"To-morrow's the day," he murmured tremulously. "Carlotty is a-comin' to-morrow. I thought she'd want to come right here to her dear ma's home fust. She can stay over at the hotel at the Forks if she wants to, but she'll want to stay here for a time at first. She'll want to put flowers on her ma's grave, and sit by it with me, like we used to do, while I tell her how faithful and lovin' her pretty young ma was, an' how I loved my little Carlotty first. just because she was her ma's little gal."

That afternoon the old man tramped far up the trail and was gone until nearly night. When he returned he was loaded down with flowers and vines. He walked slowly, with uncertain step, and coughed incessantly, but he went patiently to work decorating the house for Carlotta's coming. His old hands shook and his steps lagged before he had finished the task, but he worked away resolutely until the last spray was arranged to his liking.

When he had finished his work he went outside and sat down on the doorstep. He wiped the perspiration off his forehead, and a smile of deep contentment stole into his weary face.

The sun had gone down and the shadows were gathering about him, but he did not heed them.

"I don't think I'll have any supper." He laughed softly. "What a silly fool I am—I'm just too happy to eat."

A horseman appeared on the road leading to the mines. The old man did not see him until he was at the very door.

"I got a letter for you over at the Forks," the rider said good-naturedly, as he handed it down. "Can't stay a minute. I expect that daughter of yours started by an earlier train. Good thing, too," he added to himself as he galloped away. "The old man won't last long."

"Yes, yes; that was it," said old Wainright, smiling. "How silly of my old heart to jump like that. Why, for a minute I was fairly scared—I actually was. Carlotty's a-comin' by an earlier train, an' wants her old dad to be at the station to meet her."

He tore the envelope open with trembling fingers, and in the fading light began to read aloud:

"Dear Father: I find that I cannot start at the time I wrote you I would. It seems this is going to be an unusually important season. There is a most eligible young Englishman here for the winter, who is paying marked attentions to Clarissa. I must make the most of an opportunity like this, I am sure your cough is not serious; you know you have often been frightened about it before this. If Clarissa's prospects continue as bright as at present it will hardly be possible for me to visit you this season——"

He read no further.

The shaking hand that held the letter fell nerveless at his side. An ashen grey had crept into his face. He spoke no word, but stared blankly into the gathering darkness.

* * * * *

The moonlight filtered through the swaying branches of the gum trees at the back of the cabin. It fell upon the bent figure of an old man kneeling by the side of a lonely grave. He was a very old man, and he trembled as if with ague.

The night wind blew his white hair about his drawn face, and he stretched his shaking arms across the empty silence. Then his head dropped forward on his breast and he slipped gently to the moist earth.

It was thus that they found him in the morning, a crumpled letter, bearing a Sydney postmark, in his stiffened hand.

G. P. Lane.

Two Books to Take on Holidays.

ADVENTURES OF CAPTAIN KETTLE
AND THE
FURTHER ADVENTURES OF CAPTAIN KETTLE.

By C. J. Cutcliffe Hyne. Illustrated by Stanley L. Wood.

Crown 8vo, Price 6s.

"His adventures are of a most startling kind, and his resource, energy, and fighting propensities carry him safely through them all. It is impossible not to admire the energy and courage of the viperish little man, and one is pleased to know at the end that he finally makes a lucky hit, which enables him to attain the great object of his ambition and to settle down on a farm with his wife and children."—*Standard.*

C. ARTHUR PEARSON Limited, Henrietta Street, W.C.

An Instructive Book.

THE MISTAKES WE MAKE.

COMPILED BY

C. E. CLARK.

F'cap. 8vo, cloth, with Index; Price, post free, 1s. 9d..

SOME OF THE CHAPTERS ARE:

Chap. I.—Things that we Call by their Wrong Names.

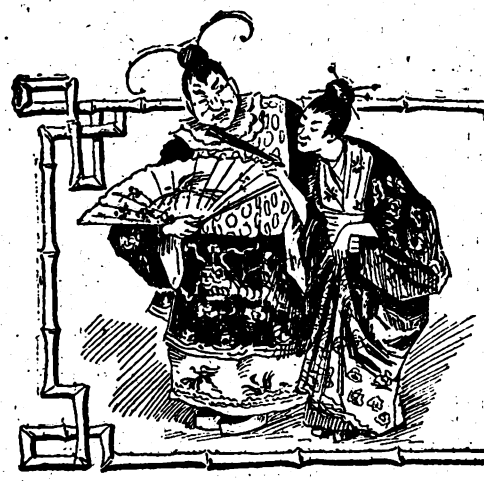
Chap. II.—Mistakes we Make About Places and their Names.

Chap. VI.—Common Errors in Speech and Writing.

Chap. X.—Historical Mistakes.

C. ARTHUR PEARSON LIMITED,
Henrietta Street. W.C.

Digitized by Google



Mr. Bowser's Tribulations.

XX.—HE DOES A LITTLE INVESTIGATION AT HIS COUNTRY PLACE.

When Mr. Bowser had seen the coat-tails of Dusty Bill disappear around a bend in the road and had watched the rising sun until assured it could take care of itself, he went in to breakfast. He found Mrs. Bowser looking very homesick, and the cook had her chin in the air and a frown on her face.

"Are—are we going home to-day?" hesitatingly queried Mrs. Bowser after a bit.

"Yes, that's what I want to know," added the cook.

"Going home?" repeated Mr. Bowser in tones of astonishment. "Of course we are not going home to-day. We have got this place for three months. We only arrived here yesterday evening. You women must be losing your senses!"

"But this awful, awful place!" protested Mrs. Bowser as the tears came to her eyes.

"There's nothing awful about it. It's a farm. There are a few weeds and thistles about, but every farm has 'em. We came out for the pure air, the peace and quietness. We were disturbed last night by a tramp, a dog and an owl, but it won't happen again. We'll have provisions here to-day, and I'll cut down the weeds round the house, and before another twenty-four hours you'll be thankful that I brought you out. Ah! but do you get the scent of the new-mown hay coming through the windows?"

"It's the water in the cellar you smell," said Mrs. Bowser.

"And there's rats down there as big as a barrel," added the cook.

Mr. Bowser had finished his breakfast of sandwiches and pickles. He pushed his chair back, and standing before Mrs. Bowser, he said:

"Woman, I want no more howling. If you want to go back to the city and burn, and roast, and shrivel, and become a mummy, I have no objections, and you can take the cook with you; but, as for me, I stay. I have already gained five pounds. For the first time in ten years I can breathe through my nose. In a week longer, with these gorgeous sunrises and sunsets and sweet-scented zephyrs, I shall be as fat as a pig and on my way to live a hundred years. I am now going forth to inspect our domain."

There was no more to be said. Mr. Bowser had put his foot in it, and would have given a good deal to have been able to back out of the affair and save his pride and dignity; but as there was no chance to do so, he must go ahead.

He clapped his hat on and started out for a walk. It was a farm which was under mortgage instead of under cultivation. The fences were down, the outbuildings in ruin, and the fields were overgrown.

"I ought to be kicked for coming out here," he admitted to himself as he stood and gazed over the landscape, "but I'll try and hang on for three or four days more at the least. By George, but that's a singular insect! That must be what they call a bumble-bee. It's either a bumble-bee or a humming bird."

It was a bumble-bee. He was large and solid of frame, and the pure air of the country had given him a feeling of independence. He went sailing about as if he had all the week to get there and back, and Mr.

Lowering its head, it dashed for Farmer Bowser.

Digitized by Google

"Murder! Thieves! Police!" shouted Mr. Bowser, as he danced about.

Bowser followed and tried to knock him down with his hat. The chase led to an old meadow, and with a drone of defiance the bee disappeared in a big bunch of grass.

"Where there's bees there's honey," mused Mr. Bowser as he stood and gazed at the spot. "I don't remember whether Brown said there was any honey on the farm or not, but if I come across a pailful so much the better."

He had started to investigate when his attention was attracted to the bovine they had seen in a field the previous night. He had told Mrs. Bowser it was probably a new milk cow, but now he discovered that it was an ancient-looking one-horned bullock. The animal was hardly more than a living skeleton, and had evidently been turned out to shift for itself, but it had more curiosity than flesh. Seeing Mr. Bowser in the field, it came shambling along to make a closer acquaintance.

He picked up a stick to drive it away, but the bullock seemed to be without fear. Lowering its head and uttering a loud bellow it dashed for Farmer Bowser, and he turned and fled for an old strawstack not far away. He reached it far enough ahead to climb to the apex and escape the horn, but for two long hours the bullock stood guard below and kept him up there. The two hours might have been four had not a tramp, who was looking for a turnip patch, entered the field and driven the creature away.

"What're you doin' out here in the country?" he asked, as Mr. Bowser came down.

"Taking a holiday," was the reply.

"Hired the farm?"

"Yes."

"Got the fam'ly out?"

"Yes."

"Well, old chap, I've long wanted to meet the biggest fool in the world, and I fancy I'm lookin' at him now. A man who'll come out to a place like this for a holiday has either got sawdust in his head or is hidin' from the cops. That bullock must have took you for a cabbage head."

"You will keep your opinions to yourself, sir!" stiffly replied Mr. Bowser, "but here's sixpence for driving that brute off and releasing me."

"Thanks, old chap. Don't you want to hire a man by the month?"

"What for?"

"To help you enjoy the landscape and keep the butterflies from stealin' your hat!"

When the tramp had gone, Mr. Bowser busied himself for half-an-hour in throwing stones at the one-horned bullock, which had retired to a distance, and seemed to be plunged into meditation. He could hit him every time, but the stones gave forth a hollow sound, and were totally disregarded, and the sport was abandoned after a time for a closer investigation of that bumble-bee's nest. The only way to find a nest in the grass is to look for it.

Mr. Bowser advanced as bold as a lion, and began to paw at the grass. He presently heard a sound like a child's rattle, but gave it no attention until about two hundred overgrown and aggressive bumble-bees suddenly flew up out of the grass and sailed into him. He did not believe they were in earnest until he felt a red hot darning needle enter the calf of his left leg. Before he could open his mouth to yell, the right leg was served the same way.

"Murder! Thieves! Police!" shouted Mr. Bowser as he danced about, and the bees continued to make him jump, and it was not until he got a sting on the chin that he started for the house.

The bees followed him. A bumble bee never lets go of a good thing. They had a good thing in Mr. Bowser. His yells were heard at the house, and long before he got there he saw Mrs. Bowser at the door, and the cook looking over her shoulder. As he came up on the gallop, his ears working and his eyes bulging, Mrs. Bowser cried out for an explanation. He didn't pause to give it, however. He made a half circuit of the house and plunged into an acre of docks and thistles and other weeds, and there the bees left him. He was lying on his back and panting for breath when Mrs. Bowser appeared and exclaimed:

"For heaven's sake, but what is the matter with you? What was all this running about?"

Then she caught a sight of Mr. Bowser's face. There was a lump on his chin, a second under his left eye, two on his neck, and one on his forehead, and about forty more which she couldn't see, but which felt as big as washtubs to him.

"Now you'll start for home, won't you?" she asked as he tried to sit up and groaned like a dying horse.

"Never, woman—never on the face of this earth!" he shouted as he fell back among the weeds.

M. QUAD.

Next Week:

"He Spends His Last Night in the Country."

Digitized by Google

The Dream of Arnold Blythe.

The Argonaut.
7th Nov., '99

"The Editor presents his compliments to Mr. Arnold Blythe and returns the inclosed with his best thanks."

ON a seat in the Embankment Gardens, Arnold Blythe literary man of no repute, sits, clutching in his hand the fateful paper inscribed as above. He is as near starving as can be, while he feels himself to be a victim to a lack of system as hollow as it is idiotic.

He has hitherto blindly followed such professional finger-posts as "peg away," "never say die," "try something else," thus ever searching for the right Editor as Japhet searched for his father.

And the result has left him penniless, well-nigh shoeless, and utterly exhausted. He knows that he has the article some editor must require, but thanks to an orderless system the editor in question is invariably invisible.

The cold wind comes sweeping up from the river, it searches his thin garments, chills his foodless frame.

He murmurs a name.

"Mami—Mami! God bless my little Mami!"

In sheer inertia his head droops; the stereotyped slip falls from his fingers, and, oblivious of all things, he sleeps.

* * * * *

A busy street in the great city of the burning pavement, much affected by publishers, newspaper and magazine offices, in fact, a mighty literary and journalistic centre. The doors of the various palatial buildings stand wide open as if inviting entry. Some, there are light-hearted, of gay plumage, and on good terms with the world, themselves, and the presiding genii of the temples of knowledge. These pass in and outwith a smile upon their lips, and laughter in their eyes.

But Arnold Blyth, the mocking echo of the words "declined with thanks," ringing in his ears, unwanted, empty of hope and faith, turns in the direction of his home.

Before leaving the magic thoroughfare he is suddenly brought to a standstill in front of an unpretentious-looking house. He could have sworn that as he had passed and re-passed the spot both on this day and previous days without number, no such house existed. Part of the ground floor is a shop, the lower half of the window of which is filled with a wire blind, upon which, in gold letters, is the legend:

"LITERARY BUREAU
AND
REGISTRY OFFICE.
Sec.,—
The Hon. Aldwyn Merton."

The man wholly in doubt, despairing doubt before, in his wanderings up and down the street does not hesitate now. Tremblingly opening the modest door he finds himself in a spacious room separated by half-drawn curtains and a counter of polished mahogany from its larger part.

"Your pleasure, sir," said a voice at his elbow, and he turned to see a tall, kindly-looking, honest-eyed man, who evidently had followed immediately upon his own entrance.

For the life of him he could not answer the interrogator who giving his hat to an attendant gently indicated precedence to his visitor in the direction of the inner sanctum.

"Take a chair, Mr.——er—?"

"Blythe," stammered the other.

"Well, Mr. Blythe, my name is Merton, and I need hardly say that I shall be very glad to be of service to you, should you need such service at my hands. What's the trouble?"

The Secretary's whole manner was so delightfully confidence-inspiring; so sympathetic in every way that poor Arnold incontinently surrendered himself to the novel influence.

"Before you speak Mr. Blythe, let me briefly explain the objects of this Institution for I can see you are a stranger to them."

Evidently a keen observer, as well as a large-hearted philanthropist.

"The great need of the day," he continued, "is, as we believe, the promotion of more intimate relations between Author and Editor, whereby both may get exactly that which they want by means of Registers and Lists kept by us of mutual requirements, open to be consulted by either party. This we have found so far to be successful, and it is to help the struggling poorer literary toiler that we mainly address our energies. Now what can I do for you?"

In reply Arnold Blythe simply handed to the other a M.S. Glancing at it Mr. Merton touched an electric bell.

"Bring me A. B. C. lists."

Taking up one of the three the Secretary rapidly ran his finger down the columns, and stopped.

"Now, Mr. Blythe, if you will be good enough to look at this entry you will find that there is an article on the subject treated of by you required by the editor of the 'Metropolitan.'"

"Wonderful," gasped Arnold. "Who thought of it, who perfected the idea?"

"Well, I suppose I may claim the parentage," said Mr Merton, smiling, "but that is a mere detail, the main point is that the results are, so far, satisfactory and encouraging."

"What have I to do now?"

"Simply take this letter which I shall write to the editor of the 'Metropolitan,' and he will, if not already suited, which I do not think he is, be only too glad to come to terms with you. Excuse me a moment while I write the note."

Passing over a current copy of the journal in question to Blythe he proceeded to write the letter.

"There! You'll find Sampson a pleasant fellow, and all I ask of you in return for this is that you register with me every MS. you may henceforth write, while the Editorial lists will be open for your inspection at all

Digitized by Google

times during office hours. Fee! my dear fellow, no! When you are a great man, and have big bankers' balances we'll talk of fees; till then *au revoir*, and my best wishes for success."

The hand-shake between the two men was electric, at least for Blythe, and with "Mami" echoing in his heart and new life pulsating through every vein he sped eastward to his destination.

* * * * *

"Mr. Sampson in?"

"Yes, sir."

"Be good enough to give him this letter from Mr. Merton. I'll wait."

"Walk this way, sir, if you please."

"Glad to see you Mr. Blythe. My friend Merton says that you have something I am desperately in need of."

"For what it is worth," said Arnold, "here it is," handing the Editor the MS.

The latter took it and quickly but deliberately read it from start to finish.

"Good! very good! this will suit me admirably. Now I am sure you will understand when I say that I'm horribly busy, so if I may trouble you to take this pay-note to the cashier downstairs," rapidly filling up a printed form as he spoke, "it will no doubt convenience you as it does me. I don't want to drive you away, as I should really like a chat with you but an Editor's time is not made to be trifled with, I assure you, and as you very well know I daresay. Good-bye, and come and see me again, I'll send proofs on to you."

The pay-note duly honoured to an extent Arnold had never dreamed of, and with a speed utterly alien to his sad experience of monthly and even quarterly settlements, he is out in the street again.

How he reached his home he could not say, but there was Mami, with her soft, round little arms to twine about his neck, and to whisper loving nothings into his ready ear. As she lay upon the sofa, looking, in the fading summer twilight, the image of his dead wife, he knelt down by her and as he poured the little streams of gold and silver into her baby lap he prayed, "Oh! God! bless my Mami! Yea, and she shall be blessed."

* * * * *

The wind still blows keenly in the Embankment Gardens and every now and then in marrow-piercing squalls.

Slowly the man wakes out of his fitful sleep, to find the ideal merged in the real; for is there not still in his hand the paper, the words of which burn themselves into his brain.

By-and-by a gardener passing the seat is struck with the strange stillness of the occupant.

Calling a comrade, they raise his head.

In the great awakening only will he meet with Mami.

RALPH ENDERBY.

A THREE-CORNERED SWINDLE.

It wasn't what a conservative old lawyer would call a straight case. I had been sent to London to look up a sharper and make him disgorge for the benefit of the heirs of another sharper.

The wife of one John Saunders, an Englishman who had died abroad several years previously, had put her claims in the hands of a Dublin lawyer. This Saunders had been mixed up in a big swindle before leaving England.

Something like £20,000 had been reaped from it, but his partner in the transaction had gobbled up most of it and had also managed to pull his neck out of the noose, while Saunders had been hunted out of the country. It was the claim of one swindler against another—no more, no less.

The evidence we had, consisted of a number of papers to which both names were attached. The name of the living partner was Smallwood, and it was understood that he had set up as a money-lender. These papers criminated Smallwood in a sense, but in case he was defiant we could not push the case against him.

After some little trouble I found Smallwood and his den. He was a burly, big man, with a loud voice and a domineering way. In assisting to penetrate that swindle he had had a narrow escape, and he realised that in a way he was still under the surveillance of the police, but I put him down as a man not to be easily frightened. I found I was right in this. When I had stated my errand, he laughed in my face and called me a fool. Between ourselves he did not deny the swindle. On the contrary, he boasted of the neat way in which it had been worked. He had furnished the brains, and John Saunders was the catspaw.

He had secured £19,000 of the money and escaped the law, while his partner had fled to a foreign land with the remnant and died among strangers.

"My dear sir," he said, as he smiled and rocked to and fro, "you were a fool to come on any such errand. You have papers, but I would not give you the price of a dinner for them. I am solid, and you can't disturb me. Go to Scotland Yard, go to the lawyer, do what you will, and I shall only laugh at you."

Neither Scotland Yard nor the lawyers could help me in the case. While it couldn't be called blackmail, it was an attempt to squeeze money out of a swindler.

The one interview satisfied me that my mission was a failure, and I bade Mr. Smallwood good-day with as much courtesy as I could assume. It was about lunch-time when I left his office and I dropped into a modest restaurant for a light meal.

I had scarcely got seated when a stranger who had a seedy-genteel look about him asked permission to take the opposite side of the table, saying that he had some information to give me. When we had begun on our meal, he said:

"I saw you leave old Smallwood's office and followed you. Has he done you a bad turn?"

I did not give my case away in replying, but gave him to understand that he had refused to do the square thing by me.

Digitized by Google

"He's a cur, a cheat, a swindler, and all that's mean and contemptible!" continued the stranger, with a good deal of feeling. "He has cheated and wronged me, and I can get no satisfaction. To-day, however, I learnt of an incident in his past life that will give me a good hold on him. I must go to Liverpool to complete my information. If you will go along and become responsible for expenses, I will share the information with you."

For awhile I was chary of the man, thinking he might be in the pay of Smallwood, but I finally decided that I could lose nothing by tr sting him.

Smallwood had once lived in Liverpool under another name and had been guilty of a crime for which he had to flee to Brazil and remain there for several years. This man, who gave the name of Duff, proposed to go down and look up the matter and put the police on the scent. He was going to do this out of revenge, but in my case I had no revenge to gratify. I thought it might be a good thing to hold over Smallwood as a bluff, however, and I promised to reward Duff if anything came of it.

In the course of a couple of hours I returned to the money-lender's office. He greeted me affably and laughingly said:

"I have heard that you Irish are a persistent race, but in this case you are simply wasting your shoe leather. I suppose you have come to make a new offer?"

"I have come about that Liverpool affair," I replied, and I went on and stated the nature of his crime and the name he used to sail under.

The shot told. The man grew nervous and pale-faced, and when I had concluded he said:

"How you secured your information I do not know, but I will frankly admit that it is partly correct. I have little fear that the police would meddle with me at this late date, but I do not care to have the affair stirred up. I am willing to make a fair financial arrangement with Saunders' widow."

That was a matter to be talked over at another meeting. I was a bit surprised that Smallwood should give in so quickly, but concluded that the Liverpool affair was rather serious and that like a man of sense he preferred to part with a couple of thousand sooner than have it resurrected.

He had rooms over his office, and I was to dine with him on the next evening but one at eight o'clock, and the matter of restitution would be arranged. I went to the place appointed by Duff to meet him, but he was not there. I had given him my address, but he did not call on me. As a matter of fact, I never saw him again. After he had played his part he vanished.

When I made my third call on Smallwood, I was cordially received, and while waiting for supper to be served we came to an understanding. He was to give me two thousand pounds for Saunders' widow, and I was to give him a receipt in full.

He grew sociable and jolly as the affair was concluded, and my glass was no sooner empty than he pressed me to drink again. Of a sudden things began to whirl, and then came a blank. When I recovered consciousness, it was morning, and I was lying on a bed in a strange room.

My head buzzed and ached, my throat was as dry as paper, and as I rolled out of bed and attempted to stand my knees gave way and let me down. A strange man came to me and talked, and I was given something to drink, but it was late in the afternoon before my brain was clear enough to understand things.

As I sat up on the edge of the bed and wondered what had happened and where I was, a quiet spoken man who had the look of a doctor entered and sat down beside me and felt my pulse and said:

"You will do now if you keep quiet. Let me say for your encouragement that cases just as bad as yours have been cured in three months. The great point is to avoid excitement."

"In the first place, where am I?" I asked.

"In Dr. Colwell's private lunatic asylum," he replied.

"Who brought me here?"

"Your friends. The loss of your money in that Peruvian speculation unbalanced your mind. You will be well car d for here, and if you aid me as you should. your detention will not last over three months."

"I see how it is," I said as I looked him straight in the eye. "I am indebted to Smallwood for this. He drugged me and had me brought here that he might have t me to fix up his affairs and get away. I demand my liberty this instant!"

"Come, come," he replied in a coaxing way as he patted me on the shoulder. "I know no one named Smallwood. Your friends in Beacon Street brought you here, and Dr. Henry made out the papers. All was perfectly regular. Let us have no excitement. Dinner will be ready in half-an-hour. Meanwhile think it over."

In that half hour I thought it out. Smallwood had drugged and abducted me. It might or might not be a private lunatic asylum, but the man had surely been bribed to keep me for a time. If I made a fuss, it would be the worse for me. If I remained passive, I would be set at liberty as soon as the money-lender left the country.

I decided to make the best of things, and when the doctor returned I was very quiet. The two of us ate supper together in a small room and were waited upon by an old woman. He called me Mr. Perrine, and, according to his talk, I was a member of a mercantile firm in London. Next morning I was taken to walk in a narrow garden surrounded by high walls. I got sight of no other person, nor could I make out what sort of place I was in.

During the day I had the use of a sitting-room off my bedroom. It looked out on the back yard, and the windows were barred. I was given plenty of reading matter, and the doctor played chess with me, and taken altogether the time did not pass unpleasantly. In the three weeks I was in the house I saw only the doctor and the old woman.

At nine o'clock one evening I was told that my cure was complete and ten minutes later was being driven away from the building in a closed carriage. After an hour's ri le I was set down in a street in Whitechapel, and had I been backed up by all the police in London, I could not have found the house where I had been held captive.

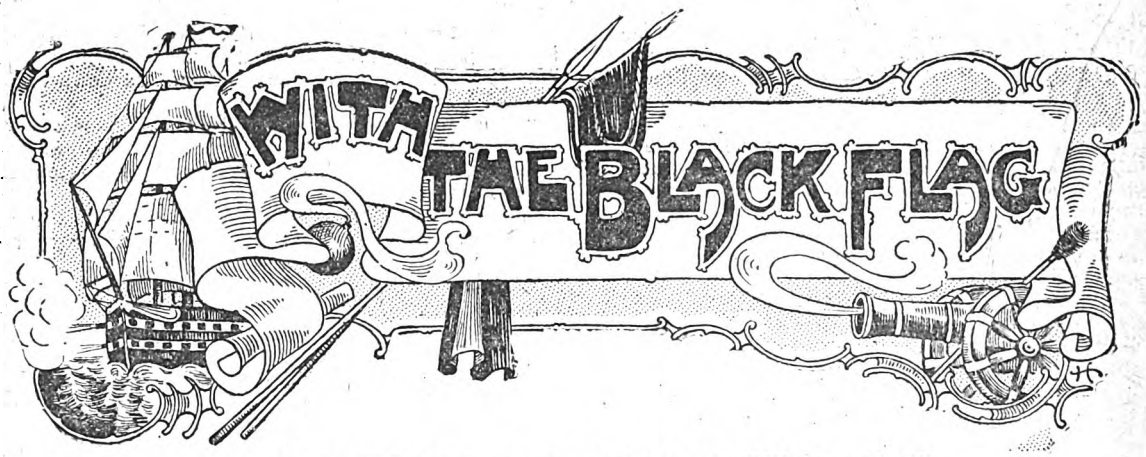
Smallwood had been gone a week—gone no one knew where. While I do not believe there was any truth in the Liverpool story told me by Duff, the money-lender was more afraid of me than he need have been and had played me a pretty little trick to give himself time to settle up his affairs and move on.

I did not go to the police officially, but I did tell the story to a detective on the quiet. How they would have regarded it at Scotland Yard may be judged from what the officer said to me. At the end of the story he winked and grinned and observed:

"What born liars some men are!"

C. B. Lewis.

Digitized by Google



A ROMANCE OF LAND AND SEA.

By William Westall.

Author of "With the Red Eagle," "The Phantom City," "Nigel Fortescue," etc., etc.

SUMMARY.

Major Wyvenhoe leaves England on the *Campanella* with a detachment of troops, raised by Major Barnish, to help the Venezuelans in their struggle for liberty. Major Barnish is accompanied on the vessel by his wife. At Cork a detachment of Irishmen is taken on board, together with General Molyneux, who is connected with the Venezuelan Army, his secretary and chaplain. When the vessel has been out a few days Major Barnish meets with a fatal accident, and on that same day a mutiny breaks out among the troops, but it is speedily quelled.

Shortly after this Venezuela is reached, and as Captain Cautley does not know the coast well a pilot has to be obtained, and it is found that Couroy, one of the chief mutineers, is able to act as such, and the course of the ship is intrusted to him.

On arrival at Pampatar Major Wyvenhoe and Captain Cautley are received by the Governor, General Arismendez, and his second in command, General Urdenetta.

After staying for some time idle at Pampatar, Cautley goes off in the *Campanella* reconnoitring, and on his voyage he captures a large Spanish vessel, on which he finds twenty thousand doubloons. This money he divides, giving Mrs. Barnish a thousand doubloons in part settlement of her claim against the Venezuelan Government for equipping the expedition. The remainder, after paying the wages of officers and men, he hands over to the Governor in trust for the Government, and gets a joint receipt for it from him and Urdenetta.

The next day, after a parade of the forces, Major Wyvenhoe, to his very great surprise, is arrested by order of the Governor, and proceeds to the jetty for the purpose of boarding the *Libertad*, a sloop of war which had just arrived from Angostura with dispatches, as a prisoner.

CHAPTER IX.

Major Wyvenhoe Arrested—The Reason of the Arrest.

Arrested by the governor's order, after all that had passed between us, and the money I had spent and the services I had rendered! Impossible, I said to myself for the twentieth time. Yet there I was in custody of a military guard of my countrymen commanded by a brother officer, a circumstance which added to my mortification and disgust.

"You are sure there is no mistake, Clincher?" I asked him again as we were being rowed to the *Libertad*.

"I never make mistakes, major, for a very good reason. I always obey orders and ask no questions, and the order given me under the colonel's hand was to arrest Major Wyvenhoe, take him on board the sloop and leave him there in charge of Sergeant Molloy and the guard. You will be free of the ship, but if you attempt to escape they are to shoot. Now you know as much as I do myself. Very sorry, but duty is duty."

It was clear that no solution of the mystery could be got out of poor Clincher. He had no more intelligence than an automaton nor an idea beyond doing as he was told.

The commander of the sloop, an Englishman of the name of Davis, gave me a courteous reception and a comfortable cabin.

"When are you bringing the other prisoners?" he asked Clincher who could, however, afford no information on the subject.

There were other prisoners, then!

"How many do you expect?" I inquired.

"Three, and you are the first," said Davis.

"Who are they?"

"That is more than I can tell you, but I have an idea that they are people of consequence."

"I am going ashore to make my report. Very sorry, and all that, but duty is duty, you know. I have told the sergeant to treat you with every respect. Very unpleasant, but hope you will come out all right. Good-day to you both," said Clincher, and then, after saluting, went over the side.

The plot thickened. There were three of us in it—or, rather, three victims. Who the others might be I was unable to guess, for though I ran over in my mind everybody I knew, I could spot none who seemed likely. Likelihood, however, was nothing to go by. After the governor's treachery anything was possible. Never in my life had I been so deceived in any man; or, except in Araminta, in any woman. But she at least had a motive which was not far to seek. Arismendez, so far as I could see, had none, unless it were pure malice.

Had somebody been poisoning his ear—Urdenetta, for instance? But no, Urdenetta was his enemy, the last man in the world to whom he was likely to listen, and though Arismendez was cruel and vindictive, I had always found him straightforward and above board. Moreover, from the very beginning of our acquaintance, he had treated me as a friend.

I gave it up and tried to think about something else, with so little success that I thought about nothing else.

Presently Ready came with my kit.

"What news, John?" I asked eagerly.

"None that amounts to much, sir. I went to the governor's house, thinking I might hear something. But it was surrounded by troops and they would not let me

Digitized by Google

pass. All I heard was that there is some sort of difficulty between the governor and General Urdenetta."

On this it occurred to me that one of the other prisoners might be Urdenetta, though why I should be put in the same boat as a fellow whom I detested and with whom, as Arismendez well knew, I had nothing in common, was a riddle I was utterly unable to read. The only explanation I could think of was that he had had a sunstroke and gone mad.

I sat under an awning on the poop, looking shoreward and trying to calm my feelings by making many cigars. At length something happened.

A boat, filled with red coats put off from the jetty.

"The gentlemen in the stern sheets are the prisoners, I suppose! Do you know them?" quoth Davis, handing me his glass.

"No sir, one of the gentlemen in the stern sheets is Major Hart, of Colonel Rooke's regiment, the other is the governor of Margarita."

"Oh, the governor. Where are the prisoners then?"

"That I don't know, nor much care, but I am glad the governor is coming on board, as I presume he is. I shall insist on knowing what offence is imputed to me, and why I was arrested without a word of explanation and marched through the town under escort like a dangerous criminal or a common deserter."

The boat ran alongside and General Arismendez came on deck, where the guard received him with military honours.

"You here, Major Wyvenhoe!" exclaimed the governor as I stepped forward to greet him.

"I am, your Excellency, and much against my will, as you must well know," I answered indignantly.

"What do you mean, sir?" demanded Arismendez haughtily.

"What do I mean? That is a question I should rather ask you. I mean that I was arrested three hours ago by your order, and brought on board this ship under escort, and I shall feel obliged if you will be good enough to say what you have against me."

"You are labouring under some mistake. I have nothing against you, neither did I order you to be arrested."

"I was right then. I felt sure there must be some mistake. But how did it arise? Captain Clincher, who arrested me, said that he did so in pursuance of a written order under the governor's hand, and you are the governor."

"Unquestionably; but there is another who claims to be governor. It was perhaps he who gave the order."

"Urdenetta?"

"Yes, he is the man; and we are brothers in misfortune, major. I also am under arrest."

"Well, 'pon my word! This beats everything. But how could anybody—who would dare?"

"Urdenetta again. The *Libertad* brought dispatches; one was from Bolivar, superseding me as governor in Urdenetta's favour. But as I was appointed by Congress I refused to be deprived of my office by an inferior authority, and so told Urdenetta. We had hot words. I ought to have had him shot, but thinking it might scandalise you English, and knowing it would embroil me with the Supreme Chief I held back. For all that it was a mistake, and against my better judgment. Take an old soldier's advice, major, if you should ever hesitate about destroying an enemy, give yourself the benefit of the doubt. You will repent it if you don't. If I had killed the hound, or let Ramon kill him, I should have rid the Republic of an incompetent general and myself of a dangerous enemy. For the moment he has succeeded. He went to General English who, I am afraid, is a fool."

"I don't think he is very wise, and he knows nothing of war. He was never more than a commissary general in our service, and for several years has been in trade, I believe."

"Anyhow, he acted like a fool. Urdenetta showed him Bolivar's dispatch, said I had been inciting the native troops to mutiny and persuaded General English to arrest me and send me to Angostura for trial. My house was surrounded by troops, I was unable either to resist or to escape, and here I am."

"What a treacherous scoundrel. I am sorry you did not have him shot. He is the mutineer. But why should he arrest me?"

"Because by telling General English the truth and enlightening him as to Urdenetta's character you might have put a spoke in his wheel, and getting you and me out of the way gives him entire control of the doubloons."

"But you surely don't think he will make free with them?"

"Well, he will perhaps send a thousand or so to Bolivar, and another thousand for distribution among a few office holders at Angostura, and keep the balance on the pretext of providing for the troops, but the troops will get no more pay, and when they have consumed the salt beef and pork taken out of the prize, no more rations, except sugar-cane."

"So Urdenetta has a double motive for arresting us. But Captain Davis spoke of a third prisoner. Who is he?"

"The boat in which I came is alongside the *Campanella*," said Arismendez, drily.

"Cautley?"

"Yes, like you, he might spoil Urdenetta's game, who moreover owes him a grudge for retaining those doubloons."

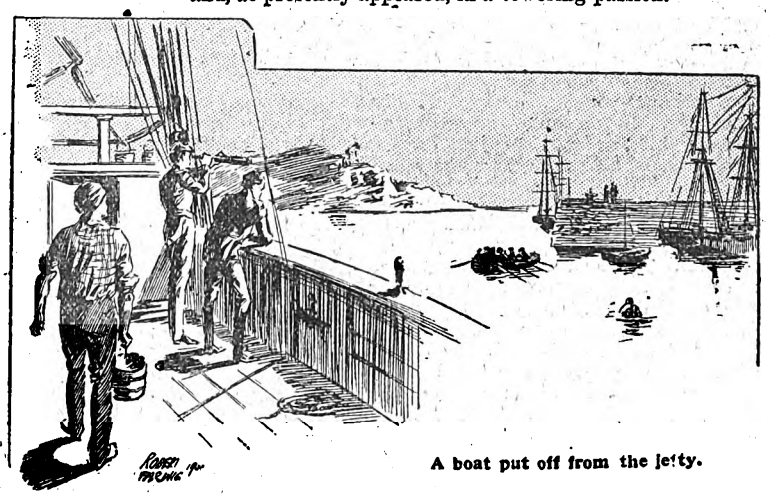
"I wish he had taken more."

"So do I. He might have demanded half, to which, rather than lose the whole, Urdenetta would have agreed, and I should not have objected."

"Cautley was too honest for that. He only demanded what he thought strictly just."

"Honesty does not pay in a South American republic, my friend, and there would have been no dishonesty in El Capitan taking a payment on account of his prize money, of which he will never receive a peso, and insisting on Mrs. Barnish being paid all that is rightly her due. Now she may whistle for it."

While the general was talking I had been keeping my eye on the boat which presently ran under the sloop's counter, and the skipper came on board looking very angry, and, as presently appeared, in a towering passion.



A boat put off from the jetty.

Digitized by Google

"So you are here!" he exclaimed, on seeing Arismendez. "The very man I most want to see. I have been arrested on my own quarter-deck by these soldiers and, as I am told, by your orders. This is my reward for saving the corvette and capturing a treasure-ship laden with grub. By heaven, sir, I wish that your dirty republic were at the bottom of the sea, and if you were not old enough to be my father I would demand instant satisfaction for the insult you have put on me. Arrested on my own quarter-deck by redcoats. And for what? Can you tell me, Wyvenhoe?"

This tirade being delivered in very broken Spanish, interlarded with English, was fortunately not fully understood by the general, who merely smiled one of his strange smiles. I laughed outright.

"You seem to find it amusing. Well, I don't," added Cautley, "and if you and I were not good friends, Wyvenhoe, I should have something to say which you might not like to hear. If you had been arrested on your own quarter-deck—in your own house, I mean—and bundled into a boat by a lot of red-coated ragamuffins, and never a reason given, do you think I would laugh at you? No, by heaven, and if you will excuse me for saying so, it is most ungentlemanly behaviour to make merry over a friend's misfortunes."

Tore the paper in pieces and threw it overboard.

On this I laughed again, and Arismendez, grasping the situation, though he had not understood a word, joined in, to Cautley's utter bewilderment and disgust.

"What does it all mean? Am I the victim of a practical joke?" he demanded fiercely. "If so, let me tell you——"

"We are all victims, captain, but of a villain, not of a practical joker. I, too, have been arrested in my own house if not on my own quarter-deck, and bundled into a boat by redcoats, so has the governor."

"And that's where the fun comes in, I suppose. But tell me now, was the governor arrested by his own order?"

"No; by order of Urdenetta, who has usurped his place, and having got General English on his side can do as he likes."

"Just like them both; the one is a rogue, the other a fool. How was it managed?"

"So we are going to Angostura!" quoth the skipper when I had explained matters. "What will happen to us when we get there? Are we going to be shot or merely strung up?"

"Neither," answered the General smiling. "I am no great admirer of Bolivar, but he is no fool, and very much alive to his own interests, and though he favours Urdenetta he knows that dealing harshly with me would be to his own detriment and the detriment of the cause. He would lose Margarita, for the islanders amongst whom I have lived all my life, and who regard me as their chief, would secede from the Republic and probably take up arms against us. No, señores, the Supreme Chief knows better than to shoot me or even keep me under arrest. While, as for you, there is nothing against you except some cock-and-bull story that Urdenetta may have invented as a pretext for getting you out of the way."

"But how about those doubloons I gave Mrs. Barnish, and took for the crew and myself?" asked Cautley. "It was rather a strong measure, you know. Might not I be court-martialled for it?"

"Possibly. Though I think you were quite justified. But the receipt we gave you is a complete defence. I hope you did not leave it in your cabin; it is sure to be searched."

"No, it is here in my pocket."

"Good! So long as that can be produced in evidence, Urdenetta, though he may gasconade, cannot hurt you, the more especially as Bolivar is just now very friendly disposed towards the English, whose help he needs. But we must find a safer place for the document than your pocket. Urdenetta is quite capable of having your person searched as well as your room."

"I will give it you then, or to the major."

"That won't do, he may have us searched also, and if he gets possession of the paper and destroys it, as he certainly would, he could give you trouble; for instance, accuse you and the major of having abstracted twice as many doubloons as were actually taken, which would be a sufficient reason for putting you under arrest and enable him to account for less money than he actually received."

"So the receipt must be forthcoming when it is required, and to that end hidden where Urdenetta's emissaries won't find it. The captain of this ship being an Englishman ought to be trustworthy."

"Ought to be, certainly, but until we know him better it would scarcely be wise to trust him with the paper, especially as there is a better way," quoth I.

"What is that?"

"Give it to my servant. I don't think they will search him, and and if they do I'll lay my life they won't find what they want."

"The very thing, where is he?"

"Below. I'll call him."

When John came on deck we walked aft and leant over the rail.

"Take this paper" (slipping it into his hand) "and put it where it cannot be found, even though you are searched," said the skipper.

"All right, sir, I'll put it where it won't be found, even if I am skinned," answered Ready.

"Now we have nothing to fear, and if Urdenetta sends anybody to search you, Señor Capitan, let me advise you to submit with a good grace."

"I always cave in when I cannot help myself, Señor General, and so graciously that you would think I enjoyed it."

Digitized by Google

The governor's apprehensions were not long in being realised. Within an hour the sloop was boarded by three Custom House officers and Urdenetta's private secretary.

He gave us all courteous greeting to which we courteously responded, and Arismendez inquired what we could do to oblige him.

"I thank you, Señor General, but my duty is with this gentleman," replied the secretary addressing the skipper, "I am deputed by the governor to request you to hand me the paper which three days ago you obtained from his Excellency and the Señor General. I hope you will not, by refusing, put me to the painful necessity of searching you and taking it by force."

"Really my dear sir, you ask so nicely that I could not refuse you anything. But just one moment, please," said Cautley, and with that he took a paper from his pocket, ran to the taffrail tore the paper in pieces and threw them overboard, and as the wind carried the fragments away there was no possibility of recovering them.

It was done so quickly that the last fragment had floated into the sea before the astonished secretary found his tongue, and then the mask of politeness was dropped; he swore like a trooper, and abused "El Capitan" in the choicest Spanish at his command—and it was very choice.

Cautley merely smiled,

"Was it the paper his Excellency wants?" asked the secretary when he had done swearing.

"What paper?"

"The paper you have just torn up and thrown overboard."

"How should I know?"

"Don't trifle with me, sir, or I'll have you locked up in the carcel and loaded with chains. You know quite well."

"Well, if it is the paper his Excellency wants he ought to be quite satisfied, for he wants it only to destroy it, and it is destroyed."

"But is it, I ask you again?"

"You must find that out for yourself, Mr. Secretary."

"*Caramba!* I believe you are fooling me. I believe the paper I want is on your person all the time. Why should you tear it up rather than give it up? You shall be searched."

"*Con mucho gusto.*"

"Jose, Perez, search the gentleman, and do it thoroughly."

Which they did, stripping the skipper to his shirt, and searching his clothes inside and out, of course without result. Whereupon the secretary tried the oiled feather again.

"Come now, Señor Capitan," he said, coaxingly, "do me the favour to say whether the paper was the paper."

"Undoubtedly, Señor Secretario."

"Ah, I thought so. You mean of course the paper of which his Excellency demands the surrender."

"Not at all. I merely mean that the paper was the paper."

The secretary swore again, and seeing that he could make nothing of Cautley, turned to me and Arismendez, asking if either of us had the paper, and if not, whether we knew where it was. To both of which questions we responded with an emphatic "no," and as a consequence were overhauled, albeit less thoroughly than Cautley had been.

Then the Secretary, after another bout of swearing and threatening us with Urdenetta's vengeance, went away as empty as he had come.

I felt rather concerned, fearing further unpleasantness, but the general laughed, saying we should be troubled no more.

"The secretary won't dare to tell Urdenetta that he has been befooled and knows not whether the paper El Capitan threw overboard was the receipt. He will make up a story—perhaps say that having read it before El Capitan tore it up, he can swear that it was the receipt, and

"You three gentlemen will be good enough to understand that you are prisoners, not passengers," Diaz said, insolently.

Urdenetta, believing that it has perished, will be satisfied."

This was not my view. The secretary would no doubt make the best of it and try to extenuate his failure by telling as many lies as might occur to him. But Urdenetta was both jealous and suspicious and quite sharp enough to see he had been foiled and that the document was still in being. Moreover, the skipper's prank might set Urdenetta still more against us and whet his appetite for revenge. Nevertheless, Arismendez was right in one respect; we saw no more of the secretary and heard no more of the paper.

Captain Davis had been an interested spectator of the secretary's proceedings, and when the search party was gone, I told him frankly all that had happened, and he took our part heartily, saying that Urdenetta was a brute, and that we had been badly used.

"You are supposed to be prisoners," he said. "But I shall treat you as friends, and do my best to make your voyage pleasant. Only if you try to escape, I am afraid it will be my duty to prevent you. My orders are imperative."

"No fear of that," I answered. "Cautley and I have had more than enough of Margarita, and it is only by going to Angostura that the general can get even with Urdenetta."

"Well, I hope we shall get there, though it is about even betting that we do not. There are a good many of the enemy's cruisers knocking about, mostly off the Bocas and in the Gulf of Sadness. I was chased three times on the voyage here—once by a brigantine and a sloop, and had a very narrow squeak of it. However, I have made up my mind to blow the sloop up rather than strike my flag. It will be an easier way out of the world than being hacked to pieces by those Spanish devils."

"But you would make a fight for it?" put in Cautley.

"So long as the ship holds together, and I have some good fighting material, the majority of my crew are Zambos, and I have got them into pretty good order too,

Digitized by Google

considering what unruly ruffians they are. They like being commanded by Englishmen, probably because, though we insist on obedience, we treat them like human beings; and they are fiends in action."

"You are right. We have seen them at it. What is your armament?"

"Twelve eighteen-pound carronades, two long sixes; and we have an abundance of small arms and ammunition. As I carry dispatches my orders are to avoid fighting. All the same, I would not run away from a single Spanish ship much larger than mine. So we may see some sport before we get to Angostura."

But we were not destined to see sport under this brave captain's command, for on the following morning General Urdenetta's aide-de-camp came on board with a new captain and an order for Davis to take command of the *Campanella*. Which did not please any of us since though it was in some sense a promotion for him, the brig being the bigger ship, he was as sorry to leave the *Libertad* as we were to lose him. The Zambos showed more feeling than I had given them credit for possessing. They insisted on shaking hands with him, and as he went over the side the entire ship's company gave their late captain a hearty cheer.

Captain Diaz, the new captain, was a short, broad-shouldered man, with a swarthy skin, heavy jaws, a big hooked nose, and deep set black eyes rather out of focus.

After reading his commission, signed, of course, by Urdenetta, and making a speech to the crew, he made one to us.

"You three gentlemen will be good enough to understand that you are prisoners, not passengers," he said insolently. "So long as you conduct yourselves to my satisfaction you may come on deck when it pleases you, but if you attempt to interfere with the working of the ship, converse with the officers, or speak to any of the crew, I will have you put in irons."

None of us answered, but Arismendez smiled in a fashion which evidently did not please the new captain, who responded with a scowl and turned on his heel.

"He will put us in irons, will he? *Por Dios*, if he makes any more insulting speeches to me I shall kill him," quoth the general in a fierce *sotto voce*.

"And yet you were advising me only a little while ago to submit with a good grace," said Cautley smiling.

"Ah, well, precept is always easier than practice, and to be threatened with irons by a rascally renegade like Diaz is almost more than I can bear."

"Renegade! He is a Spaniard then?"

"Yes, for which he is none the worse, there are many Spaniards on our side. But Diaz is a deserter from the royal navy, and deserters are generally either dastards or traitors, sometimes both. Bolivar gave him a post but he did not exactly distinguish himself, and I doubt whether he is much of a sailor. Even with a commander like El Capitan or Señor Davis, it would be difficult to run the gauntlet of the enemy's cruisers, but now, Heaven help us! I anticipate the worst, señores."

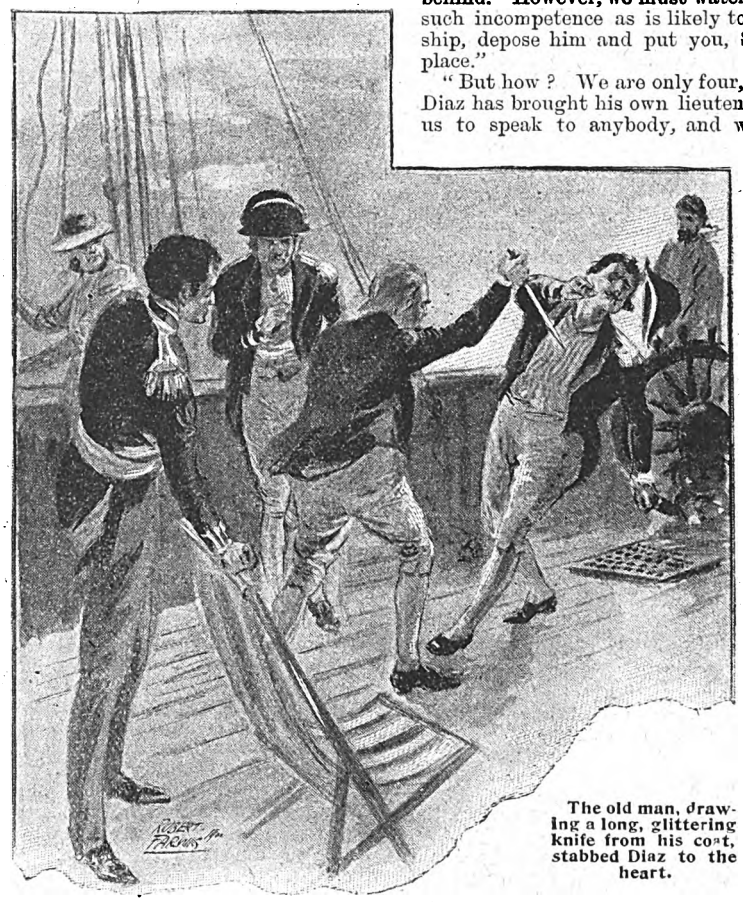
"Which is having our throats cut by the Dons, as Urdenetta probably foresaw when he gave Diaz his commission."

"I have not a doubt of it, and there may be worse behind. However, we must watch Diaz, and if he shows such incompetence as is likely to lead to the loss of the ship, depose him and put you, Señor Capitan, in his place."

"But how? We are only four, including John Ready. Diaz has brought his own lieutenants, he has forbidden us to speak to anybody, and will, you may be sure, watch us as closely as we can watch him."

"An opportunity may occur when the need arises; if not, we must make one. Your servant will be less under observation than we shall, Señor Wyvenhoe; let him, if possible, obtain three or four pistols and some ammunition. They can easily be hidden, and may be useful."

"I have not the least doubt as to his getting them, Señor General," I said. "There are two in my kit, so with two more we shall have one apiece, though twice the number would be better."



The old man, drawing a long, glittering knife from his coat, stabbed Diaz to the heart.

At dawn on the following day, the sloop weighed and stood out to sea, but the wind being both light and contrary there was a good deal of tacking, and it was three days before we were in a position to bear up for the Bocas, literally "mouths," a group of rocky islets between the north-east end of Venezuela and south-west end of Trinidad, which marks off the Caribbean Sea from the Gulf of Paria, or, as the Spaniards called it, the Gulf of Sadness.

Cautley averred that Diaz handled the sloop badly, so badly as to suggest a suspicion that he was getting as little speed out of her as he might, instead of all he could, and another suspicious sign, he kept the Independent flag flying at the mast-head. "It looks as if he wanted to proclaim our character to every vessel we may meet, Spanish cruisers included," I remarked to Arismendez, "though as he will have to die with the rest of us if we are taken I don't see what he can expect to gain by it."

Digitized by Google

"If he can show the royalists that he is playing into their hands he will get a pleasanter recompense than death. He may have an understanding with them already, once a traitor, always a traitor; and Diaz is leagued with a worse traitor than himself. The wonder to me is that we have not fallen in with one of the enemy's cruisers before this."

"Maybe we are going to do now, there's a sail on the weather bow," said Cautley. "By Jove, there are two" (looking through his glass). Then, after a few minutes, he added, "A brigantine and a corvette on the larboard tack, and as we are on the starboard tack they will be within shooting distance in less than an hour."

"They may be Spanish cruisers?"

"Undoubtedly, and, what is more, I think they are. Davis spoke of having been chased by a brigantine and a corvette, each of them bigger than the *Libertad*."

Diaz and his first-lieutenant had also sighted the two ships. They were surveying them through their glasses, yet nothing was done, no change made in the *Libertad's* course; no additional sails were set, and the Venezuelan ensign still flew at the peak. This was all the more ominous, as the Spaniards had altered their course, with the evident intention of getting between us and the Bocas.

"What would you do if you were in command, Señor Capitan?" asked Arismendez.

"Show the Dons a clean pair of heels. Wet the sails, set the studding sails, put the brig before the wind, her best point of sailing. A stern chase is a long chase, and as night is nigh I am pretty sure I could give them the slip. I should also clear for action and mount a carronade on the poop."

"And if they overhauled us after all?"

"Do as Davis said he would do; fight to the last and blow the ship up rather than strike my flag."

The general was sitting in a deck chair, we were near him, leaning against the bulwark. Diaz, standing by the wheel, now and then exchanging a word with one of his officers. Most of the crew were in the waist and on the forecastle, the heat below being unbearable.

"Oblige me by fetching your pistols, and sending Ready here, also armed, but return separately," said Arismendez, abruptly.

Guessing that he had a plan, though we had not the least idea what it could be, we obeyed without questioning, and presently returned with the pistols, of course, concealed.

Arismendez rose from his chair, and putting his right hand inside his undress uniform coat, and bidding us follow him, but not too near, went up to the captain.

"Traitor, renegade, spy!" hissed the old man between his set teeth, and drawing a long glittering knife from his coat stabbed Diaz to the heart.

(To be continued.)

THERE is a young man in Leeds so careful that, in calling on his girl, he always knocks, for fear if he came with a ring she might consider it a proposal.

LAVINIA: "Yes, James and I are to become partners for life."

Mabel: "And you will be the senior partner! How sweet!"

"A SMALL physique at times is a great disadvantage to a man," he said. "Recently I was grossly insulted by a big duffer, and I could only pocket the insult."

"In what way did he insult you?"

"He offered me a bribe."

MISS SWANSDOWN (at the ball): "What did you do with my shawl, Mr. Peterkin? I gave it to you to keep half an hour ago."

Peterkin (producing a slip of paper): "Good gracious, what have I done! In a fit of absent-mindedness I took it out and pawned it."

JUDGE: "Your age?"

Lady: "Thirty years."

Judge (incredulously): "You will have some difficulty in proving that."

Lady (excitedly): "You'll find it hard to prove to the contrary, as the church register which contained the entry of my birth was burned in the year 1845."

A FRENCH journal says that a man who had a passion for shooting called one morning to his servant:

"There's a rabbit in the garden, Jacques! Hand me a gun."

"But, sir, it is five o'clock in the morning; everybody is asleep."

"No matter. I'll fire on tiptoe."

BROADWOOD: "Some of the new houses up our way are so narrow that a piano cannot be put in."

Bans (excitedly): "You don't know the rent of the houses next door to them, do you?"

FOND MOTHER: "Children, you mustn't fight."

Willie: "We're playing jeweller, mamma, and Tommy's a clock out of order and keeps on strikin' while I'm trying to twist his face off."

HIGHWAYMAN: "Throw up your hands and give us your money."

Cumso: "How can I do that, you idiot? Do you imagine that I am a contortionist, and can get my nose into my pocket?"

A FARCE was produced in Bannister's time, under the title of *Fire and Water*

"I predict its fate," said he.

"What fate?" said the anxious author at his side.

"What fate!" said Bannister; "why, what can fire and water produce but a hiss?"

"WHAT is an anecdote, Johnny?" asked the teacher

"A short, funny tale," answered the little fellow.

"That's right," said the teacher.

"Now, Johnny, write a sentence on the blackboard containing the word."

Johnny hesitated a moment, and then wrote:

"A rabbit has four legs and one anecdote."

"MY dear," said a sentimental maiden to her lover, "of what do these autumnal tints, this glowing baldric of the skies, this blazing garniture of the dying year, remind you?"

"Pancakes," he promptly replied.

And than she realised for the first time that their two hearts did not beat as one.

Digitized by Google

SHORT STORIES ABOUT SEASIDE LODGINGS.

We devote, every week, two pages of *Short Stories* to pithy, humourous anecdotes similar to those which appear in these columns. A prize of £1 1s. will be sent to the reader who submits the best storyette this week, and a copy of "Mystery of the 'Medea,'" by Alex. Vaughan, to each of those whose attempts are used. The anecdotes may be either original or selected; in the latter case the source *must* be stated. The prize of One Guinea offered for the best Storyette in this competition has been won this week by Mr. W. J. Bristow, 119 Stratford Road, Plaistow, Essex. Attempts for this week's prize must deal with Stories about HOLIDAY ADVENTURES, and must reach the Storyette Editor, *Short Stories* Office, Henrietta Street, Strand, London, W.C., by Monday, August 27th. Post-cards only, please.

Wanted to Eat the Cat.

He came down to breakfast and nothing was ready. So he rang the bell.

"Mrs. Perkins," he said when the boarding-house keeper appeared, "what is the meaning of this? Why is breakfast not ready?"

"Well, sir," replied Mrs. Perkins, "I got a nice bit of fish for you, but I'm sorry to say, sir, the cat——"

"Confound the cat! then let me have the cold chicken."

"I regret to say, sir, the cat——"

"Well, then, some eggs."

"There are no eggs, sir. The cat——"

"Hang it all, then, cook the cat and we'll have it all at once!"

W. J. B.

Old and Tough.

"Pretty healthy place this, isn't it, Mrs. Doem?"

"Oh, yes, sir."

"The sea-breezes are considered wholesome, I suppose?"

"They are indeed, sir."

"The place to live in to a ripe old age, eh?"

"You're right, sir."

"Yes, I gathered as much by this spring chicken. I should be glad if you'd take its ancient carcase to the steam saw-mill and ask them kindly to dissect it for me."

E. C.

The Reason Why.

Being a family that is generally going away for a fortnight summer holidays, we went this year to a pleasant little seaside town on the coast of Kent, and we obtained good lodgings there during our first week's stay. We had beautiful weather, but towards the beginning of the second week it turned out very wet and we were compelled to stay indoors. Seeking for anything to pass the time we determined to get a little music and singing.

A piano being in our room we commenced our little concert. The first tune we struck up was that popular chorus, "Home Sweet Home." You know how the words go: "There's no place like home, etc."

We kept singing this chorus over and over again until we got tired of it. Well, when we saw our landlord next he was in a terrible rage.

The reason for this became quite evident to us all after a time.

I. E.

Caught.

A lancashire man who was staying at a boarding-house in Blackpool, suspected his landlady's "cat" had been tampering with his whisky.

As a test he called his landlady and said to her: "Don't let your cat touch this bottle labelled whisky; it contains a deadly poison, mixed with whisky, which I keep for cleaning purposes."

On hearing this, his landlady exclaimed: "Oh, send for the doctor, I'm dying."

J. C.

Bowser at Brighton.

Mr. Bowser (across the seaside boarding-house table): "Will you pass the tin-opener, Mrs. Skinnem."

Mrs. Skinnem (severely): "Do I understand you rightly, Mr. Bowser, the tin-opener?"

Bowser (suavely): "You do, madam; I wish to open this fruit pie."

A. Y.

How the Tea Went.

Mr. W., a well-known solicitor, in his bachelor days went to lodge with a person whom we will call Mrs. Brown. As an inducement to take the rooms, he was told that he could have a lock-up cupboard to keep his food in, where it would be safe from the depredations of the cat.

However, Mr. W. soon discovered that his favourite pekoe disappeared with alarming rapidity. Having no particular reason for suspecting the domestic tabby, he came to the conclusion that Mrs. Brown must, like himself, possess a liking for that fragrant bohea.

To make assurance doubly sure, he purchased two pounds of tea next time instead of one, and putting one pound as usual in the tea-caddy in the cupboard (which he determined not to touch at all himself), gave out his daily supply from the other pound, which he kept concealed from Mrs. Brown. But, alas! the pound in the caddy kept getting small and beautifully less, until it was all gone!

Then came Mr. W.'s innings. Ringing for Mrs. Brown, he handed her his usual supply of tea in a cup, and producing the empty caddy from the cupboard, he jocularly remarked:

"I see you've finished your pound of tea before I have mine, Mrs. Brown."

The poor woman's face, when it dawned upon her that the vanishing tea trick had been discovered, was a study.

C. R. F.

Digitized by Google

Votaries of Mrs. Grundy.

Two old maids were once inspecting some seaside lodgings, which stood back a considerable distance from the sea. Being difficult to please, they raised all sorts of objections to the rooms. At last one of them said they couldn't possibly live in such a house on account of the bathers. The landlady pleaded the distance from the offensive sight, which was half a mile or more.

With one accord, both old maids raised their hands in pious indignation, with the remark:

"True, true, the distance is great, but we could see them distinctly with a telescope!"

W. B. H.

Rather High.

I HAD only been at my seaside apartments one day when I received a telegram to return home immediately. I at once informed my landlady, and asked that my bill should be made out. A few moments later it was put before me, and the following is a copy:

To Mr. Holdsworth, from Bradford,
July 17

Bedroom...	3s.
Attendance	1s.
1 Dinner	2s.
Drinks, etc.	2s.
	25s.

"Good gracious, landlady!" I exclaimed. "whatever is this. Twenty-five shillings for one day?"

"Oh! I beg your pardon," she replied, smiling, oh, so innocently; "I have added in the date by mistake."

E. H.

Burnt Out.

LAST summer we went to a northern seaside resort. Necessity compelled us to take moderate apartments. The landlady was genial, and soon prepared tea. A young girl (a niece) came to clear away.

As she passed my chair she dropped a plate of cake, and, as I stooped to help her pick it up, she put a piece of paper in my hand.

Motioning me to keep silent, she withdrew from the room.

The paper read:

"Do not stay in this house to-night; you will be sorry if you do. There are many other places."

We came to the conclusion that the girl had quarrelled with her aunt, and had done this for spite. Being comfortable, we did not feel inclined to move.

About eleven o'clock she brought us our candles, and shaking her head, looked at me meaningly. I felt somewhat nervous, and sat at the window for some time. At last I went to sleep.

I woke up fighting for breath. The room was full of smoke. I tried to wake my wife, but could not. I got to the door and opened it.

The smoke poured in, and the stairs were enveloped in flames.

I was dragged through a window. I struggled to get to my wife, but 'twas impossible.

Poor Minnie was lost. The people of the house were safe.

The girl afterwards confessed that they set the house on fire to obtain the heavy insurance.

A. G. C.

Then They Laughed.

IT was my first day at dinner at my seaside apartments, and I was placed opposite a roast goose. The lady of the house was sitting by my side. Seeing the goose, I remarked:

"Shall I sit so close to the goose?"

But, thinking my words a trifle equivocal, I turned to the lady and said, in a most inoffensive tone:

"Excuse me, madam, I meant the roast one."

Somehow, my landlady and I didn't get on very well together after that.

E. H.

The Literary Landlady.

A REPORTER was in the habit of using his cuffs on which to make professional notes. His landlady, who undertook, in addition to boarding him, to do his washing, was much puzzled with the hieroglyphics she found inscribed on her lodger's linen, and she after a while managed to make out their meaning. One day she astonished the newspaper man by saying:

"Your last washing was quite interesting, sir, only you don't give me enough sporting news."

Evidently that landlady liked to have "a little bit on," as they say in racing circles.

C. R. F.

A Chilly Sort of Bed.

SOME years ago the National Eisteddfod was held at a popular Welsh watering-place. The festival attracted large crowds, and the town was terribly overcrowded. The only sleeping accommodation I and three friends could obtain was a bath-room. When retiring I found that my bed was a mattress placed over the bath. At least it had been so arranged by the landlady, but my villainous "friends" had removed the bath cover and mattress, and filling the bath with water, had cunningly spread the sheets over the watery trap.

When I leaped on them I fell into eighty gallons of cold water. I splashed, gasped, and struggled, the sheet became wound round my arms and legs, and I was in real danger of drowning, when my companions rescued me.

W. B.

The Scotch Calendar.

AN anecdote is told of a certain Highland hotel-keeper.

He was one day bickering with an Englishman in the lobby of the inn regarding the bill.

The stranger said it was a gross imposition, he could live cheaper in the best hotel in London, to which the landlord with nonchalance replied:

"Oh, nae doot, sir, nae doot; but do ye no ken the reason?"

"No, not a bit of it," said the stranger, hastily.

"Weel, then," replied the host, "as ye seem to be a sensible callant, I'll tell ye: there's 365 days in the Lunnon hotel-keeper's calendar, but we have only three months in ours!

"Do ye understand me noo, frien'? We maun mak' hay in the Hielans when the sun shines, for it's unco seldom she dis't!"

C. R. F.

Digitized by Google

Little Mrs. Hope.

THERE were twenty of us making up the party at a country house for the shooting season, and it so happened that while all were of course well-known to host and hostess seven or eight were strangers to each other until introduced at the house.

I do not think there were over three or four who even knew little Mrs. Hope by name, or could tell anything of her past. Nor did a great deal leak out about her father after she had been generally introduced and had come to be a favourite with both men and women.

She was *petite* and fair. She had a baby-face and big blue eyes, and your first impression of her was that she was a child and a very innocent child at that.

In the billiard room it was whispered that she was a distant relative of Colonel Saunders, our host, and hat she had married a scamp and had been so ill-used that a separation had been sought for.

It was generally agreed that it must have all been the husband's fault and that the man who would ill-treat such a light-hearted, baby-faced wife deserved something beyond contempt.

She was by long odds the best looking woman among the eight or ten, but as she was not given to flirtation and as she looked pretty without artificial means she was forgiven for her handsome face and became a general favourite.

The man who leaves business for a week or two for a holiday seldom takes along jewellery or money of any account, but nine women out of ten must carry their diamonds wherever they go.

There was a good display of gems at Rose Hill with all except little Mrs. Hope. She had two or three rings and a bracelet or two and made a poor show compared with the rest.

This was corroborative evidence that she was none too well off, financially, but she did not display the slightest feeling of envy, and no hints were thrown out to hurt her feelings.

A country house, full of wealthy guests, is a paradise for a thief, and the colonel warned the ladies from the beginning to be careful of their jewellery. All of them agreed to act upon the advice and then, womanlike, left every ornament lying about.

On the fourth day of the party a lady named White missed three valuable rings which had been left lying on a table in her room. They had been taken in broad daylight while the ladies were on the lawn and while the maid was temporarily absent from the room.

It was impossible that any outsider could have got into the house, and it seemed impossible to trace the thief to any particular servant.

Counting maids, valets and the household, there were about twenty people in the house apart from the guests. Mrs. White's loss was kept a secret for several days from all but the host and hostess, but the colonel's quiet detective work brought no reward.

The second loss was more serious. A Mrs. Willmere left her jewellery lying about after dinner and at bedtime discovered that she had been robbed of every single article.

The value was at least £3,000, and as she and her husband were both excitable people the loss could not be kept quiet.

Between the finish of dinner and bedtime we were scattered about the house and lawn, with the servants moving to and fro, and no stranger could have entered the house without being seen.

The bedroom window was open but no ladder had been used.

It seemed to be plain enough that some servant had secured the jewellery, and one by one the entire lot were summoned before the colonel's court of inquiry and interrogated.

There wasn't one without a good character, nor could suspicion justly attach to any single one. It was long after midnight before we got through and next morning the sergeant from the police station was summoned. He couldn't suspect one of the guests, and he could find no grounds for suspecting one of the servants, and he got out of it by looking wise and saying that Mrs. Willmere had probably mislaid her ornaments. Unfortunately for her she was rather absent-minded, and we presently came to accept the theory, though she searched her rooms over and over again without discovery.

The losses did not break up the party as might have been the case. The colonel and Mrs. Willmere came to

Digitized by Google

a mutual understanding. I think the detective advised them to call it a "mislay," and thereby put the thief off his guard.

Colonel Saunders insisted that every jewel of value should be locked up in the family safe, and when this had been done every guest became a Sherlock Holmes.

There were twenty guests and twenty theories. Everything from an owl to the stable-boy was under suspicion.

The detective's theory, as he gave it to the colonel privately, was that a smart thief disguised as a lady's maid or upper servant had entered the house and committed both robberies. Of all the theories this was the most absurd, but of course the man felt bound to make a move of some sort.

The jewellery had been locked up for four days, and things had quieted down, when the colonel started to produce it in honour of a government official who was to arrive that evening.

I say he started to, because he no sooner attempted to unlock the safe than he discovered that the bolts had been shot. As he pulled the door open he uttered a groan, and the sight of his haggard face was evident enough that something was wrong. The safe had been opened by means of a key, but had not been locked again. Every article of jewellery was gone, and the value of the lot was not a penny under £10,000.

In seeking to render his guests safe the colonel had helped to despoil them. It was impossible to say at what date the robbery had happened, and the only thing to do was to telegraph up to London for a detective.

While waiting his arrival no servant was allowed off the grounds, and of course no guest could well leave while under fire. It was a painful position for every one, and the detective rather added to it when he got to work. So soon as he was in possession of all the facts he said to the colonel:

"These robberies were committed by one of yonr guests. They must all assemble in the drawing-room and submit to have their rooms searched."

Rather than subject them to such an indignity the colonel offered to pay the full loss out of his own pocket, but this no one would hear of. All were willing for the search to go on, and host, hostess and detective made it.

Nothing was found. The detective clung to his theory, however, and took another look at the rooms and was given the names of their occupants. There were three rooms which communicated, and those three were occupied by the colonel, his wife and little Mrs. Hope.

The door between the rooms of the colonel and Mrs. Hope was bolted on her side and had been for years.

This door caught the eye of the detective, and after an examination of the bolt, he said:

"This bolt has been worked within three or four days, as any locksmith will tell you, and this door has also been opened."

"Do you know what you are saying?" sternly demanded the colonel.

"I do, sir. You carry the key of the safe in your pocket. To get that key someone has entered your room by this door at night."

"But Mrs. Hope's effects have been searched along with the rest."

"Her effects—yes. She has the jewellery on her person. Let your wife search her."

The colonel was furious and his wife indignant. They would answer for little Mrs. Hope as for themselves.

"I can do no more," answered the detective. "One of your guests is the robber, and it is the guest occupying this room. If you will call her up here, I believe I can break her down in ten minutes."

After long hesitation little Mrs. Hope was called up.

She came smilingly, and no pair of eyes ever revealed greater innocence. A layman would have sooner suspected a toddling babe.

"Now then," began the detective, "you are the robber. You took Mrs. White's jewellery, and you robbed the colonel's safe. You got the key from his trousers by opening this door. You have the jewellery on your person."

For the space of thirty seconds the baby-faced woman regarded him with wonder, indignation, fear, and anguish.

Then she gasped for breath and sank down on the ground.

"Search her," said the detective as he left the room.

Ten minutes later he was called in. The little woman lay weeping on the sofa, and the missing jewellery was spread out on the table.

"Heaven help us!" said the colonel as he looked from the officer to the recovered treasure and back.

"We must help ourselves," replied the man as he looked at the woman with pity in his eyes. "Mrs. Saunders, your maid must go. You must settle the price with her. She must get away as soon as possible, and the plunder must be found in her room later on. She will get safe away."

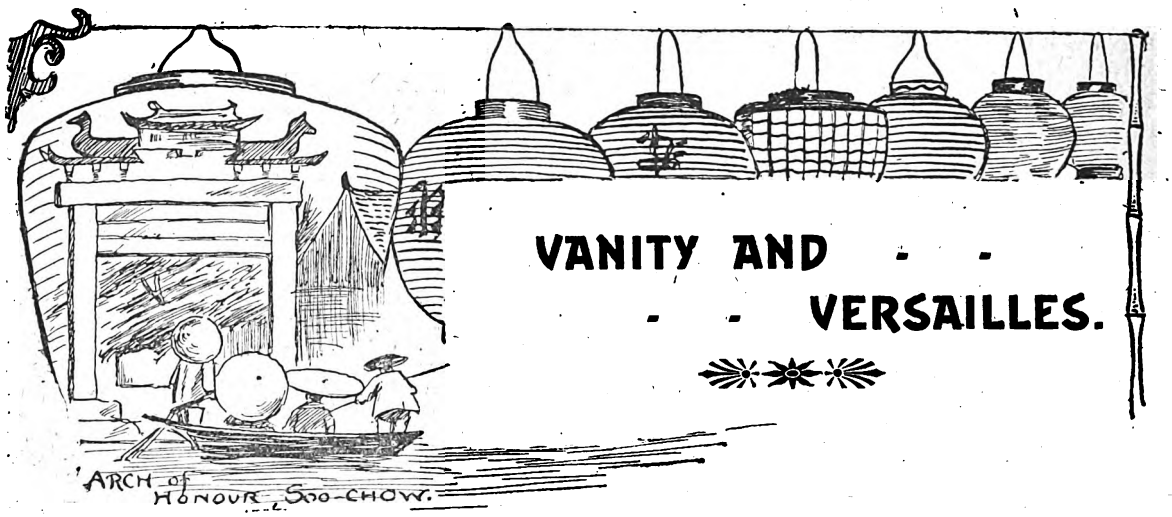
Three hours later the jewellery was "found" in the maid's room, and everybody else was cleared of suspicion and made happy. The maid had been gone two hours, and the detective doubted whether she could be found in big London, though of course he would use every effort. Little Mrs. Hope was ill for a day or two under the nervous excitement and so had a good excuse for leaving Rose Hill.

So far as I know not one of the guests suspected her. Indeed as the maid had left a written confession before she bolted how could anyone else be suspected? This being the case, you may wonder how I got hold of the inside facts in the case. Well, that's a matter of no concern so long as I have given you the full particulars. Perhaps the colonel trusted me farther than he did the others.

As for little Mrs. Hope, it was want of money, probably, that induced her to turn robber, but I have always tried to make myself believe that she couldn't have realised what she was doing.

C. L.

Digitized by Google



VANITY AND - - - - VERSAILLES.

ROSE LEPEL was a pretty grisette who lived in the Rue Montmartre in Paris and worked all the week at a confectioner's manufactory. She sugared the mirabelles and the violets sent up by thousands from the South of France and arranged them in pretty little boxes with stamped paper and tissue ornaments, with the taste that seems to grow in Paris.

Sunday was her great fête day; then all thoughts of work were put aside and in her pretty grey muslin dress and neat shoes, Rose felt herself the gayest of the gay and the neatest among the many neat and pretty grisettes of Paris.

She had a friend, who was always at her disposal on these holidays, one Henri Marul, a brave soldier in the 4th. Zouaves de la Ligne. Henri had never yet had a chance of proving his bravery, and so it was an unknown quantity, but in France all soldiers are "brave soldiers" as soon as they are adorned by the loose red trousers of the Zouaves, and they march about looking intensely fierce, carrying pain and pleasure and admiration to the hearts of the Parisian grisettes.

This fine morning in June Henri had arranged to call for Rose early in order that they might spend the whole day at Versailles, in the gardens and park. When he called for her in the Rue Montmartre Rose was ready and waiting, with a charming little basket on her arm, containing their *déjeuner* to be eaten at twelve o'clock.

"But what have you there, my angel?" cried Henri, trying to examine the contents of the basket.

"Wait! and you will see at Versailles," said Rose, "it is something of the most ravishing, I assure you. How the sun shines and how the sky is blue. Henri, I long to be in the gardens, by the little lake at Versailles."

"Come, then," said Henri, and they walked fast through the busy, bright streets that had an air of festivity, even so early, to the Place de la Concorde, where on the further side by the big bridge, the steamers stopped. Here they took tickets for Sèvres, the nearest point on the Seine to Versailles.

"It is fortunate," said Rose, "that we have started early. On such a fine day all the world will go to Versailles, especially when the great fountains play as they will this afternoon."

They started in a few minutes and the river steamer went puffing up the river between the long lines of exhibition buildings on either side. Very frail and insecure these looked, many as yet unfinished, but giving an appearance of brightness and gay colouring, grouped near the towering height of the Eiffel Tower and stretching along in lines of whiteness and gilding and quaint, fantastic shapes. The steamer passed through all this and passed Passy and St. Cloud, out to the fields and gardens beyond the city limits.

At last they stopped at the Bridge of Sèvres and got off the steamer at the pretty country landing place. Many other passengers did so too, among them a lady smartly-dressed and with wonderful curly golden hair. This lady had already absorbed much of Henri's attention on the boat; this was the worst of this gay Zouave, though faithful in his heart to Rose, whom he intended to marry as soon as his term of military service was ended, yet he was continually admiring other people and causing Rose's neat little bodice to flutter anxiously with jealousy.

"Must not everyone admire also the manly graces of her brave Zouave? Ah, in this life no pleasure is without its thorn!"

The lady, however, was at present engaged with friends of her own; with much talking and laughing they all went up the steep incline from the landing place to the road above, where the steam tramway from Paris passed on its way to Versailles. Henri and Rose climbed up on the outside of the tramway, it was cheaper and pleasanter than the inside; the lady with golden hair went inside, so for the time, temptation was removed from the neighbourhood of our gay Zouave.

The tramway stopped in the Place d'Armes at Versailles, by the great stables of the Palace; everybody got out and streamed across the great, open, glaring Place to a side door, the entrance to the picture galleries on the right and straight through to the fountains and gardens.

Oh, shades of ill-fated Marie Antoinette and her frivolous Court, how must you feel to see the crowd you despised so much, troop over the parterres and terraces sacred to Royalty, to see little booths for refreshments put up even on the great terrace, and a merry-go-round in the Lime Tree Avenue!

Henri and Rose thought little of kings and queens, to-day was sufficient for them; they hurried down across the terraces to the wood by the lake and they ate their *déjeuner* there, in the cool shade of the forest trees.

Digitized by Google

Rose produced a delightful *paté* from her basket and a bottle of Médoc. Henri bought cakes and fruit from a stall in the gardens and they had a nice little meal.

"All that there is of most charming," said Rose, and they laughed and talked while the shadows of the great limes fell as unconcernedly on this little bourgeois lunch as on the great ladies of the French court long ago.

"At half past four the fountains begin," said Henri, "and before that, the band plays in the wood; let us go there, it is more gay. I see already many people among the trees."

So they went, Rose with rather a heavy heart, for the golden-haired lady would be sure to be where the crowd met. Her fears were justified; there she was, much finer and more fashionable than poor little Rose.

Henri twisted his moustache in a fine manner and put on his most soldierly air; the lady looked for a chair, and he darted forward to supply one, receiving in thanks a bow and smile that constituted an acquaintance.

Poor Rose was quite in the shade henceforth; certainly she had also a chair paid for by Henri, but she sat on it alone and neglected, and all the world knows it is not gay to sit alone in a crowd. Henri had forgotten her—the sky was black, not blue; what a most detestable place to spend a holiday in!—was this much talked-of Versailles?

At last Henri and the lady left their chairs and went down towards the lake, she having expressed a desire for a little "promenade" on the water. Rose followed them and remained on the bank, the faithless Henri merely saying the boat was too small for three.

Below the fountains there is a long, wide artificial canal, with a round pond at either end. At one end there is a boat-house where canoes and boats can be hired for one franc fifty centimes the hour.

The specimens of rowing one sees are not very good; some oars fly wildly up without touching the water—others are forced in with severe determination till it seems as if they would never come up again. Then again there are many collisions and clashings of oars, but the water is shallow and the master boatman looks on with serene unconcern. Should a boat upset, he will go to the rescue, but for nothing less can his superior mind be disturbed.

Henri was one of the worst rowers, and the golden-haired lady was evidently not at ease; in starting, he bashed up against a small pier to which boats were moored and the shock jerked one oar out of his hand. The lady screamed, the people on the bank laughed, which made her furious. However, Henri recovered his oar and, rather red in the face, proceeded out to the centre of the lake. Here all went well.

Henri paddled about and even got so experienced as to make a feeble attempt to feather his oars. He and the lady were evidently on the very best of terms, and as Rose watched them from the bank and heard their laughter, her heart sank within her and she walked away sadly under the trees.

Hark! what was that? A shriek from the lake. Ah, yes, indeed! she turned quickly, and saw Henri's boat in collision with another just in the centre of the round pond.

All would have gone well even then, but the golden-haired lady would not keep still—she stood up in the boat and called loudly for the master boatman. What happened was easily foreseen—a sudden lurch, and over she went into the lake—down, down, to the depth of seven or eight feet: then she rose again, gasping wildly.

The boat, fortunately, with Henri in it, was close by; he leaned over and clutched her by the closest place handy—her mass of golden hair. But what was this? It came off! All the ravishing curls, the entire head-dress with flower-toque attached was left in his hand, leaving a round head covered with very short red hair like a brush. At the same moment, fortunately, the lady seized the edge of the boat, so she was in no danger of drowning. Henri remained paralysed, the golden hair in his hand. Not so the inhabitants of the other boat, who screamed with laughter—so did the spectators on the bank. The lady could do nothing but hold on and gasp out "*Canaille!*" to her tormentors at intervals.

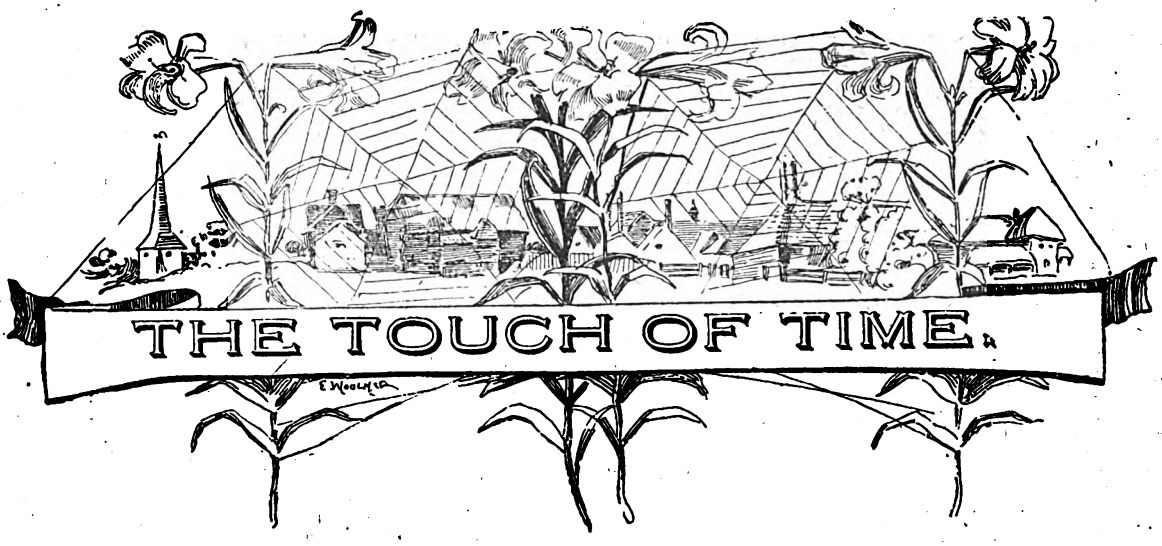
The master boatman soon arrived on the scene in a wide punt, into which he hauled her with scant politeness. Henri restored to her, her golden curls and the episode was ended. So was also Henri's admiration. Alas for fickle Zouaves! he turned his attention to his Rose well-loved, now smiling on the bank, he took her on board his boat and they spent the rest of the day in undisturbed happiness and good-fellowship.

He explained away the episode of the lady with the art of a diplomatist. "All is well that ends well," For Rose it ended well, so she thought it better to forgive and to forget.

As to the lady and the golden hair, she put it on her head again in the welcome seclusion of a little refreshment hut at the park gate, near the boat house, and reappeared charming as ever, only she avoided the neighbourhood both of our friend Henri and the Lake.

SADI GRANT.

Digitized by Google



"PLEASANT, isn't it?"

Mrs. Roger Brice looked at her husband, her eyes twinkling with mischievous amusement. She was a woman who had learned to take life as it came to her, and did not worry over what she could not alter.

Perhaps that was the reason why her cheeks were still so round and rosy, and the lines about her eyes and mouth were soft instead of hard.

It was inconvenient to have to wait at this tiny junction of the branch road for four hours, but obviously it could not be helped. Already they had explored the single street of the little settlement twice; but the heat was intolerable, and they had returned to the station, resigned to the inevitable. At least, Mrs. Brice. Her husband's frame of mind was better unexpressed.

Roger Brice was one of those methodical, practical men, who have their whole day's action mapped out beforehand, like a military campaign. No spare moments, no idle musings for him! Not that he did not cultivate leisure to a proper degree.

He took his vacation of two weeks (upon which they were just starting) each year with the same precision with which he read his daily paper, and kissed his wife good-bye before starting for his office in the morning; in short, his whole mature life had been one of monotonous routine. Hence when the complexities of outside existence disturbed his own, as in the present case, he was helpless in his well-bred, well-controlled vexation.

"If Roger only would lose his temper sometimes he wouldn't be so exasperating," his wife had often thought; "but, then, he's kept it bottled up so many years that it would be something awful."

His love for her she never doubted, yet deep in her soul was the longing that something sometime might rouse it to a more fervent expression. Still, their life was so happy, so tranquil, if colourless, that she could not really desire any change—she only thought of it.

Mr. Brice smiled unwillingly at her question, and did not answer. He was hot, uncomfortable, bored. In that state a man who has been married fifteen years does not think it necessary to be conversational. Mrs. Brice recognised the mood, and tactfully responded to it.

"I'm going to talk to the ticket agent, or whatever he is," she announced, rising. "Perhaps he can tell me something interesting about the people who live in those houses. Just imagine it! Being shut up here all the year round. I wonder what they think about? But probably they don't think. Good-bye."

Her husband followed the trim figure and easy gait with his glance, critically but not caustically. Then he lighted a fresh cigar and resigned himself more composedly to the discomforts of the situation. In an hour his mood would be almost cheerful, so beneficent are the effects of tobacco and solitude at the right time. Most women realise the potency of the first; but, alas! fail to discover that the second is still more powerful.

How long he sat there Mr. Brice never knew; but he must have fallen asleep, for he was roused suddenly by his wife's voice.

"Roger, Roger," she called, as she hurried down the platform towards him, "I've just had a long talk with the man in there, and who do you think he says lives here? Mrs. Page, Edna Larkin, of all people! Her husband is superintendent of the granite quarry two miles from here, and they live in that house with all the flowers growing round it—the white one. I thought you'd like to go to see her. There's plenty of time, unless you think it's too hot," she added stooping to retie her shoe-lace.

Her husband looked at her in bewilderment. Edna Larkin! He had not heard her name for fifteen—twenty years; had not thought of her voluntarily for ten; but the same old thrill, faint and tremulous, went over him. How unreal it seemed! Yet there stood Carrie before him awaiting his decision.

"Of course," he answered simply, rising. "I should like to see her very much. How strange that we should run across her here! I haven't thought of her since—since——"

"I knew some nice woman must live in that house," interrupted his wife briskly, helping him over the difficult pause.

"Now we must walk slowly. Isn't it hot?" And she smiled apologetically, as she tucked a tiny handkerchief around the collar of her shirt-waist. "It's almost gone, and I want to be respectable when we get there," she explained, as they walked along.

The half-mile between the little shed that served as station and Mrs. Page's pleasant cottage was traversed largely in silence. It was too hot to talk, Mrs. Brice said, and her husband was trying to simplify his confused thoughts.

Digitized by Google

Edna Larkin! How he had loved that girl! As a lad in the country town where they were both born he had dreamed of nothing better, nothing greater than a life with her. It had been a boy and girl love affair that had grown as they grew, and when chance threw in his way the opportunity to enlarge his life and successes, his one hesitation had been that he must leave her behind.

"Only for a time," he had told himself and her; and she had promised to wait for him with all a girl's rapture over her first sweetheart.

The sequel had been ordinary enough. She had tired of waiting, perhaps had never really cared for him, and married another man.

In spite of himself, Roger Brice smiled as he recalled his misery at this crisis. Not because it had not been real, but because it had been so strong, so vehement. Looking back at it now, it seemed to him incredible that any event could have so wrought upon him.

Then had come the slow but sure rearrangement of his plans; his growing devotion to business; his gradual change from impulsive, ardent youth, to conventional middle age. When the wound had healed he had married, in the same deliberate way that he now did everything; telling the woman of his choice his little story, as something due to her. He remembered his very words:

"I cannot offer you the first, fresh affection of a young heart, dear. But what I do give you—what you will always have, whether you take it or leave it—is the deeper love of one who has suffered and overcome suffering."

And she had said that was all she deserved or wished.

Certainly, Carrie had made him happy. As he stole a look at her, he thought how few of his friends had such cheerful, helpful comrades.

Oddly enough, there flashed across his mind, the memory of one night three years past when she had been very ill, and his forlorn anxiety. What was that early, passionate love, for years almost forgotten, to these long years of calm affection and fellowship? It was a mere bagatelle—a boy's dream. Yet—

"Here we are," said Mrs. Brice, as she turned up the neat path between two flower beds, gay with sweet peas and nasturtiums. "Won't she be surprised to see you, after all these years?" she continued, after ringing the bell.

The door opened promptly, and a tall slender girl, evidently about sixteen, stood on the threshold.

"Is Mrs. Page at home?" asked Mrs. Brice, after waiting a moment for her husband to speak.

Evidently he preferred that she should take the lead.

"Yes'm. Won't you walk in?" answered the girl, opening the door into a long, low parlour, and ushering them to two large plush armchairs.

Not a window was open, and although the blinds were closed, the room was stifling.

"I'll go right and tell her you're here," she continued, disappearing after she had learned their name and errand.

Mr. and Mrs. Brice looked at each other, and the room, tentatively. She was the first to speak.

"What a pretty girl! Her complexion is like a wild rose; and her eyes and hair make such a striking contrast. Does she look like her mother? Oh, how hot it is!" and she picked up a photograph from the centre-table, using it as a fan.

"Yes; very like. Isn't she lovely?" answered her husband slowly.

He was still trying to readjust himself to the conditions before him.

A Splendid Offer.

At the special request of a large number of readers we propose to repeat the offer made some time ago:

We will give a beautiful **INDIA INK and CRAYON PORTRAIT** size 15×12, mounted on plate sunk mount, 24×19, to anyone who will bring or send us 7s. and a Coupon from the

ILLUSTRATED WEEKLY NEWS.

These portraits are of the finest artistic merit. They are quite permanent, being finished by the Air Brush with Indelible India Ink, making them more permanent than any of the old styles of portraits, and they will last a lifetime.

They would cost you, if obtained through an artist, many times as much.

Have you Father, Mother, Sister, Brother, or Child's Photograph which you wish Enlarged?

Perhaps some dear one has passed away whose likeness is now faded, and could be preserved before it is too late.

Special Offers to Relatives of Soldiers and Sailors.

Doubtless there are amongst our readers many thousands who have relatives at the front—brothers, or husbands, or fathers, or sons. Doubtless some of these brave fellows will never return to the old home. Perhaps you have a photograph of your husband, or your brother, or your son, which you want to preserve for years to come, and yet you have not the means to pay two or three guineas to have this done in the ordinary way. We, therefore, shall make a reduction of a shilling on every photograph of a Soldier or Sailor sent to us.

You will certainly get a genuine bargain by availing yourself of this offer. The enlargements can be made from any photograph, large or small, tin-types, or any kind of glass picture, provided the print is legible. All the enlargements are of the head and shoulders only.

Write your name and address plainly in ink on the coupon to be found in the current number of the

ILLUSTRATED WEEKLY NEWS.

Write your name and address plainly in ink on the back of the portrait you are sending us. Get a postal order for 7s. (if the photograph be that of a soldier or sailor get a 6s. postal order). Place all these in an envelope, or make a securely packed parcel of them and address it to the PORTRAIT EDITOR, *Pearson's Weekly*, Henrietta Street, London, W.C. The money and coupon must accompany each order, otherwise your photograph will be returned to you.

Any number of enlargements can be made from one photograph.

A Reduction of Threepence

on each enlargement, if the order is for two or more from the same photograph, will be made, but a coupon must be sent for each enlargement required.

This offer will remain open until Saturday, August 25th, and orders will be treated in rotation. The sooner you send the sooner you will get your photograph.

All photographs—particularly those on glass—should be securely packed. Although all possible care will be taken, we do not hold ourselves responsible for photographs damaged or lost in transit.

A sample enlargement is on view at these offices. Below are other addresses where the enlargements may be seen:

Portsmouth.—A. B. Bennett, 408 Commercial Road, Landport.
Southsea.—L. Hillyer, 9 Green Road.
Glasgow.—William Love, 221 Argyle Street (opposite Central Station), and William Barr, 88 Sauchiehall Street.
Liverpool.—F. W. Edwards, 122 Pembroke Place, and Henry Jones (tobacconist), Oldfield Road.
Blackpool.—Coppock (newsagent).
Newcastle-on-Tyne.—Messrs. T. and G. Allan, 18 and 20 Blackett Street.
Sunderland.—Edward Thompson, 263 High Street West.
Manchester.—J. Matthews, 88 Oxford Street, and Messrs. M. Carr and Co., 38 Alexandra Road, Moss Side.
Stockport.—Sisson, 49 Middle Hillgate.
Darlington.—North of England School Furnishing Company, Blackwellgate.

The names of other places will appear next week.

Digitized by Google

"Why, Roger Brice, I declare! Who would 'a thought of seeing you?" said a shrill voice behind him, and he turned abruptly to see Mrs. Page standing on the threshold.

Could that be Edna Larkin? he asked himself while he shook hands with the newcomer, and murmured the conventional responses.

"I thought it was you when I saw you coming up the walk," continued the hostess turning towards Mrs. Brice, who had also risen, and nervously clasping the brooch at her throat. "And this is Mrs. Brice? I'm happy to make your acquaintance, ma'am. I used to go to school with your husband. Isn't it a dreadful hot day? Won't you have a fan, and a glass of water? Edna," to her daughter, who had re-entered bashfully, "can't you get the lady a glass of water? Yes, this is my daughter Edna. Mr. Page would name her after me. We've never had any other children. How did you ever happen to come to Belmont Junction? And how did you know I lived here?"

Mr. Brice found himself answering in an absent-minded way, but intelligently.

"Poor fellow! I suppose he thought she'd look just as she did twenty-five years ago," thought his wife compassionately, as she fanned herself. She even smiled as she remembered his description of Mrs. Page's beauty as a girl. Then she sighed a little. Mrs. Brice's first lover had given up his life at Gettysburg, "What changes time does make in all of us!" she thought, as she came to her husband's rescue.

How the time passed during that call Mr. Brice could never have told distinctly. His part in the conversation was decidedly passive, yet he talked just enough to banish constraint. Of this, however, he was only dimly aware. What he realised, was intensely conscious of, was the presence of the woman who had been his early sweetheart—the woman he had unwittingly idealized in memory. His ideal!

Not one detail of her present personality, from her awkward figure, red dimpled hands, thin straggling hair, faded eyes, and her kindly but barren talk, escaped him. Still more keenly did he realise the narrowness of her mind, partly due to circumstances, no doubt; but—

When she spoke of sending Edna away "to get an education," he started, and gazed fixedly at the girl; but his wife quietly suggested several schools, encouraged the idea, and finally brought the call to a close. Mother and daughter accompanied their visitors to the gate, and with kindly generosity filled Mrs. Brice's hands with the flowers she had admired. At length the final good-byes were said.

"What a pretty girl the daughter is!" ventured Mrs. Brice breaking the silence on their walk back to the station.

"So quiet and ladylike. I hope she will be able to study, I'm sure; she seemed so anxious to be a teacher,"

She paused, hesitatingly. Her inmost thought was, "I wonder what Roger thought about the mother," but sure of her own position, she was too good-natured to ask.

Mr. Brice walked on without replying. He was still busy trying to harmonise present circumstances with past. This is a difficult task always; but to a man of his unimaginative temperament it is well-nigh impossible, mentally.

Just before they reached the station he turned and looked at his wife long and eagerly; looked at her so intently that she felt his gaze, and smiled up at him encouragingly. Mrs. Brice had never been a beauty, never even a pretty woman; but there was a charm about her that no one who met her failed to recognise. This charm grew on acquaintance.

"Well?" she asked.

Mr. Brice did not answer for a moment. Then, as if the expression of his state of mind was wrung from him involuntarily, he made his only comment upon their call.

"To think that Edna Larkin could ever be so fat!" he said slowly, and relapsed into silence. "Here's the train, dear," he added ten minutes later.

Mrs. Brice smiled at him affectionately. She understood the significance of that "dear."

HELEN RAY KENT.

Digitized by Google

A FREE GIFT. WRITE TO-DAY.

H. SAMUEL'S SUPERB ROYAL QUARTO ALBUM

(*THE BARGAIN-HUNTER'S GUIDE*)

This **Magnificent Volume** consists of nearly **200 pages** in a **Highly Embellished Cover,** and contains **over 3,000 Illustrations** of **Wonderful Bargains** in Watches, Clocks, Diamonds, Jewellery, Plate, Cutlery, &c.

NEWEST & BEST DESIGNS at Large Reductions on Ordinary Prices.

Each Volume contains full lists of

HANDSOME BONUS GIFTS

for every Purchaser. Write to-day, and this Unique Work will be sent per return, **ABSOLUTELY FREE** to any address.

H. SAMUEL'S SOUND SYSTEM OF DIRECT SUPPLY FOR CASH,

and the unvarying excellence of

H. SAMUEL'S UP-TO-DATE WATCHES,

have won approval from all classes, the Purchaser receiving the GREATEST POSSIBLE VALUE for money.

A MONTH'S FREE TRIAL

is allowed with every article; thus fullest opportunity is afforded of thoroughly testing the goods.

H. SAMUEL'S LADY'S ACME WATCH

Contains Special Inventions protected by Her Majesty's Royal Letters Patent, and obtainable only in H. SAMUEL'S Watches. Fine three-quarter Jewelled Plate Lever Movement, Richly Decorated Dial (plain, if preferred), and Highly engraved Case. Warranted for FIVE YEARS, and sent with **BONUS FREE GIFT** on receipt of 25/-

H. SAMUEL (DEPT. 29), 95, 97, 99, 101, 33, 89 & 121 **MARKET STREET, MANCHESTER.**

NOSE MACHINES. LEES RAY. S. S. Dept., South Castle St, Liverpool, is a specialist on Ugly and Red Noses. Send stamp for particulars of his patent scientific Nose Improvers. Red Nose Cure, medically approved, 3/9. Outstanding Ear Machines 11/6.

WHITE CALICO FREE

Per Post. Superior heavy quality. Remnants, 2 to 4 yards long. 32 inches wide, 2/6 per Dozen yards; yard wide, 3/3 per Dozen yards. Free from "Dressing." Samples Free. Satisfaction Guaranteed.—EMDEN & CO. (F Dept.), *Manufacturers*, Levenshulme, Manchester

JUNO CYCLES FOR LADIES & GENTS.

THE VERY BEST.

Discount for Cash. FREE or FIXED WHEELS The most up-to-date. Carriage Paid.

	Monthly.
£8 10s. ...	14/2
£11 11s. ...	19/3
£12 ...	20/-
£12 12s. ...	21/-
£14 14s. ...	24/6

Write for New Season's List. **JUNO** Cycles and Accessories (over 100 pages) sent Post Free. Patterly Hard Wood Cycle Stand, 2/6. Handlebar Basket, 1/-

LISTS POST FREE

JUNO ... ... £10 ... 16/8 monthly.
Lady Safety ... £11 ... 18/4 monthly.

METROPOLITAN MACHINISTS CO. LTD., Juno Cycle School, and Works, 75, 76 Bishopsgate Street Without E.C., and Piccadilly Circus, London, W.

TOO STOUT

I was for years; by chance I came across a simple home remedy that reduced me from 17st. to 10st. 12lb., and I will willingly send particulars **free** to any sufferer enclosing stamp. Mrs. L. E. FELL, 195 Oxford Street, London, W.

SEND FOR

DR. EVANS'S (U.S.A.)

Pamphlet on Nervous Diseases of All Kinds. THIS PAMPHLET describes all the symptoms which arise from Diseases of the NERVOUS SYSTEM. It is up-to-date, having been compiled after years of labour and experience in the Treatment of these Maladies. It is complete, practical, and can be readily understood and acted upon. It gives pure and simple advice to Sufferers. Send stamped addressed envelope to GEORGE WRIGHT, ESQ., Colne House, REMBRANDT ROAD, LEE LONDON, S.E. (*Name this Paper.*)

THE

BEST OF ALL BEVERAGES

AND THE

CHEAPEST.

GOOD! IT'S MASON'S

Extract of Herbs

8 Gallons Prime Beer for 6d.

Sample Free for 9 Stamps.

AGENTS WANTED EVERYWHERE.

NEWBALL & MASON, NOTTINGHAM.

VARICOCELE.

Every man suffering from Varicocele and the allied troubles, should send for treatise, describing their Causes, Symptoms, Results, and Successful and Painless Treatment without surgical operation or the use of cumbersome trusses and electrical appliances. Will be sent sealed, post free, three stamps.

S. S. MURRAY,
7, Southampton Row, London, W.C.

KEATING'S POWDER

KILLS BUGS FLEAS MOTHS BEETLES

TINS 3D 6D & 1S
THE NEW BELLOWS 9D

THE ONLY EFFICACIOUS SUBSTITUTE FOR COD LIVER OIL.

DEVONSHIRE CREAM.

REALLY GENUINE.

In Patent Air-tight Tins. ½lb., 1s. 4d.; 1lb., 2s. 4d.; 2lb., 4s.; including tin and postage.

MRS. CONYERS,
MORCHARD BISHOP, DEVON.

ALL FAT PEOPLE

can safely **Reduce Weight and cure Corpulency permanently** by taking **TRILENE TABLETS** (Regd.) for a few weeks. They are small, agreeable, harmless, and never fail to IMPROVE both HEALTH and FIGURE without Change of Diet. An English Countess writes: "*Your Trilene Tablets act admirably.*"

Send 2s. 6d. to **THE TRILENE CO.,** Sole Proprietors, **66 Finsbury Pavement, London.**

SAMPLES OF TESTIMONIALS.

Princess Liechtenstein writes from Landsberg, Austria: "Pray send your excellent tablets directly." Mr. Canham, 87 Alexandra Road, Norwich: "Tablets cured my wife of extreme stoutness; it has never returned." Mrs. H. Cox, 28 Watnall Road, Hucknall Torkard, writes: "The Tablets reduced me 1½ stone." Mrs. S. Alexander, 102 Dixon Street, New Swindon, says: "They reduced me 28lb., and I am cured." Mrs. Darnley-Smith, of Landscove Vicarage, Ashburton, says: "Tablets have reduced me very much." Mrs. Crossley, of Rose Hill, Torver, Comston, says: "I weigh much less and can breathe so much easier; I am delighted."

Digitized by Google

The Brain Gymnasium

In these competitions a prize of £2 will be awarded each week to the competitor whose attempt we receive giving the correct solutions of all the puzzles. If more than one is absolutely correct the prize of £2 will be given to the first correct attempt dealt with.

If no lists of absolutely correct solutions are sent in the first prize will be awarded to the competitor whose attempt is first dealt with showing the fewest mistakes.

Each week we shall award in addition to the above, either ten of our silver plated pencil-cases or ten popular six shilling novels, to be distributed amongst the competitors whose attempts are absolutely correct and have failed to win the first prize, or, if no complete lists of correct solutions are received, to those whose attempts show the fewest mistakes.

Write all your solutions on one sheet of paper, putting the number against each. Post the batch in an envelope marked "Brain Gymnasium," to reach the Editor, Short Stories, 18 Henrietta Street, Covent Garden, W.C., by first post on Monday, September 3rd, 1900.

Readers are invited to submit puzzles, acrostics, conundrums, word-squares, etc., for publication on this page. A gold-plated pencil-case will be given to each reader whose attempts are used. All attempts must be vouched for as original, and, of course, it is distinctly understood that the sender of a puzzle must neither compete in the competition nor divulge to anyone the solution. Any reader found infringing this rule will be severely dealt with.

No. 199.

The following letters, when re-arranged, will form a well-known proverb:

AA D E GG H II LLLL N OO R SS TTTTT.

No. 200.

What words of the English language may be pronounced softer and louder, quicker and shorter, by adding syllables to them?

No. 201.

I am a useful article; change my head and I am a metal, again and I am a drink. Change my tail and I am a vehicle, change my head and I am an animal.

No. 202.

When a certain number of two digits is doubled and increased by 36, the result is the same as if the number had been inverted and doubled and then diminished by 36. What is the number?

No. 203.

So proudly pranced his gallant steed,
His lofty FIRST gleamed bright;
Sure fie'er in tourney had been seen,
Ere this, so brave a knight.

He sees his lady's azure eyes
Beam on him, brimmed with love,
When, 'mid the NEXT that mark his path,
He turns his glance above.

No WHOLE, reversed, has been his lot,
But WHOLE his foes ret eat;
Yet conquered now, he bends before
His lady's glance so sweet.

No. 204.

Divide the number 112 into four parts, so that the first part increased by two, the second multiplied by three, the third diminished by four, and the fourth divided by five may all be equal.

RESULT OF TRACING FACES COMPETITION.

The prize of £2 has been awarded this week to Mr. M. Read, of "Chesterton," South Croxted Road, West Dulwich, whose solution was the first correct one dealt with.

A copy of "The Knight of the Golden Chain," by R. D. Chetwoode, has been sent to each of the following:

W. Gyde, The Barracks, Warley, Essex.
H. Culyer, 14 Chalford Road, West Norwood, S.E.
F. Culyer, 14 Chalford Road, West Norwood, S.E.
E. W. Sanders, 10 Alderney Street, Eccleston Square, S.W.
Miss A. Brown, 34a Great George Street, Liverpool.
Pte. John O'Connor, No. 6625 E Company, 2nd Battalion King's Regiment, Royal Barracks, Dublin.
W. B. Heberden, 42 Hartington Road, Stockton-on-Tees.
E. C. Drayson, Hawkshill, Esher, Surrey.
G. S. Walker, 119 Newington Green Road, Canonbury, N.
R. Taylor, Kenilworth, The Parade, Worthing.

Key to TRACING FACES COMPETITION.

SHORT STORIES ADVERTISEMENT RATES.

Single column, per inch, per insertion	£0 10 0
Double " " "	1 0 0
Full page inside, facing page of matter, either white paper or 2nd or 3rd page of cover, or back page, per insertion	10 0 0
Half-page " "	5 0 0
Quarter-page " "	2 10 0
Eighth-page " "	1 5 0
Front page, whole " "	12 10 0
" half	6 5 0

All spaces above one-eighth of a page are charged at per page rate.

Series discount: 5 per cent. for 13, 10 per cent. for 26, 15 per cent. for 52 insertions.

Black blocks are charged 25 per cent. extra. All advertisements are subject to approval. All copy must be sent in by Noon on Tuesday, August 28th, if intended for the issue on sale Sept. 11th, and dated September 15th. The Proprietors reserve the right to hold over or suspend the insertion of any advertisement without prejudice to other insertions on order. All communications should be addressed to the Advertisement Manager, "Pearson's Weekly" Offices, Henrietta Street, London, W.C.

Printed and Published by C. Arthur Pearson Ltd., at Pearson's Weekly Buildings, Henrietta Street, London, W.C.

Digitized by Google

SEE SPECIAL 10 DAYS' OFFER AT FOOT OF PAGE.

KOKO

FOR THE HAIR

UNDER ROYAL PATRONAGE.

Eradicates Scurf and Dandriff.

Prevents Hair Falling and Turning Grey.

Promotes Growth.

Contains no Dye.

Is delightfully Cooling, Refreshing, and Invigorating.

Keeps the Hair Soft and Pliant, and Imparts to it the Lustre and Freshness of Youth.

Invaluable for Use after Sea Bathing.

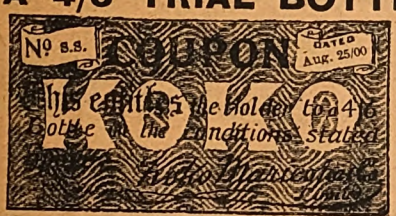
Allays Irritation and Keeps the Scalp Clean.

Recommended and Used by H.M. THE QUEEN (of Greece), PRINCESS VICTORIA (of Schaumburg-Lippe), PRINCESS HOHENLOHE, PRINCESS MARIE (of Greece), PRINCESS HENRY REUSS, Rear-Admiral TINKLAR, &c., &c.

KOKO FOR THE HAIR

SPECIAL OFFER to those who have not yet tried KOKO.

A 4/6 TRIAL BOTTLE for 2/-.



Any person forwarding this Coupon and P.O. for Two Shillings, and four Stamps to pay postage, packing, &c., will receive immediately for trial, by Parcel Post, under cover, prepaid, **One Regular 12 oz. Bottle of Koko for the Hair**, the price of which is **4/6**, provided it is ordered within **ten days from the date of this offer.** In no case will more than one bottle be sent for the use of the same person on this coupon, as we make the offer solely for trial, knowing it creates a demand when once used; and this large bottle gives it a fair trial. We find it better to thus practically **give away** one bottle to make a customer than to spend large amounts in advertising. **Any person into whose hands this offer comes may avail themselves of it.** Address all Orders with Coupons to—

THE KOKO-MARICOPAS CO., LTD., 16 BEVIS MARKS, LONDON.

Orders may be sent with this Coupon after the expiration of date, provided we are then issuing these trial bottle Coupons, and if we are not, the money will be returned. This Coupon will be received at 16 BEVIS MARKS, E.C., or 113 REGENT STREET, LONDON, W., and **2/-** only will be required when presented personally.

KOKO is sold by all Chemists, &c., at 2/6 and 4/6 per bottle. For the sake of greater profit you may be asked to buy some other hair preparation instead. In justice to us kindly insist on having Koko.

Digitized by Google

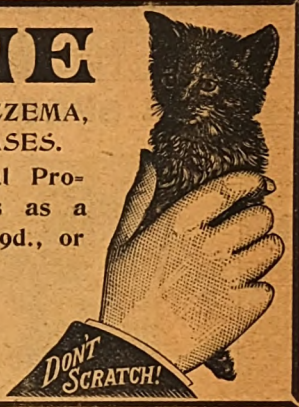
PARASITENE

Is a new and important remedy for GOUT, ECZEMA, RINGWORM, and all IRRITANT SKIN DISEASES.

Prescribed by members of the London Medical Profession. Can be obtained from all Chemists as a Lotion or an Ointment, at 1s. 1½d. and 2s. 9d., or Post Free from the Proprietors.

"Skin Diseases and How to Cure," by Parasitene Treatment, Post Free from

THE WEDNESFIELD CHEMICAL SYNDICATE LTD.,
WOLVERHAMPTON.



ZEBRA

Grate Polish

No Hard Work.

A

FREE TRIAL FOR 2/6

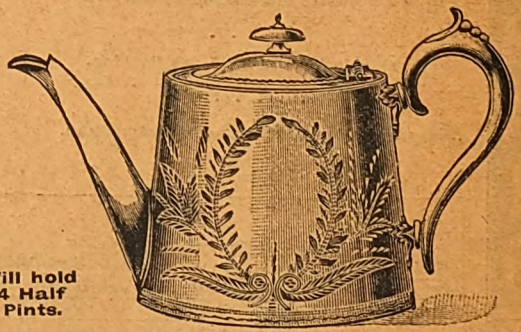
DESCRIPTION:

- New Sun Shade Eyepieces.
- Telescopic Slides Ormolu Gilt
- Ebonised Adjusting Screw.
- Crocodile Leather Covered Body.
- Nickel and Gilt Lens Mounts.

J. N. MASTERS LTD, will send one of these handsome **FIELD** and **MARINE GLASSES**, price value **14/6**, complete with Crocodile Leather Case and Sling, to any reader who mentions *Short Stories* on receipt of **2/6**. If you do not approve of them, we will return your **2/6** in full. If you approve of them you send us **2/-** on receipt, and **2/-** each month for five months; but should you prefer to send the balance at once, send only **10/6**, as we allow you **1/6** discount; or you may send **13/-** at once, and if you do not approve of the Glasses we will return your **13/-** in full.

J. N. MASTERS LTD., RYE, SUSSEX.

MASTERS' ELECTRO SILVER TEAPOT 10/6



Will hold 4 Half Pints.

A FREE TRIAL FOR 2/6.

MASTERS LTD., will send one of these celebrated Half-Guinea Electro Silver Teapots, to any reader (who mentions *Short Stories*), on receipt of **2/6**.

IF you do not approve of it, we will RETURN YOUR **2/6** in full.

IF you approve of it, you send us **2/-** more on receipt, and **2/-** **each month** till paid for.

BUT when you see the Teapot, should you prefer to send the balance at once, send only **7/-**, as we allow **1/-** discount to those who pay CASH.

OR you may send **9/6** at once, and if you do not approve of the Teapot, WE WILL REFUND YOUR **9/6**, if Teapot is returned to us within 7 days.

Large Catalogue of Watches, Jewellery, &c., post free.

J. N. MASTERS LTD., RYE, SUSSEX.

Digitized by Google

"HAVE YOU GOT THAT £10?"
See this week's "Pearson's Weekly."

SHORT STORIES
A WEEKLY MAGAZINE FOR HOME AND TRAIN

No. 609. FOR WEEK ENDING SEPTEMBER 1ST, 1900. [ONE PENNY.

REASONS WHY

YOU SHOULD DRINK THE DELECTABLE

NON-INTOXICATING BEER

MADE FROM

Good for the HEALTH,
Good for the POCKET,
Good for the OLD,
Good for the YOUNG,
Good for EVERYBODY,
Good for YOU!
TRY IT!
SOLD EVERYWHERE

Good for the HEALTH,
Good for the POCKET,
Good for the OLD,
Good for the YOUNG,
Good for EVERYBODY,
Good for YOU!
TRY IT!
SOLD EVERYWHERE

A 6d. BOTTLE MAKES 8 GALLONS OF

WHOLESOME, PALATABLE BEER!!

Try also MASON'S COFFEE ESSENCE (Sample sent free) and
MASON'S WINE ESSENCES (Sample Bottle free for 9 Stamps).

NEWBALL & MASON, Nottingham.

AGENTS WANTED.

Digitized by Google

KOKO

FOR THE HAIR

UNDER ROYAL PATRONAGE.

KOKO for the HAIR is a tonic, cleansing, invigorating preparation, it eradicates scurf and dandriff, prevents hair from falling or turning grey, promotes growth, contains no dye or greasy substance, is the most cleanly of all hair preparations and invariably gives satisfaction.

1/-, 2/6, and 4/6, of all Chemists, Hairdressers, &c., everywhere

OLD PEOPLE LIKE IT for its wonderful power to *invigorate decayed hair*, and induce an entirely new growth when that is possible.

MIDDLE-AGED PEOPLE LIKE IT, because it *prevents them from getting bald*, keeps dandriff, away, and makes the hair grow thick and strong.

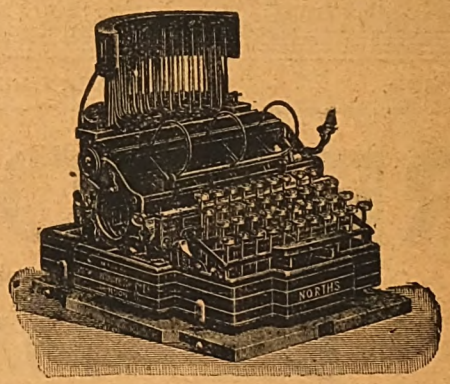
YOUNG LADIES LIKE IT As a dressing, because it gives the hair a *beautiful glossy lustre*, ensures a *luxuriant growth*, and enables them to dress it and keep it in any style that may be desired,

CHILDREN LIKE IT, Because it keeps the hair and scalp cool and clean, *allays irritation*, and keeps the hair in whatever position desired.

THEY ALL LIKE IT, Because it is as *pure as crystal*, perfectly colourless, contains no poisonous substance, no sugar of lead, sulphur, nitrate of silver, or grease, and does not soil or colour *the scalp, face, or the most delicate fabric in clothing.*

NORTH'S TYPEWRITER.

THE PREMIER MACHINE OF ENGLISH MAKE.



CATALOGUES—Apply

27a LEADENHALL STREET, LONDON, E.C.

35 TITHEBARN STREET, LIVERPOOL.

TOO STOUT.

I was for years; by chance I came across a simple home remedy that reduced me from 17st. to 10st. 12lbs., and I will willingly send particulars **free** to any sufferer enclosing stamp. Mrs. L. E. Fell, 195 Oxford Street, London, W.

VARICOCELE.

Every man suffering from Varicocele and the allied troubles, should send for treatise, describing their Causes, Symptoms, Results, and Successful and Painless Treatment without surgical operation or the use of cumbersome trusses and electrical appliances. Will be sent sealed, post free, three stamps.

S. S. MURRAY,

7 Southampton Row, London, W.C.

VIE D'OR FOR THE HAIR.

THE AMERICAN TREATMENT.

Vie d'Or puts 10 years on the life of the hair.

Sole Agent:

GUSTAV ROSSELLI, 4 New Park Street, Park Lane, LEEDS.

Price **2/9** post free.

DO YOU KNOW

That with Every Copy of This Week's

"HOME NOTES"

A Complete Novelette of 16 pages, entitled "ONLY A FLIRTATION," is

GIVEN AWAY?

HOME NOTES is the Best and Daintiest of Ladies' Weeklies. You should order a copy at once.

ONE PENNY.

WHITE CALICO FREE

Per Post. Superior heavy quality. Remnants, 2 to 4 yards long. 32 inches wide, **2/6** per Dozen yards; yard wide, **3/3** per Dozen yards. Free from "Dressing." Samples Free. Satisfaction Guaranteed.—**EMDEN & CO. (F Dept.),** *Manufacturers,* **Levenshulme, Manchester**

The Only Efficacious Substitute for Cod-liver Oil.

DEVONSHIRE CREAM

(Really Genuine). In Patent Air-tight Tins. ½-lb., 1/4; 1-lb., 2/4; 2-lb., 4/-, including Tin & Postage.

Mrs. CONYERS, Morchard Bishop, DEVON.

A SUM of from 12s. to 25s. per week can be earned in spare hours or evenings by either sex everywhere.—Send addressed envelope for particulars to Box 24, Eclipse Works, 89 Aldersgate Street, E.C.

ALL FAT PEOPLE

can safely **Reduce Weight and cure Corpulency permanently** by taking **TRILENE TABLETS** (Regd.) for a few weeks. They are small, agreeable, harmless, and never fail to IMPROVE both HEALTH and FIGURE without Change of Diet. An English Countess writes: "*Your Trilene Tablets act admirably.*"

Send 2s. 6d. to **THE TRILENE CO.,** Sole Proprietors, 66 Finsbury Pavement, London.

SAMPLES OF TESTIMONIALS.

Princess Liechtenstein writes from Landsberg, Austria: "Pray send your excellent tablets directly." Mr. Canham, 87 Alexandra Road, Norwich: "Tablets cured my wife of extreme stoutness; it has never returned." Mrs. H. Cox, 28 Watnall Road, Hucknall Torkard, writes: "The Tablets reduced me 1½ stone." Mrs. S. Alexander, 102 Dixon Street, New Swindon, says: "They reduced me 28lb., and I am cured." Mrs. Dawley-Smith, of Landscove Vicarage, Ashburton, says: "Tablets have reduced me very much." Mrs. Crossley, of Rose Hill, Torver, Comston, says: "I weigh much less and can breathe so much easier; I am delighted."

ESTABLISHED 1851.

BIRKBECK BANK

Southampton Buildings, Chancery Lane, London.

2% on CURRENT ACCOUNTS, on the minimum monthly balances when not drawn below £100.

The BIRKBECK ALMANACK, with full particulars, post free.

FRANCIS RAVENSCROFT, *Manager.*

SEVEN PRIZE MEDALS.

These series of pens neither scratch nor spurt. They glide over the roughest paper with the ease of a soft lead pencil. Assorted sample boxes, 6d., to be obtained from all Stationers. If out of stock, send 7 stamps direct to the works, Birmingham.

Advertisements should be sent to "Short Stories" Advertisement Department, Henrietta Street, London, W.C.

Digitized by Google

ACROSS THE BORDER

A Tale of the Present War.

"MARY!"

The voice came from the tall grass which clad the sloping sides of one of two hills laying mid-way between Zeerust and the Bechuanaland frontier.

The one addressed was a beautiful girl of about twenty, clad in the becoming, and useful, dress—half-riding-habit, half-walking costume—affected by most of the women whose fate it is to live in semi-civilised countries.

As the well-known voice fell upon her ears she turned pale, and, after casting one searching glance upon the level stretch of veld at her feet, moved in the direction from which it had come, saying:

"Oh, Dick, why have you ventured here again. You know Stephanus Reicht has sworn to have you shot as a spy if he catches you in his district again."

The immediate answer was a hand stretched forth to draw her into the grass, and the next moment Lieutenant Richard Oram, of Colonel Baden-Powell's Irregular Horse had his sweetheart in his arms.

But only for a moment, it had not needed Mary Trevor's words to tell Oram of his danger and, as he released her, he said:

"I know all about Mr. Reicht, dear, more perhaps than he would like. It is partially to put you on your guard against him that I have crossed the border, and have ridden into hostile territory."

"Hostile territory, Dick? Surely war has not been declared?" asked the girl anxiously.

"To all intents and purposes it has. Kruger has gone dotty in his old age, and has ordered all British troops to be moved from the Transvaal borders," was the reply which brought forth from the young lady a laugh:

"What impertinence! Even the Kaffirs seem to have a truer knowledge of England's greatness than the Boers."

"But it is true nevertheless, and I hope your father will see the wisdom of crossing to Mafeking at once," returned Oram, "but it was not that which brought me here. Our Kaffir spies tell me that Reicht has been collecting the scum of the black population on either side of the border. The spies have talked with them, and they say they are hired to attack the outlying British farms when war commences. Now Kruger dare not do such a thing as that, for, if we retaliated by letting loose the Zulus, Swazis, and Basutos upon them, there would not be a Boer left in the country in a month. No, Reicht is doing it on his own responsibility. He has for some time had a suspicion that your father is something else besides a mere farmer, and perhaps has jumped at the truth."

"You don't think he knows anything about the mine?" asked Mary, turning pale to her very lips.

"That is just what I do think. If he brought a force of Boers against you he would have to share whatever he found with them, if he did not have to give it all up to his government, whilst he can employ the Kaffirs to kill you, then seize the gold for himself."

Ere the girl could reply a Cape Boy who had been on the look-out on the top of the hill rushed towards them crying:

"Four Boers coming, gallop, quick, from Zeerust, Missie."

"Warn the Baas, Tchina," she cried, addressing the Kaffir. Then turning to her lover she added hastily: "Go at once, Dick. After what you have told me I am certain my father will not think of remaining here longer than to-night. At the latest you may look for us in Mafeking to-morrow evening."

"I will not be easy until you are safely there. Good bye, darling, Heaven shield you," cried the young man, pressing her to his heart ere disappearing amongst the tall grass which obtains round Zeerust to make his way towards where he had left his horse fastened to the gnarled roots of a thorny bush.

The girl stood where her lover had left her until she saw him in the distance galloping over the veld, then assured of his safety, she made her way down the hill towards a house built on a bluff which jutted into a narrow stream flowing between the two hills before mentioned.

The house was called a farm, and registered in the Field-Cornet's books as a farm. In fact the thousand acres, which Mr. Trevor had bought twelve months before, fed some three hundred head of cattle, but the grass was too tall and rank for profitable cattle-raising, and the house with its stone walls and corrugated iron roof, seemed rather built as a fort in case of need than for comfort.

All rights reserved.]

Digitized by Google

And such was the case, for the house was literally built on gold.

Some eighteen months previous by Mr. Trevor and his four sons had left Mafeking prospecting for gold. To his experienced eye the bluff on which he had afterwards built his house, showed signs of gold.

A few experimental borings showed him his supposition was correct as far as the bluff itself went, although the hills and surrounding country did not seem to have a grain of gold in them. Most probably the gold-bearing reef had been detached centuries before from the rich Malamani Goldfields by a volcanic eruption.

To make his find known was to have it wrested from him by the grasping, unscrupulous Boers. He therefore gave out that he was a settler from Cape Colony, and, after some bit of higgling, bought the two hills and the surrounding land for farming purposes. The wily Boer who sold it chuckling at the folly of the "fool Englander," who gave away good money for bad land.

His first care had been to build a house he could defend in case of need, then he trekked with his whole household from Mafeking, to take possession of his new purchase.

Mr. Trevor had taken every precaution to conceal the existence of his great find. Yet, somehow, at the commencement of our story it came to be whispered about that the Englander, Trevor, was working an illicit mine. However, the reports did not trouble him greatly. The mine had proved rich beyond his most sanguine dreams, and he was quite ready to move into British territory, and from thence make his find known at any moment.

Having watched Lieutenant Oram until he was nearly out of sight, Mary hastened from the hill to the farm buildings.

As she entered the barn she found her father arranging the last bags of mealies over the windlass, and washing pans, which were their sole appliances for obtaining the gold, whilst nearly half the barn was occupied with earth from the mine, so covered with hay as to be completely hidden from view.

Assured of the mine's safety, Mary hastened into the house; reappearing at the door just as four Boers, armed with rifles, rode into the open space between the house and the barn.

"Here, take a drink of this," he added, handing his flask to the Kaffir.

"Come, father, dinner is ready," she cried, pretending not to see the clumsy salute with which the foremost Boer greeted her.

"Hullo, Reicht, just in time to have something to eat with us," cried Trevor, hospitably. "Come in, come in."

Nothing loth, the Boers dismounted, and the four brothers joining them at that moment, they all entered the house together.

Reicht was a tall, evil-looking fellow, with heavy features, blood-shot eyes, full thick nose, and sensual lips—in fact, a typical Boer.

At the meal which followed he was more than once in danger of finding himself thrown neck and crop from the house by one or the other of Mary's stout brothers, for the coarse fulsome compliments he paid her, but the laws of hospitality prevailed, and the meal passed off without unpleasantnesses except so far as the Boers' manners are always unpleasant, closely resembling that of the animal whose name but for one letter is similar to his own.

"Are you travelling further, or is your visit to myself?" asked Trevor, when the meal was finished.

"My business is with you, friend," said Reicht as he drew an official-looking paper from his pocket. "You have not taken out naturalization papers, but that doesn't matter, we're going to drive you Britishers into the sea, and you must help to do it. I have here the order to commandeer you, and your sons; but some must be left to look after your farm, I, Field-Cornet, will be content with three of them."

Reicht had spoken with the air of one having authority, and he flushed angrily when Mary, her father, and brothers, received his proposition with roars of laughter.

"Surely you are not serious, Herr Reicht?" asked Trevor. "Why, man, if your little one horse country tries conclusions with Britain, you'll be just giving your country to us."

"You beastly English pigs will never do it. You will run as you did at Majuba, and as for your silly old Queen—" began Reicht.

"Silence, you hound! You may say what you like about our country, for that I know is ignorance. But if you dare to say a word against our beloved Queen, I'll whip you from here to Zeerust." thundered Trevor, red with anger, as he laid a heavy hand on Reicht's shoulder.

Digitized by Google

Pale as death went the valiant Boer, and pale as death went his gallant companions.

"Don't hit me. Don't hit me," he whined too terrified to do more than look appealingly at his escort, but they were gazing in terror at Trevor's stalwart sons who had placed themselves between their guests and their rifles.

"Hit you, you coward? I have a good mind to thrash you as you deserve for daring to come here on such a fool's errand. Off with you, and if I catch you within five miles of my farm again, you will think a cyclone has struck you," cried Trevor, and the Boers glad to escape so easily mounted their horses and fled.

"Look out you pig Englander, I'll be even with you for this," shouted Reicht, when at a safe distance from the Briton, checking his horse for the moment and shaking his fist at the laughing Englishmen.

"When you wish, Herr Reicht, I will always be glad to see you in any guise but that of a friend," shouted back the miner. "Now, lads, we must get out the gold and make tracks for Mafeking, that brute means mischief," he added, turning to his sons.

Unfortunately for the Trevors' rich "pocket of gold," lying deep in the quartz, had delayed them longer than they expected, and, although they had got it all to the surface, it was not ready for transportation.

But first, as the Trevors had no idea of making the Boers a present of their household furniture, they loaded it on to a big ox-waggon, and some two hours before dark sent it off in charge of the youngest son and the two least trustworthy Cape boys. Old Tchina and another Cape boy went with the waggon to the frontier, after which they were ordered to return and fire the shed, Trevor hoping that, seeing the place destroyed, the Boers would not take the trouble to search it very closely, and would thus miss the mine which he hoped to work, or to dispose of after the war, which seemed inevitable, was over.

As we have said, the Trevors' mining venture had been more than usually successful. Three months before, the old man had taken some ten thousand ounces of gold done up in various sacks and bags, to a trusted agent in Capetown, five thousand ounces had gone with the waggon, hidden away amongst their household effects, but there was still nearly thirty thousand ounces to be carried away, in itself a considerable fortune.

This they placed into strong canvas bags and filled up with mealies, to disguise what they contained, ere being flung over the backs of pack-horses.

The last bag had been placed in position, the pack-horses strung together, and Mary Trevor was looking with a saddened heart at the place in which she had spent so many happy months, when an ejaculation of alarm burst from her lips as Tchina, wounded, bleeding, and breathless, approached them.

"Good Heavens, Tchina! What has happened? Where is Master Charles?" asked Trevor, anxiously, as the old Kaffir hastened towards him.

"Waggon all right over border. Massa Charlie all right, too. Bad black men, creeping like snakes through the grass. Panja dead! Tchina soon join him," replied the faithful old fellow in a weak voice.

"To horse, lads, to horse. We have not a moment to lose. Throw the gold off that horse and mount him, Tchina. Here take a drink of this," he added, extending his flask to the Kaffir who seemed about to fall.

"Too late, Baas, too late," declared the Kaffir. "Black rascals all round farm, no escape, not none."

Even as the faithful Cape boy spoke a shot rang out from the grass and a bullet flattened itself on the wall behind the old miner.

"That's a Boer rifle, I'll swear," ejaculated Trevor angrily. "Into the house, boys, we must give the villains a drubbing, it will never do to start through that grass until we have driven them off."

"Come back, Mary, where are you going?" he asked the next moment as his daughter turned her horse's head towards the open.

"One can get past them, perhaps, where more would fail. I am going for assistance," returned the brave girl. "Good-bye, father, Heaven preserve you," she added, as her horse sprang forward and she was lost to sight in a clump of trees to the east of the farm.

For a moment the miner seemed almost inclined to dash after his daughter, but a moment's reflection showed him that she had chosen a course no more dangerous than his own, and probably less so.

Another bullet which sent his hat flying yards warned him that his position was too exposed, and he rejoined his sons and the remaining three Kaffirs, who, having driven the horses into a large paddock, protected by the house on one side, and by the face of the bluff on the other three, offered them freedom from capture, were already putting the house into a state of defence, by closing the loop-holed shutters, and strengthening them with bags of mealies.

Barely had Mr. Trevor and his three sons, Tom, Harry and Claude and three Kaffirs, one of whom, Tchina, was badly wounded, got ready, then, with blood-curdling yells, some two hundred dark figures dashed from out the long grass and rushed towards the house.

"Don't throw a shot away. Fire!" cried Trevor.

In response the four Lee-Metfords of the white men, and the Sniders of the Kaffirs, flashed fire in the rapidly darkening air, each bullet finding its mark in the closely packed ranks of their foes, who, maddened by the drink Reicht had given them, surged to the very walls of the house, ere, unable to stand the pitiless hail of lead which struck them down at every moment, they turned and fled to the cover of the long grass, from whence the defenders could hear a voice which they recognised as Reicht's, urging them to charge again.

"Do you hear that black-hearted villain. Let us pour a volley into the grass, perhaps a bullet may reach his foul carcase," whispered Trevor to his sons.

No sooner said than done and the four Lee-Metfords all speaking at once, sent their nickel-coated missiles hurtling through the grass, bringing forth a yell of pain which told that they had not fired in vain, although the sufferer was evidently not the man they wanted to kill, but a native.

There is little or no twilight in the Transvaal, and night came upon them like a dark curtain, shutting out the view around, and rendering the task of the defenders trebly hard.

But ere the last rays of the grey light struck the earth, Reicht's band of Kaffirs sprung forward, and, for five minutes, it seemed as though they would break down the door, which alone kept them from their prey, by sheer weight of numbers. Just as darkness finally settled on the scene, the Britons drove them off once more, but not until one of the Cape boys lay dead on the floor with an assegai, which had been hurled through the loop-hole from which he was firing, quivering in his chest, and Claude Trevor had been wounded by a spent bullet in the fleshy part of his arm.

Slowly the hours of darkness dragged their weary

Digitized by Google

lengths away. Death, in its most unnerving form, was constantly threatening them, for in the darkness a native would creep up to the very loop-holes, and the first thing that was known of his presence would be his broad-bladed assegai hurtling into the room.

More than one attempt had been made to burn down the door, but it had been covered with sheet tin and would not burn, and as one of the windows projected so as to cover it, the attackers soon found that the slightest spark only led to a quick report, and certain death, and accordingly it was abandoned.

About one o'clock the moon rose, and with a sigh of relief the defenders saw by her pale beams a score or so of dark bodies which littered the front of the house.

One final rush, and the natives, changing their tactics, kept well under cover, and maintained a constant fusillade upon the house to which the little garrison could make but a faint reply, for their ammunition was already failing them, and, unless help came, the end could not be postponed long.

Just as the first beams of the welcome sun tinged the top of the two hills between which the farmhouse was situated, a cry of:

"The English soldiers! Look out! The soldiers are coming! Run! run!" broke from the ranks of the attackers and the swaying of the tall grass told that they were fleeing towards the East, the direction opposite that from which the rescue party from Mafeking would naturally come.

"Hurrah, lads, we are saved!" cried the old miner, throwing down the mealie bags which blocked the door. "Give them a cheer, boys. It will show Mary, bless her, if she is with them, that her old dad is safe. Hip, hip, hurrah!" he added, rushing out, waving his hat.

But no answering British cheer responded. Instead, a wild, fierce, triumphant yell from their blood-thirsty foes told them that they had been the dupe of a cunning stratagem to draw them from the shelter of the house.

The disappointment was crushing. But not for a moment did the little band of heroes hesitate. It was too late to retreat, and, standing back to back, they faced the oncoming mass of savages, undaunted to the last.

In the meantime Mary Trevor having cleared the wood into which we saw her disappear, found herself in a narrow belt of tall, semi-tropical grass, beyond which lay a wide expanse of short "sweet veld" or "sugar-bush" grass.

So far neither shout, nor shot had followed her, to show that her escape had been noticed, and she was about to congratulate herself on being out of danger, when, from the grass at her feet, a hideous savage, in all the bravery of feathers and furs, sprang up, and seized her horse's bridle.

A home-bred girl might well have lost her nerve, and her life, at the same time. Mary Trevor did neither. Ready for any emergency, she carried in her hand an elegant little pearl-handled revolver, a present from her father. Without a moment's hesitation she aimed at the brawny savage, and fired.

The tiny bullet struck him squarely in the forehead, and, almost without a moan, the raised spear fell from his hands, and he dropped back amongst the long grass dead.

A shudder shook the brave girl from head to foot, and for the moment, she reeled in her saddle, but the next, as an assegai clipped one of the feathers from her hat, in its flight over her head, telling her that other foes were about, she shook her rein, and her well-trained steed darted forward, as a second burly black charged forward to avenge his comrade's death.

Once more the little pistol spoke, and the random shot, for it was little more, struck the shaft of the savage's assegai, cracking it in halves, and undoubtedly saving her life, for a Kaffir seldom misses an easy shot twice.

On she dashed, fearing to meet fresh foes at every stride her charger made, until, at last, the belt of tall grass was cleared, and she was speeding over the open veld.

Turning to the North, and then to the West, she encircled the farm, and, eager to make as much of the little daylight left as possible, urged her horse on to its utmost, the heavy firing from the farm telling her how great the danger was which threatened her father and brothers.

Presently, just as the sun sank to rest, on topping a long ridge running East and West, she came to an abrupt halt, and, for the first time, her brave heart failed her.

Riding slowly over the veld in the direction of Mafeking, from whence alone help could come, was a large force of, as far as she could estimate, quite a thousand Boers.

Had they been European soldiers, although they were marching against her own countrymen, she would have ridden boldly up to them, and begged them to have sent assistance to save white men from savages, but she knew the Boer character too well to hope anything from them. On the contrary, well she knew that he would be met with insult and detentions, if not death.

The Red Indian of the boundless Western

The tiny bullet struck him squarely in the forehead, and the raised spear fell from his hands.

Digitized by Google

prairies may have mercy on a foe, if that foe is a woman, but a Boer never.

There was no help for it. She must make a long detour, and get ahead of the commando. Perhaps now, not only the saf ty of her own people, but the safety of the entire garri-on at Mafeking depended upon h r reaching that place before them.

With an impatient sigh she turned her horse's head once more in a northerly direction, and recommenced her ride at an easy hand-gallop.

For nearly an hour she pressed onwards in a darkness so thick that she was unable to see a yard before her horse's head. More than once she narrowly escaped being precipitated into a donga, or over some of the many ant-hills which dotted the plains.

At last, fearing lest she should ride headlong into a Boer encampment, she reluctantly halted. Dismounting, she knee-haltered her horse, and flung herself on the ground to snatch, if possible, a few minutes' sleep.

But every time she closed her eyes the contracted face of the negro she had killed rose before her, and she sprang to her feet trembling in every limb, and praying for light.

At last the moon rose, and she looked around her in dismay. By travelling in the inky darkness she had broken one of the ru'es of veld-life, except when there is a well defined road, and suffered for it accordingly. She was on a wide, ant-hill dotted plain, without a single landmark to guide her.

A rattling of hoofs told her that the Boers were in swift pursuit.

However, unless she had passed over it in the dark, she knew that, by travelling with her back to the moon, she must strike the railroad, which, starting from Cape Town, is destined to traverse Africa to Cairo, and by following that would be certain to reach Mafeking. How she prayed that she might be in time to put Colonel Baden-Powell on his guard.

Her conclusions were correct. About an hour later she struck the railway and was cantering steadily southwards when she stumbled into the midst of an encampment of about thirty Boers, who were evidently on the look-out for a train going, or coming, to Mafeking.

To retreat was impossible, to obey the guttural shouts of the Boers and halt meant the death of her father and brothers, and probably the destruction of the defenders of Mafeking, so bending over her horse's withers she struck him smartly with her riding whip and bounded forward.

A few shots were fired after her, then a rattling of hoofs told her that the Boers were in swift pursuit.

On they came, every moment drawing nearer and nearer, for Mary's pony was small and weighted with the gold she was carrying.

Presently, when the Boers were barely twenty yards behind her, through a cutting between some low hills came a dark fire-belching, unshapely monster, which caused her horse to sw rve aside, almost unseating her.

As it did so the report of a single rifle rung out in the night air and the foremost Boer tumbled from his saddle. The rifle was followed by a "zip-zip-zip" once heard never forgotten, a constant stream of flame seemed to pour from the front of the dark mass, and the remorseless fire of a maxim struck the remaining Boers, sweeping them down as though they had been blasted by supernatural agency.

Then she knew that it was one of the armoured trains which had saved her, and rode fearlessly up to an opening near the engine, in the cent e of the train from which a man alighted, who, with a cry of joy, she recognised as Lieutenant Oram.

"M ry, you here? Where are your father and brothers?" he cried, hastening to her side.

He looked very grave as Mary Trevor told him all that had occurred. When she had finished he said:

"Ride back to Mafeking, darling, and give notice of the Boer advance. I ha e a dozen troopers behind those hills, and will start off for the farm at once. Heaven grant we may be in time."

"Can't I come with you, Dick?" pleaded Mary.

"Impo sible, dear. Besides I cannot spare a trooper, and so you will be doing an actual service if you will go," replied Dick, who knew that appeals for her personal safety woul l have had no effect on the brave girl, and had invented this excuse fo sending her into the town.

As to the advance of the Boers, Colonel Baden Powell's scouts had informed him of that long ago.

One hasty kiss and D ck having seen his sweetheart speeding towards Mafeking, blew a blast on his whistle. Immediately twelve troopers, one of whom led his officer's horse, cantered through the cutting.

"Now, my lads, four Englishmen and a few Cape boys are being attacked in a farm just over the border by some Kaffirs led by a white scoundrel, whom I need

Digitized by Google

not say is a Boer. We have been ordered not to cross the frontier, but there is no time to communicate with the Colonel. I will not ask you to disobey commands, but I am going, let who will stay behind."

As he spoke Dick swung himself on to his horse, and, without looking round, galloped eastwards, but his practised ear told him that his gallant little troop had answered his appeal to a man.

On they swept over the veld, keeping well to the North, for Dick wished to take the foe in the rear, from whence no attack could be expected. An hour's quick gallop brought them to the rear of the hills just as the sun rose above the horizon.

Little guessing how close Nemesis was on him, Stephanus Reicht was watching his mob of half-drunken blacks as they surged round Mr. Trevor and his gallant little party.

Reicht was an arrant coward at heart, and had gladly availed himself of the excuse that he did not want to be seen by the Britishers, to keep out of harm's way.

Now and again the Kaffirs seemed to be swamping the little group of determined Britons, then they would reel back, beaten and discomfited, but only to gather for another rush.

"Bother these English, how they die," muttered Reicht with involuntary admiration, as he saw his paid assassins recoil once more before their foes. "On, my brothers, on. One more charge and your assegais will drink their heart's blood," he yelled.

"But yours shall pay the penalty first," shouted a hoarse voice in his ear, and, turning, he found himself face to face with Dick Oram and his twelve stern-faced troopers.

"Mercy, mercy. I——" began the wretched man, but ere he could throw himself on his knees before his avenger, as he intended doing, the cold beams of the moon shone for a moment on Dick's sword, and the next the blade entered his cowardly heart.

"Now, lads, one volley into the black devils, then charge," he added, withdrawing his sword, and stepping contemptuously over the writhing corpse.

Twelve loud reports, ringing out as one, a stirring British cheer, and the Kaffirs, not daring to meet Dick's gallant troopers, broke and fled.

"Thank heaven you have come. Their next charge must have destroyed us. We have only one cartridge left!" cried Mr. Trevor as he pressed his rescuer's hand.

"Had we been too late you would have died like heroes," cried Dick admiringly, pointing to about forty or fifty dead Kaffirs which lay around where the little band had stood.

But although they were saved so far, all danger was not yet over. Not one of the party had escaped unwounded, although all except the eldest son were yet upon their feet, but they were bleeding from numberless wounds and would not be much good if they had to fight their way through the Boers to Mafeking.

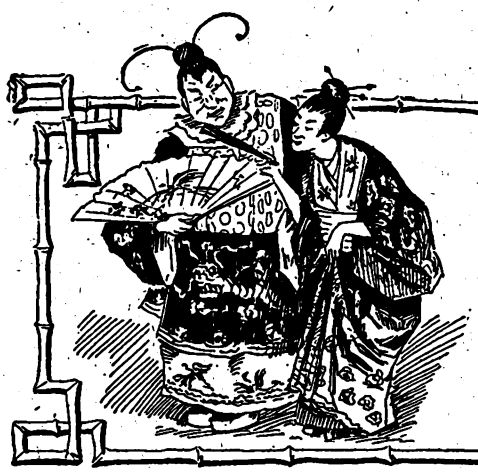
It took the troopers, experts in wounds though they were, half-an-hour to see to the injuries the little party had sustained, then driving the pack horses before them, for Dick would not hear of the gold being abandoned to the Boers, they set off on their return journey.

Until they struck the railway they were unmolested, but as they neared the cutting where Mary had met the armoured train, they were attacked by at least two hundred Boers and were in imminent danger of being captured, when the train once more steamed on to the scene, and sent the Boers flying in all directions before the fire of its maxim.

Shortly afterwards the little party reached Mafeking in safety. The next day, when the armoured train under Lieutenant Nesbit departed on its journey to Vryburg, from which it was fated never to return, Mary and her elder brother, who had been too seriously injured to fight again, were carried by it to that town and to safety.

Reginald Wray.

Digitized by Google



Mr. Bowser's Tribulations.

XXI.—HE SPENDS HIS LAST NIGHT IN THE COUNTRY.

MRS. BOWSER and the cook worked over Mr. Bowser for two hours after his adventure with the bumblebees, and he spent the whole day sitting about with his head and hands in poultices. During the morning before his pains had abated, no questions were asked him, but after dinner, when his interest in life seemed to have revived a little, Mrs. Bowser said:

"I can't make out how it happened. Did you walk into a nest of bumblebees?"

"Woman, do you take me for an idiot? I saw through the whole thing in a minute. I was out here for my health. I was beginning to find the pure air and the seclusion doing me good. You wanted to go home, and played a trick on me."

"But how did I know about the bumblebees?" she protested.

"Never mind how you knew. It was a deep laid plot to bring about my death, your sixteenth attempt to assassinate me, but it failed. But for your bloodthirstiness I might have consented to return home when my weight had increased ten or fifteen pounds, but now I'll be hanged if I don't stay here till I weigh a ton!"

It was no use to argue further. The day passed slowly and quietly by, and night came. Mr. Bowser grew better natured, and as he sat at the door he melted enough to say:

"By George, but what an evening! At this hour in the city there's noise enough to rouse the dead, while here there's a soothness and stillness positively entrancing. No wonder that farmers live to be two hundred years old."

"I hope the whole night will be quiet," ventured Mrs. Bowser as she thought of Dusty Bill and the other interruptions.

"We shall sleep like tops and awake with the rising sun. I am glad to see you and the cook more reasonable about things. In a day or two all will be ship-shape, and you'll both thank me for this move."

The crickets sang, the blackbirds chattered, and the sparrows called to each other in the ivy. By and by it was bedtime, and the house became quiet.

The first interruption came from the owl of the night before. He wasn't satisfied with his previous effort, though he had done fairly well. He came to beat the record, and the sound of his voice rolled Mr. Bowser out of bed and set the women screaming.

"Shut up your noise!" he shouted as he fumbled about and struck a light. "It's nothing but that owl come back again; but, by the bones of my grandfather, I'll show him that his hooting isn't appreciated!"

The bird flew away at the sight of the light, and Mr. Bowser was standing in the open door surveying the night when a voice out of the darkness remarked:

"I see your light, old pal, and thought I'd drop in and hev a drink with you."

It was Dusty Bill again.

As Mr Bowser gazed at him in astonishment he came forward and continued:

"And perhaps you can be prevailed upon to show me that trick you practised on me last night. By George, what's the matter with your face?"

"You scoundrel!" gasped Mr. Bowser. "But what are you doing down here again tonight?"

"Haven't I been telling you? Where's the drink?"

"I'll give you drinks, you loafer, you! Out of this before I mop the earth with you!"

"But the dr——"

He was standing at the open door surveying the night.

Mr. Bowser tackled him, the women screamed, the owl hooted from a distant tree, and for five minutes there was a lively time in that end of the country. Then the tramp broke away and made off, and as the panting Mr.

Digitized by Google

Bowser sat down on the doorstep to recover his wind Mrs. Bowser tearfully exclaimed:

"Your ear is bitten, your nose is scratched, and he's torn the shirt off your back! How can you call this a holiday? Oh, if you'd only agree to go home in the morning!"

"Never!" he shouted as he got breath enough. "I've hired this place for three months, and all the tramps in the country shan't drive me away. Go back to bed and let the crickets sing you to sleep. I'll sit about for a while and see if anything more is going to happen. If the tramp comes back, I'll kill and bury him."

Mrs. Bowser and the cook went back to their rooms, and for the next hour all was peace. Mr. Bowser was sick of the whole job and fishing for a way to throw it up and get back to town, but he couldn't see his way clearly. Right or wrong, he always stuck to his word.

He was plunged in reflection when the owl came flying round, but he managed to drive it off without raising an alarm. He had just taken his seat again when he

The four men were fighting in a heap on the grass.

heard the tramp of feet, and the next moment Dusty Bill and two other tramps stood before him.

"Excuse me, old pal," said Dusty, with a scrape and a bow, "but I thought you might like to meet me intimate friends, Railway Jim and Towpath Tom. I told 'em that you had some drinks ready for us."

"I want the gang of you to clear off this place at once!" sternly replied Mr. Bowser as he heard the two women getting out of bed.

"Speak softly, my boy," said Railway Jim as he pressed forward. "We is gentlemen talking to a gentleman. There ain't no call for any hard words between us."

"And on the part of this gang of gentlemen," added Towpath Tom, as he moved up, "I'd like to ask the stranger what he is doin' in our house."

"Your house!" replied Mr. Bowser. "I've hired this house for three months, sir, and you can't get off the place any too quick to please me!"

"Gents, you see how it is," said Dusty as he turned to his companions. "This yere chap has gone and formed a trust to drive us out of our home, and the only way we can git our rights is to bust the combination."

Mr. Bowser realized that he had a fight in prospect, with odds of three to one, but he did not falter. As they moved towards him he was ready, and when Mrs. Bowser reached the door the four men were fighting in a heap on the grass.

There were screams and shouts and bad words, the tramps encouraged each other by shouting warcries, but at the end of ten minutes they gave up the fight and fled. Mr. Bowser had fairly licked the trio, but he had not come off unscathed. They had kicked and bitten and pinched him until he was a sight to see.

Mrs. Bowser was weeping and the cook wailing as he got up and shook himself to see what was missing. Without heeding them he marched into the house and the kitchen. After washing off the blood he took down his coat from a hook, buttoned it round him and put on his hat.

"You are not going to follow them?" sobbed Mrs. Bowser.

"If we are left alone here, we'll be murdered!" wailed the cook.

"Get ready and come on," replied the victor of the fight.

"But where to?"

"Follow me."

And they put on their hats, locked the door behind them and followed him down to the gate and down the road to the station. He walked in advance and spoke no word.

They had only five minutes to wait for the midnight train, and he waved them into a compartment and came after.

"It must be that we are going home," said Mrs. Bowser as the train started.

"If we are, then I'll work for you for a year without wages," said the thankful cook.

Mr. Bowser heard them, but he gave no sign. He had spent a day and two nights in the country, and he was trying to calculate how many years it would take him to recover from his holiday.

Only once did he seem to take any interest in what was going on round him. That was as the train stopped at a station for a minute and a familiar voice on the platform was heard saying:

"Yes, gentlemen, he's fat and bald-headed and crooked in the legs, but you have the word of Dusty Bill that if he'd train for the ring none of the fellers of to-day would be in it."

M. QUAD.

Next Week:

"He Establishes a Home for Friendless Dogs, and is Surprised at Results."

Digitized by Google

The Palomino Stallion.

We drank our coffee, saddled up and rode away from the ranch house into the chill death of night that comes before the dawn, Tom and Jack and I.

For the first hour the three of us had but little to say as our cow ponies scuffled quickly ahead through the dark, beyond a word at the passing of a light and some disjointed talk of the chances for finding the "Wolf's Pond Bunch," a wild outlying drove of brood-mares and younger horses. There is always the risk, with such a drove, of their joining the mustangs, and we decided to take out their leader, the shy Palomino stallion, and break him to ride, putting in his place a gentler horse; one who would keep his family nearer home.

Clearing the thicker growth of the main valley we rode up an open draw that heads away towards the high levels of the bare divide. It was a night of stars; and obscuro deeper than the black void beneath a clouded sky. The creak and chafing of the saddle gear, and the quick crunching of the horses' feet, went strangely through the silence.

Beside me rode so much of Jack as was not lost in reverie, swinging easily along, with a certain care in the nursing of his cigarette and an absent tapping of his quirt against the horse's quarter. I could catch at times the soft gleam of the starlight in his eye, and my thoughts strayed vaguely on the trail of his, wandering with the sweethearts and the worldful of brothers the dear fellow lived for.

On my other hand rode Tom—a riddle not to be read by such key as the occasional emphatic slap of his quirt against his leathern chappareros. A sturdy figure, a careful seat in the saddle and a something in the strong face that little children loved.

As we rode steadily through the star-gloom, suddenly, from out a thicket, far off on the low swell of hill that outlines the gentle valley, there came, clear as a bugler's reveille, the morning song of a mocking-bird. Of all the sounds that haunt the night and cheer the dawn, there is none that moves one as does the surprising readiness of the mocking-bird's first call.

As the song ended, with the sharp finish of a challenge, Tom raised his sombrero and cried out to the bird the morning salutation of the Mexicans—a benediction, as it comes from the lips of the humblest peon, even as our Good-bye was meant to be; and Jack broke out with the plaintive, barbaric air and the queer, inconsequential phrasing of "Manana."

And then, as our ponies climbed from the head of the valley to the higher level, the great sigh and rustle of the wakening earth filled the air.

And so, while yet the prairie forms beside showed dimly, the night had lightened, till the long range of sight seemed the limit of eye power, and the chant of the matins of the wilderness rose all about us. The full choir of the song birds, the plaintive solo of the quail, the drum-like challenge of a distant gobbler, the mellow boom of calling cattle.

Presently there fell, in that strange light, a sudden hush; and we drew rein, rolling our cigarettes with heads bowed in absent reverence, and ere we had them glowing, the great world was all alight! The chorus of the dawn broke out again, a wave of crimson swelled across the east, and with that sudden change from night to day which is ever strange to him of northern breeding, the great, red sun swung slowly into the cloudless blue of the dry-country sky.

A couple of hours later we found the Palomino stallion and his harem, as they trailed out from watering at Wolf's Pond.

Queer cattle, these half-tamed range horses.

At first the mares and youngsters huddled wildly together as we rode up to within a hundred yards of them. The stallion trotted bravely out to meet us, the sunlight glinting in the bright cream of his coat and in the rare, silvery dappling for which the Mexicans named him. Soon they were all following us with a shy curiosity, but when we turned and commenced to drive them, the whole crew stampeded, and a pretty chase they led us for the first five miles.

The stallion weaving back and forth in the rear to touch up stragglers, kept the mad pace with scarce a break in the long, free swing of his trot.

By the time we neared the ranch we had them well in hand, however, and heading them in between the wide-spread wings of the horse corral, went tearing down that narrowing lane with long whips cracking, and each man in full cry and crowding them in through the open gap with a rush, we swung the high gate behind them.

After dinner Jack lassoed the stallion, casting with the underhand throw as the string of horses whirled swiftly about the circular fence. The loop fell open before the horse, and both his forefeet struck the ground inside it. Jack drew the loop tight, with a swing and a light pull, and, as the Monarch of Wolf's Pond range rose to the next leap, threw his weight upon the lasso and jerked both forelegs from under him, bringing

Digitized by Google

him down broadside. Before the poor beggar could catch his breath Tom and I were upon him. I gripped him by the ear and by the under jaw, with thumb stuck through behind the nippers, and forced his head back upon his shoulder while Tom quickly slipped the lasso over the hind feet and stretched it taut to the snubbing-post. So he lay at our mercy while we carefully adjusted the close-fi ting "jaquima" halter and be t a forty-foot lead rope into the loop of it. To bit a bronco is a useless cruelty. Loosing the rope from off his feet we played him for an hour, a« one plays a fighting salmon, then staked him out on an open bit of sod to run the length of his rope, as, indeed, is the way of many folk, and to throw himself with the certainty of fate.

Next morning, after an hour's careful work, we had the Palomino saddled, ready for me to mount.

The beautiful brute stood blindfolded, his black mane and tail and waving foretop streaming in the breeze and every muscle tense and quivering with the raging fear that filled him. We had lashed a short stick, snugly rolled in a blanket, across the saddle, back of the pommel, to brace my thighs; shortened the stirrup leathers and tied a thong from one stirrup to the other to prevent their swinging.

Jack, on the off-side, held the stallion, dumbly crowded against his own horse. Tom sat his mount beside me. Coiling the lead rope in my left hand, I grasped, along with it, the reins of the "jaquima." With the right hand upon the pommel I swayed the saddle back and forth for a moment and then, with two fingers of the left hand in the check-piece of the halter, I put my toe in the stirrup and gently swung into the saddle. Settling myself carefully, I nodded to Jack to slip the blindfold. As he did so, Tom and he moved their horses forward.

The bronco stumbled awkwardly along with them, in the sudden daze of the sunlight, while I was filled with a most unheroic hope that he would run. But n a moment he caught sight of all the indignity that had been put upon him, and at that the war was on.

The wild swing of the straight, high leap, the racking wrench of t e buck, the dizzying jar of the stiff-legged drop, and the breathless speed of it!

For five minutes of chaos that bronco bucked, straight up and down, upon a space one might have covered with a waggon sheet, and I knew that such rough riding as I had done before had been but child's play!

Then, as I fell into it, and felt the grip of my high heeled boot in the shortened stirrup, the twist of my spur in the flank-girth, the brace of the roll across my thighs and grip of leg that held me there, I knew that I could win. I forgot the wrenching, jarring strain of it, and there came to me the nicety of balance and the quick interplay of muscle of the trained wrestler, but for how long? Already my head was swimming and my eyes blinded from the quick concussions. And then the bronco played the dre.ded "snake fence," twisting alternately to the one side and the other until it seemed as if the force of each sidewise drop must drive his shoulder to the ground. An agony of pain went through every joint and sinew, as I dizzily followed the quick changing of balance. For an instant my heart failed me, and there was a st ange choking in my nostrils, but as I blew them clear I caught the scent and hot splash upon my cheek of my own blood, and with that the decent fellow, who has usually lived inside my jacket, went out from me, and in his place there burned in every vein, and swelled in every muscle a maddened b.ute, as savage, as reckless, and ten thousand times as determined as the one between my thighs.

Jack, afire at the sight of the red trickle upon my white face, cried out, as with the war-shout of a charging captain:

"Quirt him! Dash him, quirt him!"

Tom, judging a weakening of the bronco's nerves, and seeing that the case was desperate, sent to my dull ears in that strong voice of his:

"Now, Tonie, give him his head!"

Slacking the lines, I lashed the brute on head and flank and shoulder with savage blows of the stinging lash of my heavy quirt, while Jack's great cow-whip hissed and roared as it cut burning gashes in the bronco's haunch. Tom, lurching savagely against me, staggered the stallion till he all but fell, and then, the rhythm of his bucking broken, and cowed by the punishment we gave him, he broke into mad galloping, while Tom and Jack, on either side, hustled him clear of every danger.

We ran that bronco till he staggered and was like to fall, and then Tom caught him by the "jaquima." I kicked my spurs out from the tangle of the flank-girth, and Jack, with his great arm about me, lifted me clear of the saddle—the Palomino stallion was tamed.

Charles Ridgeway Van Blarcom.

Digitized by Google

A SMALL, slender person, with a fresh complexion, and a body and limbs so diminutive that they seemed a reduced copy of those of an ordinary woman, but possessed of a pair of large black eyes which sent the blood to the head of those upon whom she turned them—such was Noeline Fargues, the young mistress of the mill of Espibos.

A ramshackle old structure, built a-straddle of a brook, isolated in a grove of alders, leaning to one side, dilapidated, eaten away by the ivy that covered it, supported here and there by large beams that looked like crutches, but endowed with an alert and joyous clatter which made it resemble a talkative peasant woman—such was the home of Noeline, the old mill of Espibos.

The mill, decrepit as it was, had its faithful customers; its mistress, though small, had a goodly number of lovers.

Among these two were chiefly to be distinguished: Aristide Larrieussec, a big, chubby-cheeked fellow, the son of a neighbouring farmer, and Jouanin Lacaze, a fair-haired youth, who was serving in the position of an apprentice at the largest shop of the neighbouring village.

Aristide, the farmer, often prowled around the mill, his pockets full of fruit for the object of his affections. The two ate it together, seated in front of the millstone, while the iron wheel turned by the water sang its unceasing rhythmic song, and the white flour fell silently, covering everything around as with a frosting of sugar.

Jouanin, the shopkeeper, was less fortunate. He hardly saw Noeline except on Sundays, after Mass, when she came to buy needles and thread at the shop in the village. At such times Jouanin was flushed with joy.

He displayed before the kind eyes of the young girl all the spools of thread and all the papers of needles which the shop contained, and a long time was spent in making a selection, while occasionally the fingers of the two touched each other, in the midst of the articles they were handling.

Sometimes, too, of a Sunday evening, Jouanin would obtain a couple of hours' leave of absence, and bring his rod and line to fish in the brook of Espibos. He hardly ever caught anything, because the brook contained fewer fish than any other in the neighbourhood, but Jouanin would choose his position so that he could watch, at the same time, the windows of the mill and the float of his fishing-line.

He consoled himself for the immobility of the latter by looking at the charming things which were to be seen at the former.

At nightfall, Noeline would generally come to look for her ducks on the banks of the brook, and the grasp of the hand which the lovers exchanged in the Sabbath twilight was so sweet that Jouanin dreamed of it till the following Thursday.

The mistress of the mill had no hesitation in choosing among her lovers; it was Jouanin whom she preferred to all the others. She hardly thought of anything but him. Him alone she trusted entirely, with him alone she felt perfectly happy.

Fair-haired Jouanin was therefore authorised to pay his court, and Noeline's mother soon invited him to come and eat chestnuts at the mill during the long autumn evenings.

The first time, however, that the young shopkeeper went to visit his sweetheart, a strange thing happened. The cricket which always chirped behind the kitchen chimney remained silent.

"That is singular," thought Noeline's mother.

And the young girl, on her part, turned quite pale.

And when Jouanin came for his second visit, the same thing happened. As soon as the wooer opened the door the cricket ceased chirping.

Upon this Noeline's mother crossed herself, and her daughter clasped her trembling hands beneath her apron.

Every time that Jouanin entered the house the hostile cricket refused to let itself be heard, and in listening closely one could hear a peculiar sound, an inexplicable scratching in the chimney, as if the little creature were revolting.

Noeline cried a good deal, her mother was much depressed.

Like the majority of peasant women they both attached great importance to the chirping of the cricket.

They were aware that the song of one of those insects in a house insures to its inhabitants happiness and prosperity. The fact of it remaining silent whenever Jouanin was present was regarded as a sure sign that the poor lad would bring misfortune upon anyone who had anything to do with him.

And yet Noeline knew very well that her lover was

Digitized by Google

good, honest, and industrious; she thought she could read many promises of happiness in his loving grey eyes; but the cricket did not agree with her. It might have proved dangerous not to heed its warning, and when the timid shopkeeper came, with bowed head and a lump in his throat to ask Noeline's mother for her daughter's hand, the old woman looked very grave, and the girl could hardly refrain from sobbing in her apron.

Jouanin was rejected. He was not given the true reason. It would have troubled him to learn that he brought bad luck to a house that he entered.

The mother gave him plenty of probable pretexts, and Noeline escaped from the room to hide her grief. She went and sat down by the millstone, in the old dilapidated mill, listening to the drops of water falling over the great iron wheel, and when she heard Jouanin closing the door as he left the house to return home by the alder-grove, along the murmuring brook, she thought her heart would stop beating in her breast, and she prayed aloud, as if she had been in fear of death.

The following week Jouanin left the country. With his clothes tied in a handkerchief, he went off during a cold twilight, when the last leaves seemed shivering on the trees. He entered the alder-grove, and went along the brook of Espibos.

The young mistress of the mill saw him coming, and remained standing motionless at her door.

"Good evening, Noeline," he said slowly.

"Good evening, Jouanin," she replied, lowering her eyes.

Then as he went on, she ventured to ask.

"So you are going to leave the country?"

He seemed to stumble a little on the path covered with leaves.

"Yes; I have found a place at Orthez."

She said nothing. Unconsciously she turned and twisted between her fingers a small silver cross that hung at her throat, and, with dim, troubled eyes, she watched Jouanin as he went, in the increasing darkness, through the silent woods.

* * * * *

A small, slight person, bent, with the lean body and limbs of a worn-out old woman, but still possessed of a pair of expressive eyes far younger than the face of which they formed a part—such was Noeline Fargues, the mistress of the mill of Espibos twenty-five years after the departure of Jouanin Lacaze. The peasant women of the South of France fade rapidly.

A-straddle of the brook, as of old, the mill still held its own, thanks to several supplementary crutches, and its clatter was as merry as that of a new one.

Noeline Fargues had not married Jouanin gone, no other lover had succeeded in touching her heart. Aristide Larrieussec, ardent though he was, had been disarded like all the rest. The young farmer, long inconsolable, had finally married a girl from the neighbourhood.

At the present day he visited his old sweetheart only for the purpose of selling her his grain. They had both probably forgotten the delicious fruit they had eaten together by the millstone long ago, while the white flour fell silently, dusting every object around them.

Jouanin, for his part, had never returned.

Many a time Noeline had wandered along the brook in the innocent hope of seeing the young shopkeeper appear before her. She had thought of him nearly every day; and almost every night, when the cricket sang she grew sad, and sat dreaming by her lonely fireside, until the resin candle had burned itself out.

Alas! Orthez was so far away! The people of Espibos never go to that town. At the shop in the village no one had heard anything about Jouanin. What had become of the fair-haired young apprentice? Noeline still prayed for him from time to time, when her poor soul was sadder than usual, and, by degrees, in the hollow breast of the lonely peasant woman, the beatings of her heart became cold and monotonous, like the clatter of her poor old mill.

One moonlight evening Noeline, who was then forty-two years old, was expecting Larrieussec, Jouanin's former rival. He was coming to sell her his corn, and to discuss the price. Noeline had offered twelve francs and five sous for the bag. The farmer had asked twelve francs and fifteen sous.

It was nearly nine o'clock. The night was warm, the moon cast its white light on the winding path through the grove. Noeline, standing on the threshold of the mill, saw someone approaching.

"That is not Larrieussec," she thought. "He does not come that way."

The unknown had a square box on his back. He walked slowly, seem fatigued, and, as if he were a stranger, looked closely at the brook, the mill, the trees of the grove.

"Good evening, my good woman," he said, as he stopped. "Would you like to see Our Lady of Lourdes?"

He was evidently a pedlar from the Bearn or the Bigourde, one of those travelling salesmen from Pau or Bagnères, who, under the pretext of showing a statuette of the Virgin, which they carry at the bottom of their box, sell to the country people rosaries, medals, as well as needles and thread.

"My poor fellow, it is rather dark for looking at your Virgin."

However, as the pedlar's voice sounded gentle, and as the Virgin's intercession might possibly induce Larrieussec to lower his price to twelve francs five sous, Noeline continued:

"Come in, salesman; I will look at your Virgin by the light of our resin."

So the pedlar followed her into the mill. When Noeline could see his face she felt the blood rushing to her thin cheeks, and when the salesman looked at her he seemed equally disturbed. At last, in rather a plaintive voice, the man asked:

"So you still live here, Noeline?"

"Oh, heavens!" replied the mistress of the mill, her heart throbbing violently, "is it possible that it is you, Jouanin?"

And for a moment they remained silent.

The water of the brook fell, in resounding drops, on the iron wheel of the mill, as it had done long ago, when the young shopkeeper courted the girl he loved. And suddenly, behind the chimney-piece, was heard the clear chirp of a cricket.

Noeline felt a slight pricking in her eyes, which seemed like the birth of a tear.

Jouanin told her of his life. He had succeeded well at Orthez. He had married there, he had had children, he had a shop there, and, at the present day, he and his family were happy. Only, he had felt a desire to see his old home once more, after twenty-five years of absence, and, from economical reasons, he had made the journey

Digitized by Google

as a pedlar, selling thread, needles, and other cheap wares.

"Oh, I was quite sure you would succeed, Jouanin," said Noeline, with a sigh.

The cricket was still chirping behind the fire-place. The mistress of the mill seemed overcome by a growing emotion.

"Well, then," stammered Jouanin, "will you tell me, Noeline, why you would not marry me twenty-five years ago."

She could not answer at first. She pointed to the chimney with a shamefaced gesture, feeling tempted to hide her face in her apron, as she has been wont to do in her youth.

"It was because of the cricket," she confessed.

"The cricket?"

"Yes; I was a fool. I thought you would bring me bad luck—the cricket stopped chirping whenever you came to see me."

"It stopped chirping; and why?"

Noeline shrugged her thin shoulders to indicate that she did not know. And they both remained thoughtful. Their eyes did not dare meet in the light of the smoking resin.

Before long, however, Larrieussec, the farmer, whom Noeline had been expecting, made his appearance.

"Good evening! I salute you!" he said, after the manner of the peasants, who give as many greetings as there are persons in the company.

And when he had recognised the young shopkeeper of old, he cried:

"What, Jouanin, you here? What the dickens did you come for?"

"I came to talk over old times. That does one good at our age."

"Yes, indeed," replied Larrieussec. "The good old times! By the way, did not you and Noeline think of getting married in those days?"

"You are right," remarked the mistress of the mill.

"And do you know what prevented us?" asked the pedlar. "A cricket!"

"Pshaw! A cricket?" exclaimed Larrieussec. "But let me think—I remember now——"

He burst out laughing.

"Oh, that was a good joke!" he cried. "A good joke indeed!"

Then he went on seriously:

"Bah! You are happy, are you not, both of you? We are all happy here! So there will be no harm in confessing the little tricks of our youth. Ah, that was a capital one! Listen, Jouanin, we are as good friends as ever, are we not, old boy? Very well. It was because I watched you, and scratched the outside of the chimney there, towards our field, every time you came to court Noeline. You see, you were not the only fellow who was in love with her, and I know someone who was horribly jealous of you!"

Then seeing that this revelation had a chilling effect on his auditors, and that Noeline's eyes rested on him sadly, he said very generously:

"But that isn't all. I came to tell you that I accept your price, twelve francs five sous a bag. Will that do, Noeline?"

And Noeline answered in a low tone:

"It will do, Larrieussec."

Upon this the farmer bought some spools of thread for his wife, of the merchant of Orthez, and paid for them at once, without haggling.

"Adieu! I salute you!" he said as he left.

The two old lovers remained alone.

They did not say much. Jouanin slowly rearranged his wares. Noeline watched him, while unconsciously turning and twisting the old silver cross, which still hung at her throat, between her poor misshapen and bony fingers.

For a moment, quite weak and despairing, she felt tempted to imprint a kiss upon Jouanin's grizzled hair, once so fine and so fair, but she restrained herself.

Her lips were too old to bestow a caress upon a man

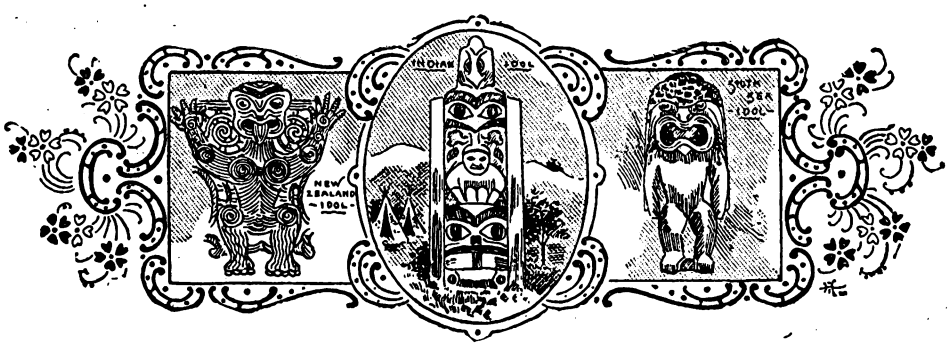
"Well, then, good-night, Noeline!" said the pedlar, lifting his box to his shoulders.

"Good-night, Jouanin."

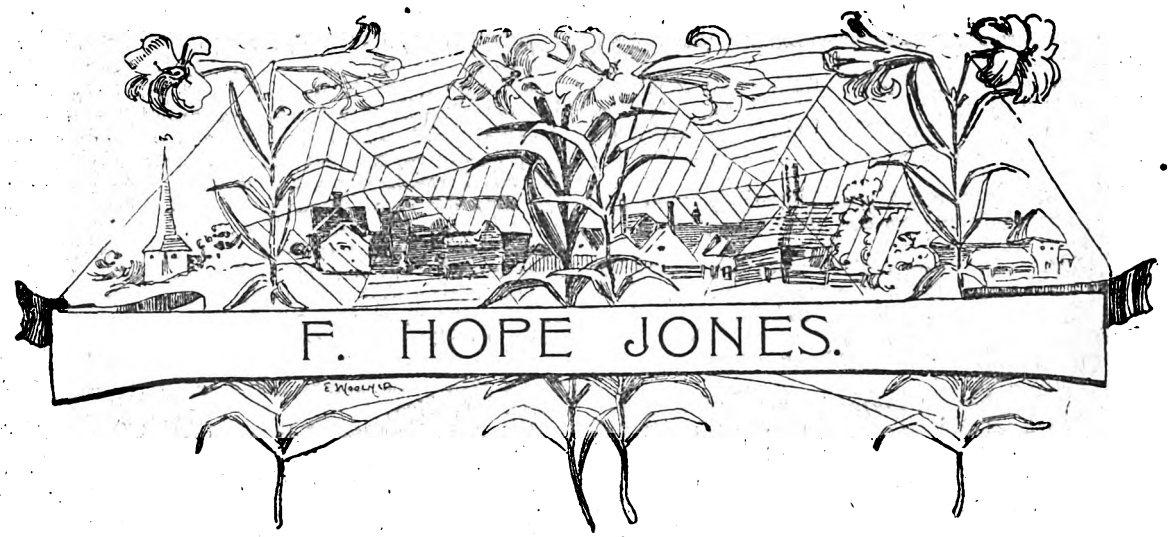
They shook hands in some embarrassment, and then separated.

He followed the moonlit path through the grove. She, standing at the door of the mill, looked after him, while, behind the chimney-piece, the cricket chirped, calmly, clearly, indefatigably, as if it would have told Noeline of all the happiness which might have been hers.

JEAN RAMEAU.



Digitized by Google



He Delivers a Lecture on the American Red Man and Duty.

"LADIES and gentlemen—It is needless for me to observe that this large and intelligent audience makes me proud.

"It was advertised that this lecture would be free, and you found the doors wide open to you. I feel it a sort of duty, however, to take up a collection. Any money so contributed will be evenly divided. One-half will go towards erecting a tombstone over the grave of the father-in-law of Christopher Columbus, as soon as the same can be located, and the other half will be economically expended in paying my personal expenses from town to town.

"As I pass the hat I will call your attention to the fact that if Columbus hadn't been backed by his father-in-law he could never have set out on his voyage of discovery, and that the said father-in-law has never had a fair chance in history.

"As I count up the proceeds of the collection, which amounts to five shillings, I wish to return thanks on behalf of Columbus and all his relations, and to assure you of my own personal gratitude as well.

"My subject to-night is the American Indian, and the duty of the white man towards him. It may surprise some of you to learn that you have a duty towards the Indian but I hope to make it plain to you. I turn the light of my stereopticon on the canvas, and you behold the picture of the savage at home.

"Instead of sowing or reaping he is engaged in a war dance. Instead of broadening his mind he is still clinging to his old time traditions. As he dances he yells for scalps and shouts for gore, and it hurts his feelings to remember that he can't break loose and tomahawk half-a-dozen women and children.

"Who is to blame for this state of affairs? All of us. Had we followed the finger of duty thirty years ago the red man of to-day would have been wearing tight shoes, tall hats and high collars, and his thirst for gore would have been washed away in mock-turtle soup and lobster salad.

"The Indian, as an Indian, can't help his ways or amend them. The white man has given him no choice but to continue on in the same old path. He has not been given enough religion to get up a fight at a street corner.

"We see this savage engaged in a war dance, when he might just as well be employed in compiling a family almanac or canvassing for life assurance, but he is barred from it by our want of interest in his welfare.

"We lay aside the picture of the war dance and substitute another. My heart aches every time I exhibit it.

"You see the picture of a squaw standing in front of her wigwam. She is not a beauty. She is stout and short and without grace, and life holds nothing for her. Years ago she was called Blue Bell, and the young men of her tribe raved over her willowy form and her fawn-like glide. Had the hand of the white race been extended to her then what a difference it would have made in her later years!

"Behold the picture of the savage at home."

"Instead of hunting rabbits with a club she would have been gliding about a drawing room. Instead of wearing an army blanket on an Indian reservation she would have draped and posed for a goddess before some great painter.

"In the place of gathering firewood and cooking mule meat she would have graced the banquets in palaces and had counts and dukes bowing at her feet. No helping hand was extended, and the Blue Bell with the willowy

Digitized by Google

form was left to mature into a squaw, who smokes a pipe and whistles.

"I ask the red-headed man on the end seat, third row, how he would like to be an Indian buck in old

A squaw standing in front of her wigwam.

clothes, with nothing to do but lick his squaw in the morning, kick his dogs in the afternoon and shout at his papooses after dark?

"I ask the woman with the frozen expression over there by the post how she would like to be a squaw in a wigwam—her feet always cold, her heart always sad, and a consumptive cough ever warning her of a cheap coffin and a shallow grave?

"Our duty is a plain one, and yet we have neglected it. We have taught the heathen of Africa how to eat mince pie, and have taught the heathen of China how to devour plum pudding, but we have turned our backs on the red Indian, and had no concern in his welfare.

"I feel I must speak plainly on this matter. I feel I must say to the fat man with the bald head and contented look on his face that he has been remiss in his duty and ought to be ashamed of himself.

"Do not argue that it is now too late to undo this great wrong—to make good your neglect and indifference. I give you another picture. It is a papoose. In forwarding the picture my artist forgot to mention the sex, but that makes no difference. It is a child growing up. Unless we reach out our hands it will grow up to be a buck Indian with no ambition beyond whooping for scalps and trapping wolves, or a squaw whose life will be devoted to tanning deerskins and roasting prairie dogs.

"My dear friends, I think I can detect looks of sympathy on the faces before me. I think I see mental resolutions to do your duty in the future.

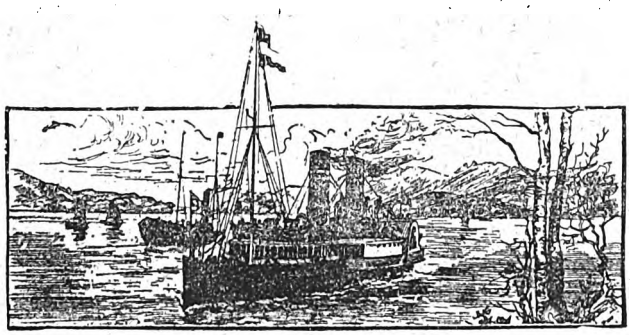
"My feelings in the matter almost oblige me to announce that another collection will be taken up as a fitting close to the meeting, but prudence bids me not to overdo a good thing. In order to prevent a stampede in which numbers of you might be killed or injured, the collection will be dispensed with, but as you depart for your homes think the matter over seriously and earnestly.

"The Indian wants to be uplifted. He wants to leave behind him his wigwam, his tomahawk and his buckskin shirt. He waits for you. Refuse him your moral influence and he remains as he is; extend your hand and

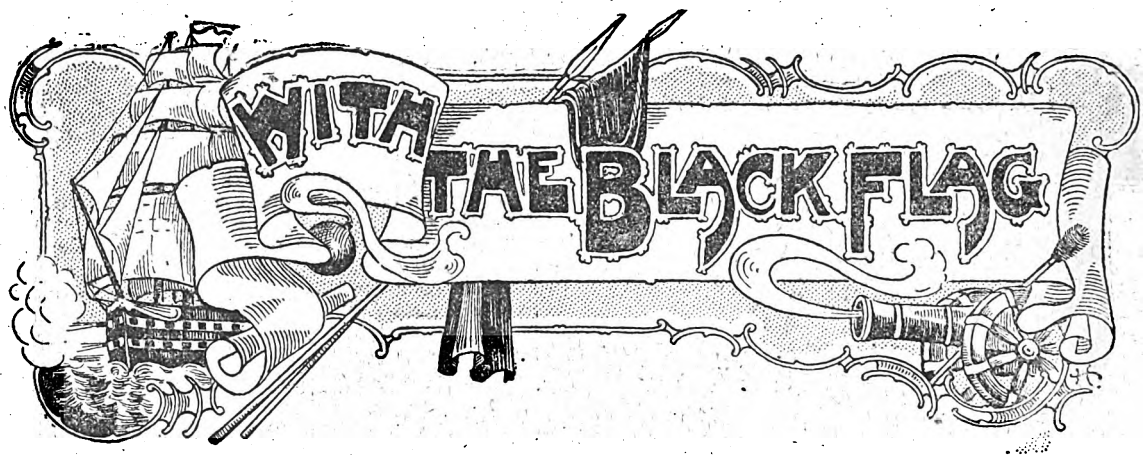
The papoose.

it won't take ten years before he will be eating with a fork and promoting trusts and syndicates for the benefit of mankind."

C. B. Lewis.



Digitized by Google



A ROMANCE OF LAND AND SEA.

By William Westall.

Author of "With the Red Eagle," "The Phantom City," "Nigel Fortescue," etc., etc

CHAPTER X.

Arrival at Angostura.

As Diaz fell dead on the deck the officers who were near made a rush at Arismendez, but interposing with our pistols we kept them at bay while he went to the break of the poop, and spoke to the crew.

"Captain Diaz was a traitor, he meant to surrender the ship to those two Spanish cruisers which, in an hour, will be within range. You know what the result would be; we should all have our throats cut. As the only means of saving the sloop and our lives I have put him to death. Captain Cautley, who is as brave as Captain Davis and, like him, an Englishman, will take command, and if we cannot give the cruisers the slip we shall engage them. Better die fighting than be killed in cold blood. *Guerra a la muerta. Viva la Patria.*"

"*Viva la Patria! Viva el General! Guerra a la muerta!*" shouted the Zambos with a great shout.

"You see, gentlemen, the crew are with us," said Arismendez turning to the officers, "and any man of whatever rank who refuses to do his duty and obey his new captain will be treated as a mutineer. Now, your orders, Señor Capitan."

"Lower the Venezuelan flag and up with the British ensign," said Cautley. "Square the yards by the lifts. Up with the foretop-gallant sail and the fore-studding sails. Up with the helm. Pipe all hands and clear for action."

This order was received with a cheer. The Zambos scented battle.

The brig was now before the wind and heading almost due west. A few minutes afterwards the cruisers changed their course and followed in our wake. But they were still three or four miles away and we all watched keenly to see whether they gained on us, or we on them, a question on which depended all our lives; for a fight with the two would have only one result.

It was only when the bustle of making sail, clearing for action and the rest, had subsided, that I could think over the drama that had just been enacted. It seemed to me that if killing in cold blood can be justifiable, it was justifiable in this instance. Slaying Diaz was the only way of saving the lives of more than a hundred men. We could indeed, have tried to lay him by the heels, but the officers and some of the watch, not knowing our motive, might have taken his part and defeated our object. Moreover, in the presence of a danger so formidable and pressing half measures had been folly, and in my opinion Arismendez not merely showed great resolution and courage, but did the right thing at the right time. He did not inform us of his design lest we should demur to it, and as he only decided to act when it became evident that the two ships were Spanish cruisers, there was no time for argument and no room for hesitation. Necessity has no law, and this was a case of dire necessity. We had either to strike or die.

Moreover Diaz was a double-dyed traitor and richly deserved his fate. Among his papers was found evidence that he had been in regular communication with the commandant of Cumana.

The cruisers had changed their course and were in hot chase, but the brigantine, being an indifferent sailer, was falling behind. The sloop, however, was slowly but surely gaining ground, and it began to look as though she would overhaul us before dark.

"If she does I shall engage and try to cripple her before the brigantine can come to her help," said Cautley. "All I ask is half an hour, for if we don't do it in that time we shall not do it at all."

Before long the corvette, a bigger ship than the *Libertad*, opened on us with her bow-chasers, but as the first shots fell short and every shot checked her speed, this was to our advantage, though we were presently hit, splinters flew about in all directions, and two or three men were wounded.

When she came within range we opened fire with the two carronades which the skipper had mounted on the poop, hulling her repeatedly, yet failing to damage her rigging as he had hoped.

Meanwhile the brigantine was falling further and further behind.

"I have got the time I asked for," said Cautley, "but I shall hold on a bit longer. No use throwing away a chance."

Nearer and nearer came the corvette. Her decks were crowded with men, of whom she had probably twice as many as ourselves.

At the last moment, as it seemed, the Spaniard being within musket shot, Cautley luffed round, thereby bringing the *Libertad* athwart his bows, at the same time delivering a broadside that swept his decks, a compliment which the

Digitized by Google

sloop promptly returned. After they had pounded away at each other for several minutes she ranged alongside and grappled, a manœuvre which Cautley was unable to prevent owing to the jamming of the *Libertad's* rudder. For with the brigantine rapidly approaching he had no wish either to board or be boarded. His game was to disable the corvette and get away.

But the Zambos yelled with delight, and, when the ships touched, fully two score of them, heedless of orders, leapt on the sloop's decks, at the very moment we were being boarded by as many Spaniards. We should have had more of them if the grapples had not given way and the vessels separated.

On which the action now ceased, for neither ship could now fire into the other without destroying some of her own people, and so hot a hand-to-hand fight was being waged in both that nobody had a mind for aught else.

The Zambos, as Davis had said, and as we knew, fought like fiends. They seemed positively to enjoy killing and being killed, and in the end all who boarded the sloop were killed. The Spaniards who boarded us shared the same fate. It was no more possible to save any of them than if the Zambos had been so many tigers, and only Cautley and myself made the attempt, at the risk of our lives.

While this was going on the brig and the brigantine had drifted further apart, and the carpenter having succeeded in repairing the *Libertad's* rudder the skipper put her again before the wind.

But instead of chasing us as we expected she put about.

"You see, gentlemen, the crew are with us," said Arismendez, turning to the officers.

"What has happened to her?" I asked Cautley.

"Badly hurt, I should say. By Jove! she is settling by the head. It looks as if she had got a shot between wind and water. Don't you see how high her stern is? The best thing that could have happened—for us. The brigantine will have too much to do rescuing the crew and saving the stores to trouble us, and our rigging is in such a state that I doubt whether we could outsail her, slow as she is, and the crew is so weakened that another engagement just now is not desirable; we might come off second best."

When we last saw the cruisers they were within hail of each other, the sloop low in the water and evidently sinking. So soon as night hid them from our view Cautley put the brig on the starboard tack, and at daybreak we were once more in a position to bear up for the Bocas, which we passed without seeing anything more formidable than a merchant ship, fishing boats and coasting craft. The Gulf of Sadness, a vast sheet of waveless water, discoloured with the *débris* brought down by the great river, looked as melancholy as its name.

Borne along by a gentle breeze we entered the Orinoco by the Great Mouth, and were presently in the main channel, which is nearly as broad as the Straits of Dover, but the navigable part for vessels of the *Libertad's* size being little more than a mile, the ascent of the stream is both dangerous and troublesome, and were it not that the wind blows almost constantly from the north-east it would be impossible to stem the current which runs at the rate of four miles an hour, and in the rainy season, at the rate of five or six miles an hour. When the wind was contrary for a time, owing to the windings of the river, warps were carried out and fastened to the trees along the banks, whereby the difficulty was surmounted and the fair wind recovered.

Just as the sloop entered the river a large schooner was observed lying at anchor, under the land on the side of Cape Barinas. After a long look at her the skipper pronounced her to be a Spaniard.

"At any rate she shows no colours, which is a bad sign. Going back is out of the question, if she tries to bar the way we must fight for it," he said, and gave orders to pipe all hands and clear the decks for action.

"What are you going to fight, Señor Capitan?" inquired the Indian pilot, whose eyes were better than our glasses.

"What an absurd question, Sanchez! Don't you see that Spanish schooner riding at anchor under the bank there?"

"That isn't a schooner, Señor Capitan," answered the Indian, laughing silently.

"What the dickens is it, then?" answered Cautley, evidently annoyed.

"Two pine trees sticking on a sand bank."

And so it proved, the stream had brought them down and set them up, but, as seen from a distance the resemblance to a two-masted ship was perfect, and deceived so sharp-sighted a seaman as the skipper.

When evening came we let go an anchor and sought repose. But the hissing of water-snakes, the splashing of alligators as they plunged into the turbid water, the howling of araguatoes, great red monkeys with terrific voices, and the attacks of myriads of mosquitoes, made night hideous and sleep impossible. We sat on deck smoking, but even fifty cigars and pipes, kept continually alight, failed to protect us from the hordes that thirsted for our blood, and, like Spaniards, gave no quarter.

Nothing so much struck me in South America as the profusion of animal life. Water, earth, air and woods, teem with it, to such an extent indeed, as often to render the lives of those "not to the manner born" a burden and a torment.

Digitized by Google

When she came within range we opened fire.

At sunrise we weighed and went on, and the further we went, the finer became the scenery. The meandering river was so wide, and islands were so numerous that it was like sailing through a long succession of beautiful lakes bounded by lofty mountains and wood crowned heights. The banks on both sides are covered with primeval forests of majestic trees, many of them hundreds of feet high and linked together by the *bejuco*, a gigantic creeping plant so thick as a ship's cable. For years after the trees decay they are kept in position by these great plants which bear a strong likeness to the huge water-snakes that lurk in the swamps beneath. Other parasitical plants are aglow with richly-hued flowers, festooned on the trees to which they cling, the whole, as seen from a ship's deck, looking like a panorama of gorgeous gardens.

Parrots, macaws, toucans and other birds of brilliant plumage complete the splendid picture and fill the air with their discordant cries, to which, at measured intervals, answers the metallic note of the bell bird, at one moment sounding close to the ear, at the next dying away in the distance. In the small creeks, over-arched with superb evergreens, you may see spoonbills, pelicans and gigantic cranes, all busily fishing, while hard by, in the main stream, a huge alligator floats among the bulky manatos and agile tomenos that are ever rising to the surface and blowing in shoals.

So, though our nights were wretched, our days were not unpleasant There was much to see, and the novelty and strangeness of it all kept us in a continual state of excitement and delight. Otherwise we should have found the voyage as tedious as it was slow, and we were not sorry when it came to an end, and the *Libertad* let go before Angostura.

The Orinoco is hereabouts so compressed between high rocky banks as to be little more than two miles in breadth, and so deep and turbulent withal that crossing it is often both difficult and dangerous.

Angostura, or more properly, San Tome, is built on the face of a rock which rises abruptly from the river to a fort on the summit of the hill, whence can be seen a great part of the provinces of Barcelona, Guyana and Cumana, with their vast forests and wide stretching savannahs, and in the near distance rich pastures thronged with cattle, and country houses embowered in plantations and groves. No site could well be more charming, and, as seen from the river, Angostura, with its white buildings, rising one above the other, gaily painted verandahs and steep streets, looks wonderfully bright and picturesque.

So soon as it became known that General Arismendez was on board the *Libertad*, we had visits from some of the leading personages of the place, who made much of him, as also of Cautley and myself when we were presented to them, which though pleasant enough in one way involved more kissing from moustached and garlic-perfumed lips than we quite liked. At least a dozen houses were placed at our disposal, with a flourish of fine phrases, of which only the Spanish language is capable, but knowing that these invitations were not meant to be accepted I thanked our new friends for their kindness in the effusive fashion of the country and said that we had arranged to take up our quarters at the posada.

Arismendez went to the governor's palace, and on the following day we were presented to several members of the government, when the general, after making his statement and calling upon Cautley and myself to corroborate it, produced the dispatches which Urdenetta had confided to Diaz, as also the document proving the latter's treachery.

"It was not necessary. We would have taken your word for it, General," said the secretary of state urbanely, "as I take it for all you have told it, and we are greatly indebted to you and these English gentlemen for saving the ship, and also for the other services which they have rendered the Republic. I shall now open the dispatches addressed to the government, the ones addressed to the Supreme Chief, who is with the army at the llanos (plains) of Apura, will be forwarded to him on the first opportunity.

"These charges are absurd on the face of them and unsupported by a single proof," he added after reading his dispatches. "All who know General Arismendez—and who does not?—know that he is too good a patriot to provoke a mutiny among his own troops. But I shall have to submit this dispatch to Congress, together with a report of my own, and any written statement which it may please his Excellency to make."

This was done, and in the result Congress not only acquitted Arismendez of the charges brought against him by Urdenetta, but gave him a vote of thanks and made him Vice-President of the Republic, so that by sending him to Angostura his adversary did him a good turn, the vice-presidency being of course an office of much greater dignity than the governorship of Margarita.

In the meantime Cautley and I were enjoying ourselves. The governor gave Arismendez a banquet at which we were present, as also at a ball given by another personage, and we received more invitations to dinners and dances than we were able to accept. Which was an agreeable change from the monotony of Margarita, and it was pleasant to be once more in a civilised community, though it was not the civilisation of Europe.

The street boys smoked big cigars, and wore nothing but straw hats, the Indian women, whom we sometimes met in our rides, dispensed even with hats, carrying under their arms only a short gown which they slipped on before entering the town, by order of the police, though not always, the rule being more honoured in the breach than the observance.

Digitized by Google

But everything comes to an end, even zest for enjoyment, and just as we were beginning to weary of our holiday and long for a more active life, we received a request to wait on the Vice-President at his official residence, whither we of course repaired at the appointed time.

"Well, señores, are you tired of dancing and feasting?" he asked, with a smile which was meant to be pleasant.

"Not tired, yet quite ready for something else," I said.

"A little fighting? If so, I think I can oblige you."

"If it's fighting I am at your Excellency's disposal," put in the skipper with characteristic promptitude.

"Good! I told my colleagues that we could always count on El Capitan. Well, you are to take command of a squadron of large flecheras with orders to cruise off the mouths of the Orinoco and in the Gulf of Paria."

"I thank your Excellency and accept the post with pleasure. When shall I sail?"

"So soon as the flecheras are ready. Probably in less than a week. The mission I have to propose to you, Major Wyvenhoe, is of another sort, perhaps even more dangerous. Yet though I should like you to undertake it, I do not press it upon you. Accept or reject it as you may deem best. It is taking important dispatches to the Supreme Chief, who, as you know, is in the field, which as yet we have had no opportunity of sending to him. Work for a courier or orderly, you will say. But several of our couriers have lately fallen into the hands of the Godos (Goths, *i.e.*, Spaniards), and though their orders were to destroy their dispatches rather than let them be taken they have not done so, and the results in more than one instance have been disastrous. For the Spanish commanders not only spare the lives of couriers who are captured with dispatches, but let them go. Those who make away with their dispatches are themselves dispatched. Now when a man knows that by keeping a certain piece of paper he will save his life he generally ends——"

"By keeping the paper."

"Exactly."

"But how do the Spaniards know that any chance prisoner whom they take is a courier?"

"They don't; only if he has dispatches they reward him, and if he has not they kill him. So it comes to the same thing. Therefore we want to intrust these dispatches I have spoken of to somebody who is willing to take oath that in the event of his being in danger of capture he will destroy them; a man of honour who will die rather than break his word. Such a man as yourself, major. Moreover, by engaging in this enterprise you will make the acquaintance of Don Simon Bolivar, who, though I am not blind to his faults, is a remarkable man, and if you get through with these dispatches you will win his favour. You will also be able to tell him what happened at Margarita, and refute the charges made against us by Urdenetta. But do not decide hastily; take time for reflection. It will be a perilous undertaking; the country higher up the river swarms with Godos, not to speak of other dangers."

Arismendez put his proposal in such a way that I could not decline it without exposing myself to an imputation which I did not care to incur. Moreover, though I was not so quixotic as to court danger, I had never shrunk from an enterprise because it seemed perilous. Also I wanted to go to the front and see this wonderful Mr. Bolivar.

"I have decided already, Señor General, to take these dispatches to the Supreme Chief, or so far as the Goths and other enemies will let me," I answered.

"I thank you, señor, but I shall not take your answer now. Think over it, and if you are in the same mind to-morrow, do me the favour to breakfast with me here at eleven, and I will introduce you to your associate."

"I shall have a companion then?"

"Yes, two are better than one, they can help each other both in council and action, and Don Iago Santleo, a captain in our service, is a very gallant gentleman, whom I am sure you will like. Being anxious to join the army I have no doubt he will be glad to bear you company, and as he knows the country will serve both as comrade and guide."

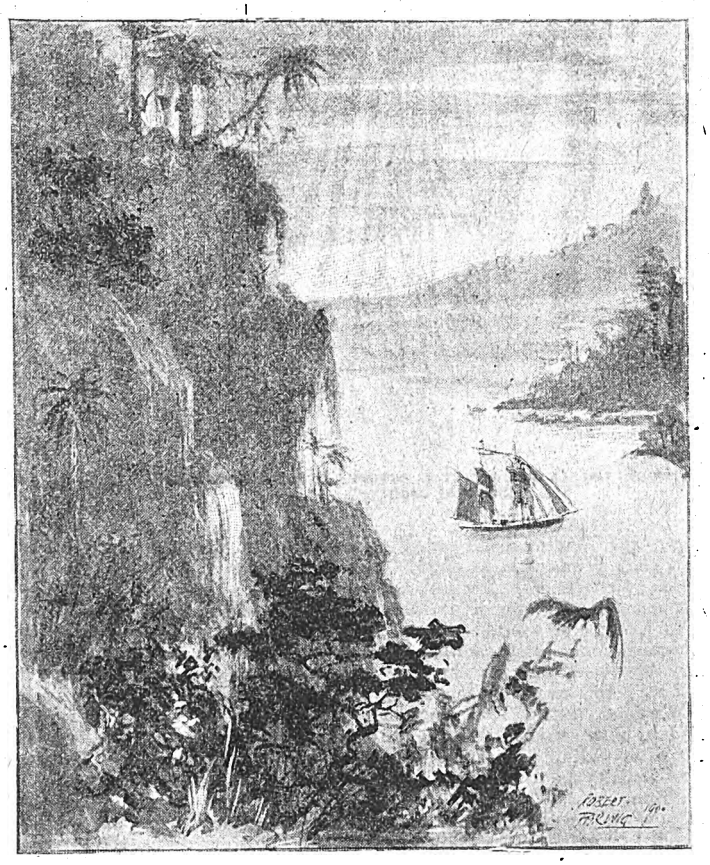
"And I am sure from your account of him, a very desirable comrade. Your Excellency may expect me to breakfast."

And then, the business being concluded, we made our adieux.

"We could not go on fooling here much longer. All the same, I am very sorry," said the skipper, sadly.

"I know what you mean. We shall have to part. I, too, am very sorry. We have not known each other very long, though long enough to become good comrades and fast friends."

On the following morning I breakfasted with Arismendez, and met Señor Don Iago Santleo, my future comrade. I liked the gentleman so soon as I clapped eyes on him. Tall and stalwart he was, and well set up; in feature bold and handsome; in age, twenty-five or six; his jaws, like his shoulders, were square; his eyes blue; his hair



At sunrise we weighed and went on, and the further we went the finer became the scenery.

Digitized by Google

tawny; his expression frank and manly, and he had a winning smile and a joyous laugh.

"You are still in the same mind?" demanded Arismendez.

"Yes, Señor, else had you not seen me here."

"Good! Don Iago, I am glad to say, has already agreed to be your companion, and I hope you will have good fortune and be good friends."

"Unless we are good friends we are not likely to have good fortune, Señor General," said Don Iago. "Without friendship there can be no union, and without union no strength; and for this expedition we shall need all our strength and all our wits."

"I think we shall be good friends," quoth I.

"We want you to do us a great favour, Senor Wyvenhoe," she said archly.

"So think I; nay, I am sure," said he, and so heartily withal that I was fain to think that the liking I had conceived for him he had conceived for me.

We learnt from Arismendez that as the dispatches were still to write, and would have to be written small so as to diminish bulk and facilitate concealment, we should not be able to set out for three or four days, whereupon, breakfast being over, we separated, the general to attend to his official duties, Don Iago and I to smoke in the verandah, where we had an agreeable talk, in the course of which, after telling him something about myself, I insinuated an inquiry as to what part of the country he might come from.

"The west," he answered, pointing in that direction.

Which I thought rather vague.

After answering some questions which he put about England, I remarked that he looked more like an Englishman than a South American.

"You flatter me," he answered, lightly laughing. "But if being born in the country and being descended from forefathers who settled in it more than two hundred years ago make one a Venezuelan, I am a Venezuelan. Are you going to Señora Calzada's dance to-morrow night? An old family hers—or rather her husband's, of pure Spanish blood, and belonging to the first order of colonial nobility, and, what is still better, she has two charming daughters, Pepita and Luisa."

"We have been invited, my friend and I, and we shall certainly go if only for the pleasure of meeting you and making the acquaintance of these two young ladies."

So Cautley and I went and were not disappointed in Pepita and Luisa, who were quite as charming as Señor Santleo had said—beautiful brunettes with great black eyes and raven hair, floating about the ball room in clouds of white muslin and as gracious as they were graceful. I danced with them several times, as also did Don Iago, and I rather thought that Luisa honoured him with her preference while Pepita favoured me. But about an hour before the party broke up both of them were hanging on his arm, talking to him so earnestly that I began to feel a little envious. Presently, however, Pepita, whose fan was only a degree less expressive than her eyes, beckoned me to them.

"We want you to do us a great favour, Señor Wyvenhoe," she said archly. "But first of all are you a Christian?"

"Of course I am a Christian, and as for the favour, you have only to name it; it was granted before it was asked."

"How good of you! I felt sure you would, as I told Luisa. We have a tiny nephew who came into the world only a few days ago. He is to be baptised the day after to-morrow, and we want you and Don Iago to be his godfathers. He and you have blue eyes and fair hair, and blue eyes are so beautiful and rare that we think they would bring the dear baby good luck. Don Iago has given his consent, and I cannot tell you how happy you have made us by giving yours."

Had I been given time to think and not already compromised myself, I should certainly have said no, but I was completely out-manœuvred, and I perceived too late that by saying I was a Christian I had owned to being a Catholic, the one, in Pepita's opinion, implying the other, and my Protestant principles were confounded by her great black eyes which glanced at me over the edge of her fan in a way that had we been *en tête-à-tête* would either have frightened me out of the room or made me forget Araminta's treachery.

All I could do or at any rate all I did, was to protest my delight at being able to oblige her.

"And you and Don Iago will be compadres," she went on. "Which as you and he are going on a dangerous expedition will be a great advantage, especially to you."

I thought she was laughing at me.

"But how will that be an advantage—on a dangerous expedition?" I asked.

"Oh, you don't know that in South America the tie between compadres" (co-sponsors to the same infant) "is considered as close as that between brothers. You and Don Iago will be sworn friends, pledged to help each other even at the peril of your fortune and your lives."

"We take each other for better or worse, as it were? A sort of marriage?"

"Almost," returned Pepita, blushing. "It is a bond nearly as sacred as that between husband and wife."

"By the way, do you know who he is and whence he comes?"

"No, on those points he is rather mysterious. When we ask him he sometimes says from the west, sometimes from the mountains. But that is nothing, he brought good introductions and we know that Don Iago Santleo is a true man and a noble caballero."

(To be continued.)

Digitized by Google

PETTINGILL'S HUNT.

JIM PETTINGILL, who is a stout man, went home to his wife the other evening and asked her where she kept the key of his Gladstone, as he wished to pack up a few things and take the night train for Glasgow to look after some important business matters.

Mrs. Pettingill told him to go upstairs in her room and he would find the key in the pocket of her black dress, which was hanging on a nail behind the door.

Poor, foolish mortal, he did not know that it was easier for the eye of a rich man to crawl through a camel than for his miserable self to find the pocket of his wife's dress.

Blinded by his own confidence, he took the dress off the nail, and that moment his sufferings commenced. He took a short survey of the garment as he held it up in his left hand in order to locate the position of the pocket.

His eyes rested on a small opening, and he thrust his hand into it, only to find his fingers gliding through a kind of bottomless concern, and then sticking his arm into it to the hilt he observed that his hand was protruding from an aperture on the other side. This caused him to change the position of the dress, and he saw another opening, and sounded its depths, and ascertained that it was the same mysterious hole he had been in a moment before.

This slightly annoyed him, and, after throwing off his coat, he went again in search of the pocket. He saw a little slit on the right side, and a softer light came into his eyes. "This is it," he murmured, and, putting his head into the shallow flounce, commenced to grope for the key, which, however, was sleeping snugly in the pocket at least two feet away. Pettingill got angry. He determined to find the pocket or die with his face to the foe, and the next minute he commenced stabbing the dress with both hands, hitting it straight blows from the shoulder, and dancing round it, just as if he were engaged in a rough-and tumble fight.

He glanced at the clock, and saw that the train would start in forty minutes, and once more he jumped for the dress with a low yell that indicated plainly that he was angry enough to match himself against a hornet. He jammed his head into the folds of the dress, and commenced digging with both hands, and the air got full of satin bows, pieces of Watteau pleats and smothered growls.

While seated in a chair resting himself, he glared at the crumpled dress lying on the floor, and the idea occurred to him that the only way to keep the pocket from dodging him was to put the dress on. He did so, and then renewed the search, but his hand would slide into loops, furbelows, folds, flounces, and everything else except the much desired pocket.

This was more than he could stand, and he determined to take off the dress and tear it to pieces, and thus discover the dwelling-place of the pocket. He pulled the dress up over his head as if he were divesting himself of a shirt, and it got caught in his braces, and wrapped itself round his neck in a peculiar way, and he stooped forward and tugged at it with all his strength, but it would not give an inch, and appeared to tighten its grip round his head.

It was hot, and he was smothering in its folds, and, in order to release himself, he beat the air with both hands and danced up and down in one spot until the window-panes rattled.

The dress, however, knew that it was getting the best of him, and would not let him go, and then Pettingill, in his rage, made a blind dash and butted the basin and jug off the washstand and upset the rocking-chair, which prodded him severely in the ribs. The next dive he made the dressing-table suffer, and cologne bottles and powder boxes, mingling with a tin bath-tub and a bird-cage, rolled over the floor.

Mrs. Pettingill heard the crash, and hastening upstairs, discovered her husband lying on the floor on his back, with his arms and head bound up in her dress, and kicking both his legs in the air and using profanity to the tune of 140 degrees in the shade.

She pulled him out of the dress, and he sat up on the floor and gazed at her in a dazed way, and rubbed his ribs with one hand, and wiped the blood off his nose with the other.

There was a look in his eyes which told Mrs. Pettingill that it was not the time to talk to her husband, so she merely picked up the dress, and without any trouble at all stuck her hand in a certain place and took out the key, which she handed him without saying a word. It was too late to catch the train, so Pettingill quietly bathed his bruised head and then went to a locksmith's, and when he came home he brought his key with him, and it was chained to a bar of pig-iron. ROB WEEK.

Digitized by Google

SHORT STORIES ABOUT THE SEASIDE.

We devote, every week, two pages of *Short Stories* to pithy, humourous anecdotes similar to those which appear in these columns. A prize of £1 1s. will be sent to the reader who submits the best storyette this week, and a copy of "The Lost Provinces," by Louis Tracy, to each of those whose attempts are used. The anecdotes may be either original or selected; in the latter case the source *must* be stated. The prize of One Guinea offered for the best Storyette in this competition has been won this week by Mr. Robert Allan, of 14 Marylands Road, Malda Vale, W. Attempts for this week's prize must deal with Stories about POLICEMEN, and must reach the Storyette Editor, *Short Stories* Office Henrietta Street, Strand, London, W.C., by Monday, September 3rd. Post-cards only, please.

What Have They Done with It?

A LITTLE girl made a really nice remark the other day.

It appears that on a previous visit to the seaside for an hour or two, the tide was right up, and she enjoyed the sight.

On this particular day she had just arrived with an excursion, and the tide was out as far as Southend can shove it.

The wee mite stood and gazed upon the mile of mud, and then, remembering the previous amount of water, asked of her teacher:

"What have they done with it? Does it belong to the East London Waterworks?"

Bless her heart, she thought it had been cut off.

R. A.

A Bit Awkward.

WHILST spending her August holidays this year at Scarborough, a young lady made her way to the cliffs to enjoy her copy of *Short Stories*, and, on her arrival there, found a young gentleman sitting at the end of a seat reading. This being the only seat available, she was obliged to take her place with the young gentleman, but sitting at the other end.

Shortly afterwards an elderly couple came along, and, after staring at the pair, the old lady exclaimed in a very audible tone to the man who was with her:

"Dear, dear John, another tiff. What a pity young folks can't agree."

E. C.

In Bonnie Scotland.

ARRAN is crowded at present, and among those who are making themselves happy are several theatrical celebrities.

To make their friends sweltering in the cities jealous they have been sending telegrams right and left.

To one man a wire was written:

"Having devilled curry here. Come and join us."

They reckoned without the lady in the post-office, however. She declared she was not allowed to send swearing telegrams.

"Ye mauna swear in a telegram, my man," she said. "It's against a' regulations."

It took the man and his friends two hours to convince the lady that she was safe in sending the wire, and then the actors debated whether the game had been worth the candle.

J. T. M.

Maritime Etiquette.

EXCITED LADY (on the beach): "Why isn't something done for that ship in distress? Why don't some of you——"

Coastguard (hurriedly): "We are doing all we can, madam, and have sent the crew a line to come ashore."

Excited Lady (to her companion): "Good gracious, Matilda, just fancy, the silly fellows were actually waiting for a formal invitation."

F. W.

Poor Fellow!

A CELEBRATED Parisian dandy was ordered by his physicians to follow a course of sea bathing at Dieppe.

On his arrival at that delightful bathing town he ordered a machine and attendant, and went boldly into the water.

He plunged in bravely, but an instant after came up puffing and blowing.

"Francis," said he, "the sea smells detestably; it will poison me! Throw a little eau-de-Cologne into the water, or I shall be suffocated!"

J. C.

Not the Drains.

A MEDICAL friend has just returned from a visit to a growing watering place on the Welsh coast. Inspecting some lodgings in a new quarter of the town he noticed a peculiar smell, and called the landlady's attention to it.

"Something must be wrong with the drains, Mrs. Davis."

"Oh, no, sir," was the reply; "it can't be the drains. There are none!"

He took his family to the old quarter.

W. H. L.

What She Thought Of.

I WAS walking along the beach at Southsea, admiring the last of the glorious sunset, when I became aware of the presence of a pair of lovers of the Cockney type, admiring also.

"Just look at it, Liza," said he. "It makes yer feel sort of dunno how, somehow, don't it?"

"Yes, ain't it lovely!" said Liza, dreamily.

I listened eagerly. This young lady might have a poetic soul—who knew?

"Don't it make yer think of a nice slice of streaky bacon?"

I left!

A. E. A.

Digitized by Google

That Moss.

Edwin took Angelina to the seaside last month, and she prevailed upon him to spend an afternoon in fishing from a boat.

They had not been out long when she picked up a tin and removed the lid.

"What lovely moss!" she cried; then there was a shriek, the boat heeled over, and its occupants were thrown into the cruel sea.

After a desperate struggle, Edwin succeeded in rescuing his adored one from a watery grave.

For days she lay unconscious, and when at length she opened her eyes it was to find Edwin bending over her in tender solicitude.

Her face hardened, and Algernon groaned in spirit.

"Have you no word for the one who risked his life for your sake, my own?" he cried in bitter anguish.

"Begone, monster!" she replied, with an imperious wave of the hand. "Why didn't you tell me it was the worm-tin?"

W. C.

All Bets Off.

They were both enthusiastic anglers, and were staying at the seaside together.

They proposed to have a fishing match; the one who caught the most fish was to receive a sovereign.

All went well for a time, till one of them, thinking he had got a bite, leaned too far forward and fell in, and, to add to the irony of it, heard his opponent call out:

"All bets off. You're diving in after 'em!"

W. P.

Parrot Wit.

A seaside parrot show was held a short time ago, and each parrot was brought into the room in a covered cage, and a prize given for the parrot which showed the smartest wit when it was uncovered.

The owners uncovered the cages in rotation, and many were the witty remarks which were spoken by the parrots.

But the climax was reached and the spectators satisfied when one parrot hopped on its perch, and looking wisely round the room, exclaimed:

"What a beastly lot of parrots."

Needless to say it took the prize.

J. E. R.

Cowed.

Just outside Rhyl a man was driving some cows bolted from one farm to another, and one of the cows and climbed a bank.

Against this bank, and built with a sloping roof below it, is a blacksmith's shop.

At the moment that the cow got on the bank a Conservative politician was in the shop haranguing the blacksmith, a Radical, on what he was pleased to term "Radical lies and false promises."

"You returned a Radical for the county," said the Tory, "and now where's your cow and three acres? I suppose you expected them to fall through the roof!"

At that moment there was a crash, and through the roof there fell at the feet of the Tory disbeliever a real live cow. The politician gave a wild yell of terror and fled.

A. B.

A Very Good Guess.

A mother was assisting her little boy to master a geography lesson, and coming to the description of a desert she quoted a definition from the text book to the effect that it was a barren tract.

The little fellow repeated the phrase after her, but didn't seem to understand the meaning of the words. She then endeavoured to simplify the description by defining it as a "place where nothing would grow."

The boy's face brightened with the light of awakened intelligence, and the mother, proud and expectant, put the question.

"Now, Johnny, what is a desert?"

"Pa's bald head," was the prompt response.

J. W.

The Bull's Mother-in-Law.

Betty was milking the cow, and a mad bull was coming down the meadow to look for someone to assassinate. Still Betty milked on placidly.

An observer from a safe position saw, to his great astonishment, that the bull, when he got within a few yards of maid and cow, pulled up suddenly, and went off to assassinate someone else.

"Weren't you afraid?" the observer tremblingly asked Betty.

"Nae a bit," she replied, going on milking. "This cow's his mother-in-law."

A. H.

"BESIEGED WITH B.P."

A complete record of the Siege of Mafeking,

By J. EMERSON NEILLY.

War Correspondent o the "Pall Mall Gazette" in Mafeking.

Crown 8vo, Price 1s. net, post free, 1s. 3d.

C. ARTHUR PEARSON Ltd., Henrietta Street, W.C.

You Send The Photo o o o
We Do The Rest. o o o o

If you have a relative who has passed away either at home in peace or abroad in war, send his photograph—which you probably cherish—and we will enlarge it to a beautiful India ink and crayon portrait, 15in. × 12in. mounted on plate sunk mount 24in. × 19in.

Relatives of soldiers at the front may obtain one of these enlargements for 6s.

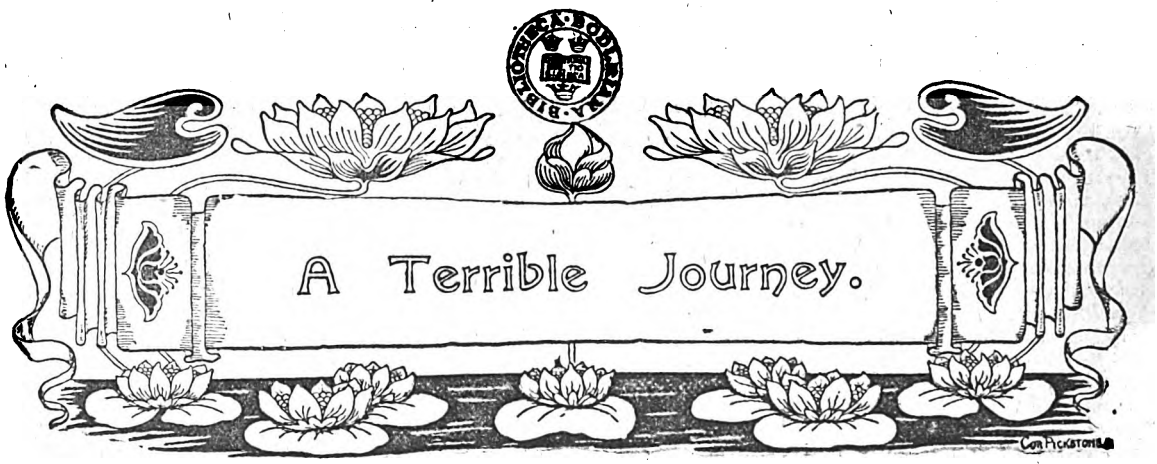
Other photographs will be enlarged for 7s.

Full particulars appeared last week, and will appear again shortly. They also appear in the current issue of the

Illustrated Weekly News,

and the coupon from that paper must accompany each order.

Digitized by Google



WE are taught that Mary Tudor—her love of pyrotechnics having been satiated with various displays at Smithfield and elsewhere—expired, assuring all and sundry that the word "Calais" would be found engraven on her soft and tender heart. Though I do not for a moment infer that an autopsy would reveal anything out of the ordinary that could by the greatest stretch of imagination appear to have anything to do with the experience I am about to relate; still that terrible experience is so indelibly impressed upon my memory that, had I had the questionable privilege of existing in the sixteenth century, I have little doubt but that I should have gone down to my grave with the firm conviction that every fact in connection therewith would have been found set forth in the convolutions of my brain.

Ten years have elapsed since that awful night; yet my memory is as clear upon every detail as though what I have to narrate had happened only yesterday. Indeed I am often incensed against myself for my unconquerable terror whenever I recall what I suffered, and even now I cannot undertake a long night journey by train without dread and apprehension.

It was a week or so before Christmas in the year—well, in the early eighties, when I, a young and struggling provincial actor, was hurrying home to London, if not exactly on the wings of love, at all events in a state of high anxiety and excitement—which indeed is hardly to be wondered at, seeing that my young wife was not only anxiously awaiting my return, but was about to celebrate the event by presenting me with a token of peace and goodwill in the shape of a little son—or daughter. I had even refused a lucrative pantomime engagement in order to be with her, a sacrifice only an actor—and as I have said a young and struggling one at that—can fully appreciate; but the advent of the first-born not being an everyday occurrence, I felt justified in the course I was taking.

In a state of pleasurable agitation, now wholly unmixed with a sort of sense of paternal importance about to be thrust on me—a feeling that only exists, I may say, before the event; for never is a man compelled to take a back seat, or to realise his own unimportance more forcibly than on these interesting occasions—I started on my journey to town.

The company to which I had been attached finished up the tour at York, where I determined to avail myself of the earliest possible train for London; this was the Scotch Express, at half-past one in the morning.

It enabled me to attend a breaking-up supper given by some half-dozen or so of us who had become on friendly terms during the time we had been thrown together; so that with many mutual good wishes and in the best of spirits we parted very shortly after one o'clock, leaving me ample time to get down to the station.

The weather was so tempestuous that I would not hear of any of "the boys" coming to see me off. The thermometer stood at many degrees below freezing-point. The wind, blowing a gale, cut like a razor; while intermittent gusts of fine, powdery snow, completely blinded me from time to time as I struggled on my way.

This fierceness of weather rather pleased me than otherwise, as, fortified by an excellent meal, with the good wishes of my comrades ringing in my ears, with my heart beating rapidly and happily with the knowledge that in a few hours I should be with my best-beloved, I hurried to the station.

Heavens! Had I but known what was in store for me, how gladly I would have turned back; but it was not to be! Ere the journey to which I had so long looked forward was ended, I was to undergo an experience the like of which I would not wish my greatest foe to suffer.

Arrived at the railway-station my first care was to find an obliging porter whom I asked to secure me a corner-seat in a smoking- carriage when the mail-train should come in. This he promised to do, if possible, though he assured me that the trains generally were very full. But he "would do his best."

In spite of the storm, within five minutes of the advertised time, the mail steamed majestically into the station; the giant engine breathing hard and snorting contempt for the elements against which it had so successfully battled. I kept a wary eye on my porter who speedily shouted to me:

"Here y'are, sir. Third Smoking. A gemman's gettin' out here."

To bundle me in, together with my wraps and bags, was but the work of a moment. With a "good-night, sir," and a "thank you, very much" at the substantial tip the fulness of my heart had accorded him, he slammed the door and left me.

In less than four hours that porter's life would not have been worth a moment's purchase, could I have laid hands upon him.

* * * * *

On taking my seat and looking round the carriage, I

Digitized by Google

observed that I should have two companions on my run up to King's Cross. One, a woman who was lying down at full length, asleep, carefully covered with voluminous rugs and wrappers; indeed I could only tell her sex by the sight of a long, golden curl which struggled out between the wraps and fell over her shoulder. The other, a man, a foreigner who was busily engaged in an animated conversation with the person who had just got out. They spoke in French and, as is usual with foreigners, in a very high tone, so that I could not help hearing scraps of their talk.

I afterwards had occasion to recall—only too vividly—every word that I heard pass between them. I remember how the light of the lamp fell upon the red-haired, pale, ferret-faced little man, leaning in at the window of the carriage, as he said (I translate as nearly as possible, for they both spoke the argot of the Quartier Latin):

"You've made a rippin' good job of it this time. It ought to be worth a pile of money to you. I only hope you won't be found out." To which the other answered:

"No fear! I'm much too fly."

"Oh, don't be too sure. Mum's the word—mind that."

"Well, you can rely on me, and she"—pointing to the recumbent form of the woman—"won't blow the gaff."

They both burst into a roar of coarse, brutal laughter, and at that moment the train started.

After carefully shutting the window, lighting my pipe and wrapping my rugs round me, I curled myself up in the corner opposite the Frenchman and tried to read. But try as I would, I could not refrain from glancing from time to time at my companion, who sat with folded arms, slowly chewing a big black cigar.

Under ordinary circumstances I am not apt to indulge in senseless antipathies; but this man aroused unconsciously within me a feeling which was a mixture of insecurity (I could hardly call it fear) and disgust. His very appearance was repellent.

Frenchmen always seem to me to be divided into two classes, the dwarfs and the giants, the *piou-piou* and the *cent gardes*. As the man we had left behind at York was a miserable specimen of humanity, so this man in front of me was a Hercules. I can see him now, his great bullet-head with its thick black hair sticking up like the bristles of a brush, his beady, shifting eyes, his cruel, thin mouth that slithered across his face, and his great bull-neck, blue with a dirty growth of beard, his shirt open at the collar and half-way down to his great, hairy chest.

I don't know why, but I remember thinking at the time that if ever he had an interview with Monsieur de Paris in the early morning, the window out of which we look into the other world, as Victor Hugo called it, would have to be enlarged for his accommodation. He wore a very tall, black, silk hat, which he never took off, and a long coat, trimmed and lined with fur, which had probably been new five-and-twenty years ago.

Yet, in spite of all this, I felt a desire to talk to him. He fascinated me in some mysterious manner, and at length I burst out with the original remark "that it was very cold." He glared at me from under his shaggy eyebrows, took the chewed black cigar from between his lips, and said slowly:

"I not speak Eenglish—mooch."

Now although I flatter myself that I can speak French fairly well, this man showed so unmistakably that he had no wish to enter into conversation that I could only gasp out a stupid "Oh!" and relapse into silence. I would not venture to tackle him in his own language.

Once more I tried to concentrate my thoughts on my books and papers, but at length had to give it up as a bad job. So I shut my eyes in an endeavour to get an hour's quiet doze before reaching Peterboro'.

However, sleep was not to be wooed. The thought of seeing Mary in a few hours, the excitement of saying good-bye to so many friends, a thousand and one waking thoughts, kept flashing through my brain, rendering the slightest approach to somnolence impossible. Most of all did I keep conjecturing who and what this strange couple could be. I wondered whether the sleeping figure was that of a woman or a girl. She looked very slight and small. Was she beautiful or the reverse? I wondered in what relationship he and she stood to one another.

As I furtively looked again at him—he was now diving into the capacious pockets of his paletot—without knowing what that relationship was, I felt a feeling of pity for her.

The man, having captured a large paper parcel as a result of the fishing expedition in his pockets, proceeded to open it. He was going to eat. He placed the paper across his knees, took a knife out of his breast-pocket and slowly opened it.

I gasped!

It was the most murderous weapon I had ever set eyes on. The blade, tapering to a fine point, was between six and seven inches long, and the handle was made of some curious green stone. As he clicked the spring, I felt an involuntary shudder run down my spine.

He ate as though he had not tasted food for days. His light refreshment consisted of half a large fowl, a long loaf, a Spanish onion, and a large piece of cheese. As I saw that deadly knife flash from one article to another, I shut my eyes and seemed to see a hideous ogre of my nursery tales feeding off little children. For a good half-hour he ravened over his food.

When he had left nothing but a few bones he wiped the knife, dried it on his coat, shut it carefully and put it in his pocket. I must own I felt relieved.

Then he fished once more, this time catching a bottle of claret, of which the cork had been previously drawn and replaced. I noticed this, as the lining of his pocket was wet. He threw back his head and let the wine gurgle down that terrible black throat till his thirst was quenched.

Then he returned the bottle to his pocket, lighted another black cigar and lay back in his corner, panting with exertion. I wondered what the poor girl was to have. Surely, his pockets could contain no more provender—and he had no other luggage.

Meanwhile I was feeling half-perished with the cold, and was thankful when we arrived at Peterboro'. Here, although we were behind time, I determined to get something to warm me or die in the attempt.

No sooner had the train come to a standstill than I made a dash for the refreshment-room, where I had just succeeded in getting down a cup of coffee strongly laced with brandy, when the stentorian "Any more for London?" was shouted out.

I had hardly time to find my compartment and clamber in when the door was shut and locked. I suddenly realized that the Frenchman was not there and I called out to a porter that someone else was coming in.

"Very sorry, sir. Can't help it. We're very late already."

Ere I could well grasp the situation we were off with a roar and a rattle, trying hard to make up for lost time.

Digitized by Google

"By Jove," I thought to myself, "here's a pretty predicament—and no mistake. Here I am alone in a carriage with a woman I have never seen and who has never seen me. Her companion has disappeared, and I shall have to explain matters. We are locked in, and the train does not stop for an hour and three-quarters, that is until we reach King's Cross. She's been asleep since half-past one and will probably wake up shortly and then—" I dreaded to think what would happen. Should I wake her at once? No, "let sleeping dogs lie" is an excellent maxim. What would she do on arrival? Perhaps the ferocious Frenchman had got into another carriage. I hoped so sincerely. What a brute he was not to give her anything to eat or drink on such a night as this!

At all events he had some feeling, for he had taken off his heavy fur-coat and thrown it over her, completely covering her head. I wondered she wasn't suffocated. Well, I would keep wide awake, anyhow.

Curiously enough, as I had not been able to woo sleep hitherto, I now felt unaccountably drowsy. Perhaps it was the brandy. At any rate I soon fell into a deep but terribly troubled slumber. I had the most frightful dreams, blood-curdling and horrible, yet nothing like so horrible as the reality which was in store for me.

I awoke with a sudden start and, dazed for the moment, hardly knew where I was. Ah, yes, of course. I recollected. There was the mysterious woman still asleep.

I shivered with the cold. I took a little nip from my flask and looked at my watch. A quarter past five. I had slept for an hour. Thirty minutes more and we should be in London. In an hour I should be home. Home with Mary. Hurry on train; hurry on minutes she will be waiting for me.

It was still snowing fast and the wind shrieked at the windows as we rattled along. Whirr—whirr—whirr—bump—bumpety—bump. We were making up for lost time with a vengeance.

Heavens how that woman slept! She would hardly be able to move for cold and cramp on awaking. And how still she was! She had not altered her position for hours past!

I sat and watched her; and as I did so, my eyes became riveted on a dark spot on the floor about as large as a cheese-plate. It glistened from time to time in the fitful light of the lamp. Watching it intently, I saw that it was wet.

I went nearer, impelled by some unknown power. I saw it was growing bigger, as it was added to by drop after drop that fell and trickled and splashed from the seat on which she lay.

Was I dreaming? No. Like a flash of lightning the whole horror of my awful situation seized upon me. My body stiffened with fear, and I gave one inarticulate, impotent yell of agony. The woman was not sleeping—she was dead! Dead—murdered by the ruffian who, in escaping, had left me to face the hideous and inevitable discovery!

Now I understood the two men's horrible conversation. Merciful Heavens—they had laughed—"she could not blow the gaff." No, poor soul, poor soul, she was silent for ever! But, stay, perhaps after all she is not dead, but only wounded. I must see.

I pulled away the heavy coat that covered her. As I did so, one of the collar-hooks must have become entangled in her beautiful hair; for, ere I knew what had happened, the head had fallen with a dull thud on to the floor of the carriage, face downwards, the long golden curls all dabbled in that horrible pool of blood.

Then a frenzy of agonised despair fell upon me. I beat at the walls of the compartment. I shrieked. I tore open the window and seized the connecting-cord to stop the train. It was frozen as hard as a bar of steel. In vain I pulled at it; and when I desisted at last I wildly beat my hands upon my forehead. I found myself covered with blood from great gashes the icy cord had cut into my palms.

Think, if you can, of the agony of those minutes that never seemed to pass! What would happen to my poor wife? It would kill her. I recalled Lefroy and Muller and their awful ends. I wept—I prayed—I cursed—and then, I think, I must have lost consciousness.

When I recovered we were nearing London. Long before the train had come to a standstill at the ticket platform I had a dozen porters running after the carriage, attracted by my piteous shrieks and cries of despair.

As I struggled to alight, bleeding and haggard, I was seized by a couple of officials who demanded an explanation. I could only point to the carriage and mumble:

"Murder—there—murder."

The police were hurriedly called; but, before they could arrive, who should come tearing along the platform but the Frenchman himself.

"Seize him," I cried, "he's the man, he's the murderer."

He dashed at the carriage like an infuriated madman and came out, bearing under one arm the body of his victim, and in his hand—oh, to think of it!—the poor creature's head. A yell of execration burst from every one; but at that moment the guard of the train came up.

"Here, what's the row?" he said.

"Murder!" shouted a dozen voices.

"Murder be blowed. Why, this 'ere cove got in at Glasgow, and mighty partickler he was about his hautomaton as he called her; would 'ave a compartment to hisself. He's a French cove from the music 'alls."

The Frenchman bowed to me and said:

"Monsieur, I am truly sorry. This is my new invention—*L'Arcana Mysterieux*. The lady walks and talks, and then I cut off her head, and—always like a woman—she still converses. It is a novelty. I shall make my fortune. Alas! that the claret has fallen on her beautiful hair. But no matter, it will wash off. Monsieur, adieu."

And he got into a cab.

I fainted.

F. HAMILTON KNIGHT.

YOU LIKE . . . . . .

"PEARSON'S WEEKLY"

OR YOU WOULD NOT BUY IT.

YOU WILL LIKE

PEARSON'S DAILY

JUST AS MUCH. IT IS

The Express.

A HA'PENNY EVERY MORNING.

NEW NEWS. TRUE NEWS. ALL THE NEWS.

Digitized by Google

THE TOWER CLOCK OF ROZSNO.

THE following incidents are set forth in an old chronicle of "Village Life in Hungary":

It is related how one day the beautiful Elizabeth Grünblatt returned, without warning, to Janos Gothard, her betrothed, his ring. Now it can readily be imagined how like lightning the news of this event spread around the town of Rozsno, and what a dust it raised.

And why not? Was not Janos Gothard son of May or Gothard, whose bears and forbears had always formed a powerful dynasty in their native village? Nor was a girl like Elizabeth Grünblatt to be picked up on every rubbish heap. She, too, came of a fine old stock, whose offshoots had frequently graced the judicial bench; nay, were old Joseph Grünblatt still alive—but that was neither here nor there. Even if young Janos Gothard were a personage with whom it was best to take liberties, surely a betrothal ring is not a fit object for such a pastime.

Hence great was the excitement. The people assembled in eager groups in the squares and streets, and discussed the probable outcome of the affair; general opinion leaning to the belief that the Gothard family would not accept the rebuff in silence.

Then broke in upon their disturbed minds this second wonderful event, which also spread like wildfire; the tower clock had stopped that morning at precisely the hour and the minute at which Elizabeth Grünblatt had drawn the ring from her finger!

It was exactly as though Providence had directly interposed to arrest the hands, and intended to hold them captive until the full truth of the matter should come out.

Now this tower clock had always been as great a source of pride to the Rozsnoites as the fair fame of their women, and here, at one blow of fate, was all over with both!

They had good reason, too, for their pride, particularly in the clock, for it was truly a marvel of its kind, so much so that the famous Albertus Turibius had journeyed away from Switzerland, the preceding year, expressly to study its mechanism.

The wardens had not been at all inclined to permit this profanation, but old Senator Komives gave utterance to this remark:

"Let us not close our ears to the man's request, since we can be perfectly assured that the wonders of our clock will find no room in his head!"

And such was really the case.

A whole week long he rummaged and poked and pounded about among its mighty wheels and hammers, its innumerable little rods and triggers, with the result that Saturday evening, when he had done, he knew precisely as much as he did Monday morning when he began.

There was but one man alive who understood the mechanism of the Kozsno clock, and that was Martin Szontágh, its maker, and he was dumb. But he could never, in any case, have been induced to reveal its secrets, since it was positively the only one of its kind in existence.

In the records of that day it is repeatedly set forth that, in all cases of dispute, where the knowledge of time was a necessity, the law decreed that that of the Rozsno clock should be accepted as the standard.

The remarkable feature of this clock was the separating, at noon and at midnight, of its face into two parts, allowing a cock to come forth, amid an insane din of hammers, wheels and springs, simulating the while a cry, like the crowing of a cock, which rang out over the silent roofs and into the busy movement of the streets this warning:

"Lutherans, look to yourselves!"

Now, all at once, the mighty thing was stilled. It was exactly as though it were making the mute declaration:

"I move not again by the breadth of a hair. Mornings can dawn and evenings fall for all me; I remain as I am so sure as God sees me. I have also shut the cock up away from you for evermore!"

Now is it really worth while, I ask you, to endure all this on account of a woman? To the Rozsnoites it was an indubitable fact that the stopping of the clock had directly to do with the whims of a capricious girl, else why could it not have stopped yesterday, or Elizabeth sent back the ring to-morrow?

Digitized by Google

To all overtures looking toward a reconciliation the obst nate girl's only reply was:

"I would rather marry the devil than Janos Gothard!"

"Very well," flared up the affronted one, "I can't hand you over to the devil, but I'll do worse!" and he carried the matter into court.

The learned Paul Szakmáry was chosen as Gothard's counsel, Stephen Miskalczi that of Elizabeth. From now on these two honourable gentlemen shunted all the opprobrium of the affair off on to their own shoulders.

For three full weeks they hurled every possible epithet at each other through the medium of their clerks (that being the first stage of the suit); then, when their mutual wrath had reached the required p tch, they opened out upon each other with the usual charges and counter-charges.

Seven ecclesiastical gentlemen of the vicinity were selected as jury. They presented exactly the appearance, in their black robes, with the long white bands hanging down from around their necks, of seven bottles of medicine.

Pale and agitated appeared the ex-*fiancé* before the august body; proud and defiant Elizabeth Grünblatt. Heavens, how beautiful she was! Her snow-white gown clung tightly to her perfect form—it had been destined to be her bridal-gown, perhaps—and three roses glowed in her chestnut hair, all three blood-red, the colour of love and inextinguishable hate! And what the roses failed to express was given utterance to by those two stars, her eyes:

"No, I will never relent—never, never!"

In vain plaintiff and defendant were made to confront each other. The representatives of justice even took Elizabeth to one side and personally remonstrated with her; but to all she only shook her lovely head, "No!"

"Damnation will o'ertake thee, girl!" warned the foreman, George Fabriczy.

"Thou wilt be boiled in a kettle in the next world!" threatened Paul Szontágh, the scribe, who, in his mind's eye, could already see the seething cauldron into which the radiant young woman was to be plunged.

Verily, the Church deputes overfascinating tasks to her servant, the devil!

But through all the maiden remained steadfast, giving the honourable counsel thereby opportunity for much vigorous debate. At last the parties to the suit were conducted from the room and the jury left to its deliberations.

"I propose to the reverend body," opened the foreman, George Fabriczy, "that we declare the maiden guilty and sentence her as follows: For the period of seven years she shall not marry, neither shall she during that time indulge in any form of worldly diversion whatever."

"Let us put it to the the vote," said another. "'Yea' and 'nay'; 'nay' signifies acquittal."

Paul Szontágh called off the names, and inscribed after each the response.

"Peter Salitius?"

"Yea."

"Samuel Urszinyi?"

"Nay."

"Charles Vitoris?"

"Nay."

At this point Miskolczi hurriedly scribbled a few words on a scrap of paper which he passed over to Paul Szontágh.

The scribe, however, took no notice, but went on uninterruptedly down the list:

"Paul Bistriczky?"

"Yea."

"Constantin Revencsan?"

"Nay."

So far two "yeas" and three "nays." There were now only lacking the voices of Szontágh and the foreman. Paul Miskolczi strove, by every means in his power, to get Szontágh to read the writing on the bit of paper which he was now crumpling carelessly in his hand; but, all unheeding, he uttered, like the foreman, a "yea" in his turn. Thus was pronounced that hard decree which has been brought down by chroniclers to this very day.

Now, at last, Paul Szontágh opened the paper and read what was written upon it; word for word it ran thus:

"Elizabeth Grünblatt sent Janos Gothard back his ring because it is your reverence she loves!"

The world seemed to whirl in a circle round Paul, his blood surged and his eyes danced. The most beautiful and best-born girl in upper Hungary in love with him! How different her conduct appeared to him now! How had he ever brought himself to utter that "yea"?

"And now, Brother Szontágh, be pleased to take down the verdict."

The scribe seized the pen with a hand that trembled, and it was only by the strongest effort of will that he was enabled to write at the foreman's dictation.

"The parties may re-enter!" announced George Fabriczy.

When in the room Elizabeth and Janos remained standing by the door with averted faces. In a choking voice the young clergyman read to them the decree which ran as follows:

"That the sacredness of the holy institution of matrimony be preserved, and to ward from us the wrath to come, we do hereby ordain that the girl, who has held these both in so light case, shall, for the period of seven years, remain unmarried; she shall also, in that time, strictly abjure each and every form of worldly amusement."

Most cruelly was this conceived. Elizabeth was just three-and-twenty, add to that seven years during which she was not to lay the virgin's wreath from her beautiful dark head, and we obtain as a result, thirty, and—a full-fledged old maid! The reverend gentleman had reckoned out with extreme nicety the exact way to make of the radiant blossom a sapless stalk.

Janos Gothard announced himself as satisfied, and Elizabeth left the room, with downcast eyes, without a word.

The very next day Paul Szontágh and Miskolczi began to set on foot the most earnest measures to obtain a reversal of the ecclesiastical decision. They even finally reached with their petition, the very steps of the throne itself, but all in vain. The affair remained precisely where it was.

They had at last relinquished all hope when one day it came to pass that, on meeting old Martin Szontágh in the street, Janos Gothard, Sr., not only did not return his greeting, but pointedly turned away his head.

Now old Szontágh had the reputation of being a man who held himself in very high esteem. He was the maker of the famous clock, had been decorated by royal hands for the same, and this averting of a Gothard head he took extremely ill. Upon arriving home he wrote upon his tablets and handed them to his son:

"Have you any quarrel with the Gothards?"

Digitized by Google

The young man then related to him the whole story. How beautiful Elizabeth Grünblatt had been tried and condemned, and how he, himself, was now consumed with love for her.

"Why haven't you said a word to me about this?" wrote back the father.

His son smiled sadly. What can a dumb man accomplish where agile tongues have failed? But the old man only shook his grey head again and again, and began hammering and snipping away angrily with his tools, for he had recently set to work with great zeal at repairing the disturbed mechanism of the tower clock.

Easter Sunday was drawing near, and on that glorious morning he had promised the clock should resume its wonderful career. It would be superb, would it not, on the day of our Lord's resurrection, to see the cock appear again between his open doors and hearering out, as loud and shrill as ever, his admonishing cry?

The old man spent the last days before Easter shut up in the tower itself. Finally all was in readiness. Exactly at noon on Easter Sunday, in the midst of the hurrahs of a multitude gathered from miles around, the works of the far-famed Rozsno clock were set in motion.

The jubilation was great, but alas, of short duration. The clock went, but at what a consternating rate of speed! The hour hand galloped round the face twelve hours in one, the minute hand flew from figure to figure in the dizziest leaps and springs, while, instead of appearing once every half-day, as had been his custom, the cock struck open his doors every sixty minutes and trumpeted forth in a more terrific voice than ever:

"Lutherans, look to yourselves!"

"Woe, woe is upon us!" cried the people, beside themselves with fear. The three oldest senators betook themselves, panting, to Martin Szontágh.

"Disaster, master, disaster!" they cried. "Our clock is mad!"

A cunning smile played over Martin's grey, old face. He sized his tablets.

"The clock is but doing its duty, gentlemen. You all admit that the time it sets must, in every case, be accepted by Rozsnoites as the standard?"

"Yes, yes; that is true," affirmed the senators.

The old man pursued:

"You have condemned the girl my son would take to wife to a seven years' penance——"

"H-m-m!" growled Emerick Komives, a light breaking in upon him.

"I have, therefore, so adjusted the clock that it shall tell off those seven years in seven months!"

"But—but you will set it right?"

"When my purpose is achieved."

The deputation strolled, crestfallen home.

In an hour, I should say twelve, the reason for the clock's unaccountable performance had spread throughout the town.

The chief magistrate took counsel with his aids.

"The clock will bring disgrace upon us!"

"In just so much as it was formally our pride, will it now work our confusion!"

"Let us give in!"

Again the senators betook themselves to Martin.

"Elizabeth Grünblatt's time of penance shall be measured according to the clock's present rate of speed; but, in Heaven's name, let it, in future, run as be eems it and us!"

Thus it was that, at the very next grape-pressing, Elizabeth Grünblatt became Mrs. Paul Szontágh.

KOLOMAN MIKSZATH.

20 £10 NOTES GOING BEGGING.

YOU CAN HAVE ONE FOR ASKING!

THE MOST ASTOUNDING SCHEME EVER DEVISED BY ANY PAPER.

THE latest scheme of *PEARSON'S WEEKLY* is unquestionably one of the most astounding that has yet been placed before the readers of any paper. Briefly speaking, the Editor places you in the position of getting ten pounds by simply asking for it.

At six o'clock on Thursday evening, August 23rd, twenty men left Pearson's Buildings, each with a sealed envelope in his pocket. Each envelope is of linen, tough and unbreakable. No one but the Editor knows *exactly* what is in those envelopes, so the contents cannot be forged. Each contains, as a matter of fact, a letter signed by the Editor authorising the first person who asks for it to the sum of £10.

NOW YOU SEE HOW YOU CAN GET £10 FOR ASKING.

We don't expect you to rush out at once and ask every man you meet if he has the envelope. That would be foolish—a mere waste of time. Moreover, you would probably get a rebuff.

What you should do is to quietly watch everyone you come in contact with. If you think the man you see is likely to be one of these men, you can, in an inoffensive and quiet manner, simply say: "By-the-way, have you seen this scheme?" and show him this page. If he is *not* one of the £10 gentlemen he will say he hasn't seen the scheme, and will be interested, and thank you for putting the chance of making £10 in his way. If he is one of the Ten Pounders he will quietly and unostentatiously take out his pocket-book and hand you the sealed letter.

This you will at once post to us in a registered envelope, and WE WILL SEND YOU A CHEQUE FOR £10.

THE TWENTY TEN-POUNDERS

Will travel by the train. Will wear ordinary clothes. Will stop at all sorts of hotels. Will smoke and drink. Will attend places of entertainment. Will look in shop windows. Will loaf about the beach or parks.

In fact, will behave just like ordinary mortals.

They will wander about our big cities, they will alight from trains at wayside stations, and walk about villages and small towns, and they will altogether give every opportunity to people to get those £10 notes.

If you are at this moment in the train one of these men ***may be opposite you, or sitting next to you!*** Just casually show him this page. If he's one of them you'll get £10.

You will at once say: "Oh, yes, but I might ask a thousand people, and yet not get the right one."

Of course you might; but then, you might ask three, and the third might be the right one. Don't think because you simply move in a limited circle during your day's work that you're not likely to see the right man. All these men will intrude themselves unostentatiously into people's daily lives. They may converse with you on any subjects but those which will give you a hint regarding the ten pounds, unless you broach such subject yourself.

Don't think that you have to ask everyone you meet. Just show the page to a fellow passenger by boat or train, to a chance acquaintance on the beach or on the parade. No harm is done if he's not the right chap. You can both just laugh over it.

ONE THING IS CERTAIN.

The Two Hundred Pounds is wandering about the United Kingdom at this moment. Someone has got to get it. Why not you?

As each £10 has been asked for advertisements will be inserted in the newspapers published in the locality in which the claim has been made.

Every day the Ten Pounders will write to the Editor and tell their experiences—where they had breakfast, where they lunched, whom they sat next to, what those people were like, what they were talking about, and what they ate—in fact, will say just exactly what they have been doing every day. Some of this information will be published in the ***Daily Express*** every day and in ***Pearson's Weekly*** every week, so you will know just how things are going along.

Digitized by Google

The Ruse that Failed.

"Now, Arthur," said Mrs. Barrington as her husband put three handbags on the seat beside her in the train and handed over her ticket, "I want you to be sure and write to me every day, and tell me everything you think, how much you miss me, and all about the way the servants get along—don't omit any of the details, thinking that I shall not be interested, for every word that you write, dear will be precious to me. Put plenty of local colour in your letters."

"Oh, I'll keep you posted," he replied. "You have a good time, and don't worry about me. I'll get along somehow. Of course, it'll be lonely and all that, but I'll manage to pass the time. It'll be rather dismal for me to sit in the garden alone when it begins to get dark, thinking of you in the gay crowd having a good time, and never giving a thought to——"

"Arthur," his pretty wife interrupted, "if you continue to talk that way I just shan't go. You know I shall think of you every minute I'm away, and if the doctor hadn't said the sea air would be good for me I wouldn't have thought of accepting Aunt Laura's invitation. Please don't fret me, love, will you? Remember that, wherever I may be, and no matter how gay my surroundings, I shall be thinking of you."

They threw kisses at each other as the train moved away. Then Barrington went to his office and began writing letters. They were to his wife. He wrote fourteen of them—enough to last for two weeks.

In general outline the letters w re about the same. He started each by filling a sheet with endearing words and declarations that he was very lonely without his darling. Then followed the local colour she wanted, in the form of comments on occurrences of the day in and about their home.

The letters were not dated, but he sealed and addressed them, and arranged them in a pile so that his lady clerk could take off the top one day after day and drop it into the letter box.

He had been gone nearly a week when there came a telegram for him.

Of course, telegrams had to be opened, and when Miss Wildreth, the lady clerk, read the message she turned pale.

"Why don't you answer my questions about the housemaid's ankle and your liver? Am awfully worried."

That was what Elizabeth Barrington had telegraphed.

After studying the matter for a while Miss Wildreth decided that it was necessary for her to act. She was clever enough to hold a position that not more than one man out of fifty could have filled, and she had the habit of keeping her eyes and ears open. Still, she said to herself:

"The housemaid's ankle? I can see how he might know something about his own liver, but—and why should his wife, of all people, want him to see about it? Well, if I ever get married——"

But instead of finishing what she had started to say, she wrote the following dispatch:

"Leg and liver O.K. Don't worry."

It was about ten o'clock the next day when another telegram for Arthur Barrington was received. It read: "Yesterday's letter contradicts telegram. Why are you deceiving me? Are you better to-day? Shall I come home?"

The lady clerk's reply was as follows:

"Am true as steel. Don't think of coming home."

Miss Wildreth had just begun to feel that she had succeeded in settling the disagreeable business when a messenger boy arrived with another telegram, in which her employer's wife said:

"Don't understand. What do you mean by being true as steel? Something tells me you are worse. Wire immediately."

The lady clerk replied:

"Never mind reference to steel. Am all right."

Mrs. Barrington watched eagerly for the postman on the following day, and when he handed her Arthur's letter she opened it with trembling fingers. Eagerly she scanned the first page and was about half through the local colour when she jumped up and ran to her aunt, crying:

"Merciful goodness, what can this mean? Three days ago Arthur wrote that the housemaid was 'still laid up with her lame ankle,' which I have tried in vain to get him to tell me about, and that he was not feeling well, and the doctor had told him his liver was out of order. Yet here in to-day's letter he tells me that the housemaid has just fallen downstairs spraining her ankle, and that he made himself a Welsh rarebit the night before last, and ate so much of it his liver is all upset. Why on earth did the housemaid fall downstairs when she had a sprained ankle, and what ever possessed Arthur to eat a Welsh rarebit when the doctor had just warned him about his liver?"

Her aunt was trying to work it out when Elizabeth Barrington happened to think of the telegram she had received the day before.

"This letter must have been written about the time they were sent," she said. "I'm going home. Something's wrong. Arthur's liver trouble has gone to his head. My poor darling has lost his reason. He writes a thing and then denies it by telegraph. By starting to-night I can be with him to-morrow morning. Oh, how shall I pass the weary hours?"

* * * * *

Miss Wildreth broke down and made a full confession when Mrs. Barrington rushed, wild-eyed and pale, into her husband's office. Then the two young women sat together in the private room and wept.

"If I hadn't accidentally knocked over the pile of letters he left to be posted," the lady clerk sobbed, "they would not have been mixed up; there would have been no reference to the spraining of the housemaid's ankle before it happened, and his liver would not have troubled him until after he ate the rarebit. How shall I ever be able to explain it to him?"

"You needn't try," Mrs. Barrington answered; "I'll explain to him when he comes home. Dear old fellow! I'm so glad he doesn't know anything about this. He mightn't be having a good time at all if he did."

F. P. James.

Digitized by Google

CHIVERS'

DELICIOUS! WHOLESOME! REFRESHING!

FLAVOURED WITH RIPE FRUIT JUICES.

THE LANCET: "An excellent Jelly, possessing a flavour of quite a natural character."
SISTER EVA, Authoress of "Scenes in the Life of a Nurse": "Your Jellies are quite the nicest I have tasted. They deserve to be more widely used in the sick-room."
PROF. GOODFELLOW, F.R.M.S.: "Perfectly pure, and of the highest excellence."

FREE SAMPLE on receipt of post-card. S. CHIVERS and SONS, Histon Cambridge.

JELLIES.

WHY BE FAT?

When a lady, who has discovered a simple means of Self-Cure will be happy to send particulars of same to any sufferer from this distressing complaint. Free on receipt of stamped addressed envelope. ADDRESS:

Mrs. TREVOR WELLS,

63 *HIGH HOLBORN, LONDON, W.C.*

DRUNKENNESS

CURED. This can be done with or without patient's knowledge. Send me a stamp and I will tell you how. (Send no money.) Address, in confidence, Mrs. C. H. (Room 8), 195 Oxford Street London, W.

NOSE

MACHINES. LEES RAY S. S. Dept., South Castle St Liverpool, is a specialist on Ugly and Red Noses. Send stamp for particulars of his patent scientific Nose Improvers. Red Nose Cure, medically approved, 3/9. Outstanding Ear Machines 11/6.

SEND FOR

DR. EVANS'S (U.S.A.)

Pamphlet on Nervous Diseases of All Kinds. THIS PAMPHLET describes all the symptoms which arise from Diseases of the NERVOUS SYSTEM. It is up-to-date, having been compiled after years of labour and experience in the Treatment of these Maladies. It is complete, practical, and can be readily understood and acted upon. It gives pure and simple advice to Sufferers. Send stamped addressed envelope to GEORGE WRIGHT, Esq., Colne House, REMBRANDT ROAD, LEE, LONDON, S.E. (*Name this Paper.*)

Neuralgia Positively Cured!

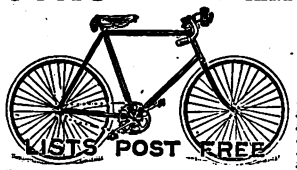
Free Test Offered.

The annexed cut presents in the prominent white lines the nerves most liable to attacks of Neuralgia. Sufferers will know only too well the pain tracks, and will be glad to know of a Simple and Sure Remedy. The proprietors will send Free two sample Zox Powders to any reader of *Short Stories* sending stamped envelope to ZOX CO., 11 HATTON GARDEN, LONDON E.C.

HAIR DESTROYED.

Send me an envelope (stamped and addressed) and I will tell you how to remove all superfluous hair free of charge. (Send no money.) Address, in confidence, Miss E. V. (Room 3), 195 Oxford Street, London, W.

JUNO CYCLES FOR LADIES AND GENTS. FREE OR FIXED WHEELS.



THE VERY BEST. Carriage Paid. Discount for Cash.

	Monthly
£8 10s.	... 14/2
£10 10s.	... 17/6
£12 ..	.. 20/-
£12 12s.	... 21/-
£14 14s.	.. 24/6
£15 15s.	... 26/3

Road Racer ... £10 0s. 16s. 8d. Monthly. Write for New Light Roadster, £10 10s. 17s. 6d. Monthly. Season's List of JUNO Cycles and Accessories, over 100 pages, sent post free. Scorcher Brake, 1/; Standard Cyclometer, 10,000 miles, 1 10
METROPOLITAN MACHINISTS CO. Ltd.
Juno Cycle School & Works, 75, 76, Bishopsgate Street, Without, E.C., and Piccadilly Circus, London, W.

KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR

KAPUTINE

SAFE REMEDY CURES

HEADACHE and NEURALGIA

IMMEDIATELY,

And is sold by all leading Chemists in Packets of 18 Doses, 1s.

To ANYONE HAVING THE LEAST DIFFICULTY, it will be sent post free for 12 Stamps by "KAPUTINE Ltd.," Huddersfield; or, on receipt of a stamped addressed envelope, A. M. Kaputine, Huddersfield, you will receive a free sample.

The fact that "KAPUTINE" is recommended by many leading Medical Men, and is used in National Hospitals and Infirmaries proves that it is THE, THE recognised SAFE REMEDY FOR HEADACHES.

Refuse Substitutes and demand "KAPUTINE," the Safe Remedy. There is no substitute "LIKE IT"; nothing "AS GOOD"; nothing "SIMILAR."

KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR

Digitized by Google

The Brain Gymnasium

IN these competitions a prize of £2 will be awarded each week to the competitor whose attempt we receive giving the correct solutions of all the puzzles. If more than one is absolutely correct the prize of £2 will be given to the first correct attempt dealt with.

If no lists of absolutely correct solutions are sent in the first prize will be awarded to the competitor whose attempt is first dealt with showing the fewest mistakes.

Each week we shall award in addition to the above, either ten of our silver plated pencil-cases or ten popular six shilling novels, to be distributed amongst the competitors whose attempts are absolutely correct and have failed to win the first prize, or, if no complete lists of correct solutions are received, to those whose attempts show the fewest mistakes.

Write all your solutions on one sheet of paper, putting the number against each. Post the batch in an envelope marked "Brain Gymnasium," to reach the Editor, SHORT STORIES, 18 Henrietta Street, Covent Garden, W.C., by first post on Monday, September 10th, 1900.

Readers are invited to submit puzzles, acrostics, conundrums, word-squares, etc., for publication on this page. A gold-plated pencil-case will be given to each reader whose attempts are used. All attempts must be vouched for as original, and, of course, it is distinctly understood that the sender of a puzzle must neither compete in the competition nor divulge to anyone the solution. Any reader found infringing this rule will be severely dealt with.

No. 205.

WHAT three figures, multiplied by five, will give six?

No. 206.

EQUIVALENTS of the following represent three well-known places: A vessel, weight. To hurry, a fish. Wine, a man's name.

No. 207.

RE-ARRANGE the following letters so as to form a double word-square, the connecting word being an Irish town:

AAA BBB D EEEEEEE NNNNNN OOOOO T V WWWW.

No. 208.

I AM a fish; change my head and I am an article of food; take away one letter, and I am to fill. Change my head, I am a measure; behead me, I am an animal.

No. 209.

MY FIRST reversed is to my FIRST
A source of deadly rancour,
And yet without my FIRST reversed,
My FIRST will not weigh anchor.

My FIRST and LAST are both the same;
This fact no doubt will please you;
And yet this hardly can be so,
Because it means to tease you.

For WHOLE, just join my FIRST and LAST,
And you at once will get it;
And yet the moment it is caught
You will no doubt regret it.

No. 210.

MY whole is a Shakesperian quotation.
My 6, 17, 22, 18, 24, 19, is timid.
My 1, 10, 18, 7, 3, is portion.
My 20, 4, 22, 24, 5, 26, is truth.
My 25, 16, 8, is part of the body.

SOLUTIONS TO PUZZLES.

Nos. 187 to 192.

No. 187. "Time and tide wait for no man."

No. 188.
CIDER
INANE
DAGON
ENODE
RENEW

No. 189. Pheasant.

No. 190. BRIGHTON. TeRcel, BrOchure. Grip, HaNdy.

No. 191.
S yria A
H ero N
Y ach T
L ent O
SHYLOCK O nio N ANTONIO.
C ad I
K iot O

No. 192. Oil-lamp.

RESULT OF THE TRACING FACES COMPETITION.

THE prize of £2 has been awarded to Mr. A. Grant, of Lowfields, Bracebridge, Lincoln, whose solution was the neatest.

A copy of "The Member's Wife," by Hon. Mrs. Henry Chetwynd, has been sent to each of the following:

Miss M. Cawood, 45 Newington Road, Edinburgh.
T. E. Bridge, 35 Loudoun Square, Cardiff.
M. Mackenzie, 42 Garfield Street, Bootle, Liverpool.
Mrs. Watts, "Kildare," Lower Edmonton.
Joshua Watts, "Kildare," Lower Edmonton.
S. Watts, "Kildare," Lower Edmonton.
W. Allan, 81 Vincent Street, Glasgow.
Miss Dexter, Millfield House, Upper Edmonton.
James Braidwood, 7 Sciennes, Edinburgh.
A. S. Hossell, Derby Haven, Castletown, Isle of Man.
George Scattergood, 209 Darlaston Road, Pleck, Walsall.

Owing to an error, the result of Puzzles 181 to 186 appeared under this heading last week.

SHORT STORIES ADVERTISEMENT RATES.

Single column, per inch, per insertion	£0 10 0
Double " " "	1 0 0
Full page inside, facing page of matter, either white paper or 2nd or 3rd page of cover, or back page, per insertion	10 0 0
Half-page " " "	5 0 0
Quarter-page " "	2 10 0
Eighth-page " "	1 5 0
Front page, whole " "	12 10 0
" half	6 5 0

All spaces above one-eighth of a page are charged at per page rate. Series discount: 5 per cent. for 13, 10 per cent. for 26, 15 per cent. for 52 insertions.

Black blocks are charged 25 per cent. extra. All advertisements are subject to approval. All copy must be sent in by Noon on Tuesday, Sept. 4th, if intended for the issue on sale Sept. 18th, and dated September 22nd. The Proprietors reserve the right to hold over or suspend the insertion of any advertisement without prejudice to other insertions on order. All communications should be addressed to the Advertisement Manager, "Pearson's Weekly" Offices, Henrietta Street, London, W.C.

Printed and Published by C. ARTHUR PEARSON LTD., at Pearson's Weekly Buildings, Henrietta Street, London, W.C.

Digitized by Google

£3,350 IN CASH PRIZES

FINAL CLOSING OF ALL COMPETITIONS.

No further advertisements of any will appear again. If you do not compete now you may lose £100 Cash. The offer will never be repeated.

In the first place make up the best sentence you can out of five words, each word commencing with a letter of **"CHINA."** Thus, for example: **"C**hinese **H**onour **I**s **N**ow **A**bhorrent." You can cut out and use the following form if you like.

Be sure and mark envelope, left-hand top corner, "Short Stories," and forward to A.B. Cycle Co. Limited, 59, 60, 67, 68 & 69 Chancery Lane, Holborn.

I*_____ of†_____

hereby declare that the sentence below is the only one I have sent in for this competition.

C	**H**	**I**
N	**A**	Date of Posting.

* State whether Mr., Mrs., or Miss. † Full address to ensure result reaching you.

Don't forget to enclose Two Penny Stamps.

Competition closes on Saturday, September 15th, 1900.

We will give you full details of the above cash prizes, in which there is nothing to pay for any prize, and where every competitor is a Cash Prize-Winner, when we send you the results of this Competition, in which for the best solution we offer:

A £23 A.B. CYCLE FREE,

AND FURTHER PRIZES OF

2nd Class Prizes ...	**£23 Cycle for £9**	**5th Class Prizes** ...	**£23 Cycle for £12**
3rd Class Prizes ...	**£23 Cycle for £10**	**6th Class Prizes** ...	**£23 Cycle for £13**
4th Class Prizes ...	**£23 Cycle for £11**	**Consolation Prizes** ...	**£23 Cycle for £14**

56 Cycles have been won Free of Cost.

FULL NAMES AND ADDRESSES CAN BE HAD ON APPLICATION.

TAKE PARTICULAR NOTICE.—Competition is NOW OPEN, and CLOSES on Saturday, September 15th, 1900.

Enclose two penny stamps for postage of Result of Competition. As so few are able to call and inspect the machines, **we guarantee to refund the full amount paid for any prize if the owner is not perfectly satisfied** with it on arrival. Results will be declared as soon as possible. Prizes unclaimed in a week or ten days are passed on to the next winner in rotation.

£100 **If you can purchase our cheapest machine, brand new, from us, or an agent, dealer, shipper, or factor can buy one for less than FIFTEEN SOVEREIGNS, we will promptly hand you a £100 BANK OF ENGLAND NOTE.**

Send your reply to the Managing Director, marking your envelope ***Short Stories,***

A.B. CYCLE CO. LTD., 59, 60, 67, 68 & 69 CHANCERY LANE, HOLBORN, W.C.

Digitized by Google

You can discover it for yourselves.
Don't wait for your friends to remark on your yellow and sallow complexion.
Seek relief in time with a BOX-*ER* two of

BEECHAM'S PILLS.

BEECHAM'S PILLS are composed entirely of medicinal herbs, and are warranted free from mercury or other poisonous substance. They can harm no one, and may be given to children or to the aged and infirm with perfect safety. They cleanse the stomach and bowels, and purify the blood, invigorate the whole nervous system, and give tone and energy to the muscles. In the preparation of BEECHAM'S PILLS the most scrupulous care is taken, and the ingredients form the most successful combination that has ever been discovered.

Advertisements should be sent to "Short Stories" Advertisement Department, Henrietta Street, London, W.C.

Digitized by Google

HAVE YOU GOT THAT TEN POUND NOTE?
See this week's "Pearson's Weekly."

SHORT STORIES

A WEEKLY MAGAZINE FOR HOME AND TRAIN

No. 610. FOR WEEK ENDING SEPTEMBER 8TH, 1900. [ONE PENNY.

A Real Tonic—
Not a Stimulant.

When prostrate and worn-out at the end of an exhausting day's work, do not be persuaded that alcoholic drinks are required. The brief span of vigour and exhilaration produced by stimulants is but short-lived. It is succeeded by languor and lethargy more troublesome than before. But with Guy's nutritive and stimulating Tonic how different! The sufferer finds that a few doses will dissipate fatigue, and infuse new energy upon the Muscular and Mental Powers; his lethargy goes, his sinking leaves him, and his Nervous terror and agitation are removed; hard brain-work becomes an intellectual enjoyment; the Stomach is strengthened, the Liver regulated, and the entire Nervous System invigorated by its use.

Guy's Tonic
Revives Strength.

Mr. B. Howard, writes from Ryall Grove, Earl's Croome, Worcestershire:

"I have found Guy's Tonic a wonderful help when run down; it is what I call a Strength Reviver."

Guy's Tonic Restored my Appetite.

Mr. J. Bird, of Summer Lane, Birmingham, writes:

"I desire to add my Testimony to the great value of Guy's Tonic. It restored my Appetite, cleared the tongue, and acted most beneficially on the Liver and Nerves. It also gave me refreshing Sleep, freedom from Dreams, and a pleasant waking. The distressing Symptoms of Melancholia and Despondency have never returned since I took the first bottle of Guy's Tonic."

Constipation. The Booklet wrapped round every bottle of Guy's Tonic gives valuable advice on Diet, and simple, yet complete, instructions for the safe, pleasant and permanent cure of Constipation. The advice is based on high Medical Authority, and it should be remembered that Constipation, now so prevalent, is frequently the cause of Ill-health and Debility, and is usually a troublesome complication of most cases of Indigestion, Sluggish Liver, and Nervousness.

A new size (Six Ounce) Bottle of Guy's Tonic, price 1s. 1½d., is now on sale at all Chemists and Stores.

ALLEN FOSTER & CO.,

THE LONDON MANUFACTURERS.

Buy Direct at First Cost from the Leading Firm of London Manufacturers.

Design No. 326. 10/6.

A Costume any Lady can wear.—Prettily and neatly trimmed with tucks of velvet and cloth. STERLING VALUE. This bodice has a tight-fitting back, with full front. The Skirt is cut to drape gracefully. Made in the Specialite Serge or Venetian Cloth—two splendid wearing materials. Colours: Black, Navy, Grey, Light and Dark Fawn, Brown, Green, Royal Red, Purple, Blue-Grey, &c. **Good Fit Guaranteed.** Price only **10/6.** Carriage paid, 6d. extra. Skirt alone, **5/6.** Carriage, 5d. In sending order, please give bust measurement (under arms), size of waist, and length of Skirt in front.

10/6

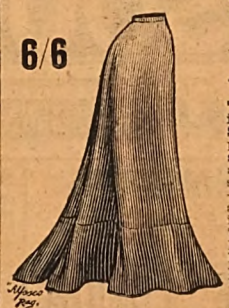
Design No. 326. 10/6.

7/6

PATTERNS FREE.

Design No. 2161. 7/6.

A Great Bargain in Jackets. Marvellous Value for 7/6. Made in good President Beaver Cloth in Black, Fawn, and Brown. The Jacket is stylishly braided, and has a Velvet collar. All Sizes in Stock. SEND FOR ONE. Price only **7/6.** Carriage 6d. extra. In sending order, please give bust measurement (under arms). Money returned if not approved.



6/6

Design No. 323. 6/6.

Design No. 323. 6/6.

The New and Fashionable Costume Skirt. This Skirt has proved an **immense success.** It is made in all the colours of the two splendid wearing fabrics—The Specialite Serge and the Venetian Coating. All Sizes in Stock. This Skirt is cut in the New Circular Shape, and has a 16-inch flounce round bottom, which is lined with good linenette. A Bargain for **6/6.** Carriage paid, 5d. extra. **Send for one.**

ALLEN FOSTER & CO.,

THE LONDON MANUFACTURERS,

47 Golden Lane, Barbican, London, E.C.

Advertisements should be sent to "Short Stories" Advertisement Department, Henrietta Street, London, W.C.

Digitized by Google

KOKO

FOR THE HAIR

UNDER ROYAL PATRONAGE.

KOKO for the HAIR is a tonic, cleansing, invigorating preparation, it eradicates scurf and dandriff, prevents hair from falling or turning grey, promotes growth, contains no dye or greasy substance, is the most cleanly of all hair preparations and invariably gives satisfaction.

1/-, 2/6, and 4/6, of all Chemists, Hairdressers, &c., everywhere.

OLD PEOPLE LIKE IT

for its wonderful power to *invigorate decayed hair*, and induce an entirely new growth when that is possible.

MIDDLE-AGED PEOPLE LIKE IT,

because it *prevents them from getting bald*, keeps dandriff, away, and makes the hair grow thick and strong.

YOUNG LADIES LIKE IT

As a dressing, because it gives the hair a *beautiful glossy lustre*, ensures a *luxuriant growth*, and enables them to dress it and keep it in any style that may be desired.

CHILDREN LIKE IT,

Because it keeps the hair and scalp cool and clean, *allays irritation*, and keeps the hair in whatever position desired.

THEY ALL LIKE IT,

Because it is as *pure as crystal*, perfectly colourless, contains no poisonous substance, no sugar of lead, sulphur, nitrate of silver, or grease, and does not soil or colour *the scalp, face, or the most delicate fabric in clothing.*

SHOP BY PARCEL POST WITH

JOHN NOBLE LTD.

Largest Costumiers and Drapery Warehousemen in the World.

All Orders Promptly Executed and Satisfaction Guaranteed.

A NEW AUTUMN DESIGN.

MODEL 255

Fashionable Coat and Skirt. The smartest Half-Guinea design before the public. Consists of double-breasted Tailor-fashioned Coat, stitched round Collar, Cuffs and Edge with White or Black Mercerised. Skirt of latest shape, with box-pleat at back. Produced in John Noble Cheviot Serge or Costume Coating. Price complete only **10/6**; carriage 6d. extra. Skirt alone, **5/6**; carriage 5d.

Tastefully-trimmed **HAT**, as sketch, **3/6**; carriage, 6d. extra.

PATTERNS (and New Season's Catalogues) SENT POST FREE

of the two very durable cloths in which the Costumes are made:

The John Noble Cheviot Serge and **The John Noble Costume Coating.**

A Full Dress Length of either Cloth (6 yards 52 inches wide) for **7/6**; carriage 8d.

Colours: Black, Navy, Brown, Myrtle, Fawn, Khaki, Grey, and Royal Blue.

Sizes in Stock of Ladies' Costumes are: 34, 36, 38 in. round bust (under arms); Waists 24, 26, 28 in.; Skirts being 38, 40, 42 in. long in front. Any other size made to measure, **1/6** extra.

Please mention "Short Stories" when writing.

JOHN NOBLE Ltd.

BROOK STREET MILLS, **MANCHESTER.**

TO THE QUEEN

PURVEYORS

CROSSE & BLACKWELL'S

GREEN PEA, GRAVY, JULIENNE, MULLIGATAWNY, TOMATO, HOUSEHOLD, CRESSY, &c.

SOUP TABLETS

OF ALL GROCERS ETC. THROUGHOUT THE WORLD

DRUNKENNESS

CURED. This can be done with or without patient's knowledge. Send me a stamp and I will tell you how. (Send no money.) Address, in confidence, Mrs. C. H. (Room 8), 195 Oxford Street, London, W.

SULPHOLINE LOTION,

For clearing the skin from Spots, Blemishes, Redness, Roughness, giving a Beautiful Complexion and pleasing appearance.

SHILLING BOTTLES.

A SUM of from 12s. to 25s. per week can be earned in spare hours or evenings by either sex everywhere.—Send addressed envelope for particulars to Box 24, Eclipse Works, 89 Aldersgate Street, E.C.

WHY BE FAT?

When a lady, who has discovered a simple means of Self-Cure will be happy to send particulars of same to any sufferer from this distressing complaint. Free on receipt of stamped addressed envelope. ADDRESS:

Mrs. TREVOR WELLS,

63 *HIGH HOLBORN, LONDON, W.C.*

HAIR DESTROYED.

Send me an envelope (stamped and addressed) and I will tell you how to remove all superfluous hair **free of charge.** (Send no money.) Address, in confidence, Miss E. V. (Room 3), 195 Oxford Street, London, W.

ESTABLISHED 1851.

BIRKBECK BANK

Southampton Buildings, Chancery Lane, London.

2% on CURRENT ACCOUNTS, on the minimum monthly balances when not drawn below £100.

The BIRKBECK ALMANACK, with full particulars, post free. FRANCIS RAVENSCROFT, *Manager.*

Digitized by Google

No. 610.] [One Penny.

For the Week Ending Sept. 8th, 1900.

THE DETECTIVE CONFEDERATE.

"Lord Whintley, Caerdoal Castle, Cornwall," read Clearsite, the well-known private detective, from a card his clerk had brought to him. "Let me see—Whintley. Yes, to be sure, that is the man who goes in for archæological researches, and who, I read in the papers a day or two ago, is to start immediately for Mexico to inspect some monument or other that has lately been discovered."

"The gentleman's waiting in the outer office, sir," reminded the clerk.

"Ask him in," returned the detective; and, arranging an important-looking roll of papers on his desk, he awaited the entrance of the nobleman.

A little man in a long, fur-lined overcoat—it was January, and the snow deep on the ground—was ushered in by the clerk. He had a thick, grey moustache, and wore blue spectacles, and his high fur collar was turned up round his ears.

"Mr. Clearsite himself?" queried the visitor.

"Yes" answered the detective, wheeling an arm-chair up to the fire. "Will you sit down, my lord?"

"Thank you. My time is rather short. I leave London to-day, on a long journey."

"Yes," returned the detective, "I have heard that your lordship was starting for Mexico."

"Dear me!" answered the visitor, as if astonished at the detective's information. "Marvellous! You know that, do you? You detectives seem to find out most things."

Clearsite did not state how he obtained his information; he merely bowed.

"Well, Mr. Clearsite, my visit to you is connected with this journey. My wife—hem—my wife, Lady Whintley, is considerably younger than I am—hem! Lady Whintley, in fact, does not take a great interest in my researches, and is remaining at Caerdoal Castle. Lady Whintley is fond of amusement—not that I make a complaint of that, mind; but—well, there is such a thing as being over confident, particularly when a man is considerably older than his wife, and he is leaving her for a time—eh?"

The detective was leaning back in his chair with his hands folded resting on his chest, and his eyes screwed up to the most penetrating attention. "Jealousy," he was reflecting; "and jealousy is a good grist-bringer to the detective mill."

All rights reserved.]

Digitized by Google

"Yes," answered the detective, wheeling an armchair up to the fire.

He simply nodded and waited for further information.

"It is an awkward thing to express," continued the visitor.

"We detectives are accustomed to strange cases," answered Clearsite; "and what you say to me will be kept in the most inviolable secrecy."

His visitor appeared reassured.

"Well," he said, "the truth is, I want my wife watched, and I want you to do the watching. I will make the job well worth your while. I will pay you at the rate of £100 a month. Can you undertake the business?"

Clearsite looked very profound, and after some apparent consideration, agreed to do so.

"It is a very delicate business, you see," he said. "Firstly, have you any suspicion of any favoured lover?"

"Partially," replied his visitor. "Lady Whintley has a cousin, whom she professes to look upon as a brother, and who, doubtless, now I am away, will be a good deal at Caerdoal Castle."

"Yes, and how do you propose that I should do this watching without exciting Lady Whintley's suspicions?"

"Ha, ha!" laughed this strangely jealous husband; "that is where the beauty of my plan comes in. I purpose to send you to Caerdoal Castle on the pretext that when my absence becomes known, the place might be expected to be attacked by burglars. I want you to be always on the watch, taking a turn about the place at night, looking into rooms, examining locks—a sort of person whose eccentricities have always an excuse. Not a bad idea, eh, Mr. Clearsite?"

The detective felt almost aggrieved at the artful inventiveness of the amateur, and in self-defence felt bound to say:

"In theory this sounds easy, but there will be difficulties in execution."

"Of course, but you are clever enough to overcome them. I leave London to-day. Will you go down to Caerdoal Castle to-morrow?"

"Yes, I think I can undertake to do so. Will you give me a line of introduction to Lady Whintley?"

"No, I think not. Say I engaged you at the last moment."

"But perhaps your wife——"

"My wife will be delighted at my forethought. The boat leaves to-night. You will see my name in the list of passengers. I will now wish you good day. I suppose you do not desire anything on account; if you do here is a £20 note."

"Thank you, Lord Whintley, though that was not necessary; but I think it would be preferable you should give a line to your wife."

"I think not. Surely I know better than you. If you do not care for the job——"

"It is not that, but——"

"I have settled the 'but' before, so you go down to-morrow; be wideawake. Mind, Clearsite, don't have any dust thrown in your eyes."

The detective smiled such a smile of confidence that even his visitor seemed to catch the infection, and to smile back, quite strangely to say, contentedly:

"There is one thing, my lord—where am I to communicate with you?"

"I will communicate with you."

"Oh, yes, you will send me an address."

"Ha! ha!" laughed the visitor again almost boisterously, "I will send you a wire when you may expect to see me."

"Expect to see you?"

"To be sure. Don't you understand my journey is a pretence? I shall certainly start, but directly I get a chance I shall find an excuse, which will require me to return. I shall manage to get transferred to a homeward bound vessel, and be back in London within a month."

The detective looked disappointed. His employer seemed uncommonly sharp; one month!—why he had considered this at least a six months' job.

"I will wire to you from London and run down incognito. I will arrive late; you will let me into my own castle, after the servants are in bed. We can have a chat, compare notes, and if necessary I can take myself off for another two or three months while you complete your investigations. Now good-bye. Do not be astonished at any time to hear I am back. Good day," and the visitor was off.

"Well," reflected Clearsite, "I rather despised bookworms and antiquaries, but this man's wits are not dulled by archæological studies. Why, he was born for a detective; while his wife most probably thinks he is absorbed in the past, he has a weather-eye open to the present. A smart idea that journey to Mexico—a decidedly smart idea—but he is a smart fellow; he actually seems to take a delight in finding out what most men try to conceal from themselves. Well, well, my profession is not to seek the motives of my employers, but those of the people I am employed to watch."

He then sent for his clerk, and gave directions for the cases he had in hand, and stated that he should manage to run up to town at least one day a week, and that if

Digitized by Google

anything very pressing turned up, a wire addressed to him at Caerdoal Castle would reach him.

* * * * *

The next afternoon Clearsite arrived at Connolly Station, which was a short drive from Caerdoal Castle, at about five, and selecting a cab, allowed himself to be conducted to his destination.

The footman, who opened the door, looked rather suspiciously at the gentleman, who refused to give his card, and asked to see Lady Whintley on business connected with Lord Whintley.

Clearsite had judged it prudent not to disclose his identity to the servants, as the idea of a detective on the premises has a silencing effect among domestics. What he wished was of a diametrically opposite nature.

After being kept some minutes waiting, the detective was shown into a small study, where he was joined by a young military-looking man of about thirty.

"You wish to see Lady Whintley?" interrogated the gentleman, whom Clearsite concluded to be the cousin, "As you did not give your card or name, Lady Whintley in the absence of her husband, asked me to see you. May I ask the nature of your business?"

"The nature of my business," replied Clearsite, "does not render it desirable that my name and calling should be known to the servants, but I have no objection in giving you my card, if you will kindly take it to Lady Whintley; and I should be obliged if you would tell her I saw Lord Whintley yesterday, and that I am come down here at his express wish."

The young man looked with some astonishment at the card which announced the detective's name and profession.

"You say you saw Lord Whintley yesterday?" he asked.

"Yes, just before he started for Liverpool."

"I will give your message to Lady Whintley," said the young man. "If there has been any discourtesy shown to you, you will, I am sure, allow that your mode of introduction was rather suspicious; but since you are following Lord Whintley's instructions, of course Lady Whintley will see you."

He left the study, and, after a short absence, returned with a young woman, handsome and attractive.

Clearsite rose and made his best bow, and the young man, after saying: "Lady Whintley, this is Mr. Clearsite," was about to retire.

"Stay, Frank," she said; "I should like to hear what is the motive of Mr. Clearsite's visit."

"In brief, my lady," commenced the detective, "Lord Whintley called at my office yesterday. He said that the fact of his going abroad might get known, and that consequently burglars might attempt to make a raid on Caerdoal Castle, and that he thought while he was away you would have more security if a detective were resident here, and he engaged me to undertake the business."

"How thoughtful of dear old George, is it not, Frank?" broke out the lady. "I thought he went away with nothing but monuments and inscriptions in his head, and, you see——"

"Yes, it was very thoughtful," interposed the young man. "I suppose, Mr. Clearsite," he continued, "Lord Whintley gave you a note for Lady Whintley?"

"No," replied the detective. "I naturally suggested he should do so, but he would not. I pressed the point, but he got quite irritable, and said I could explain to Lady Whintley."

"Just like George," put in the lady; "he can't bear opposition."

"Yes, but," said the cousin, "we have only Mr. Clearsite's word that he is Mr. Clearsite. He might have come down with a bogus message, and be the very burglar he is presumed to come down to catch."

Clearsite drew himself up to his full height, but he saw that what the young man said was reasonable enough.

"I should propose," said Frank, "that for to-night Mr. Clearsite should go to the village inn, like any ordinary traveller, not mentioning his name at all, and that to-morrow he and I will go up to London together, where, of course, his personality is well known, and then, if all is satisfactory, he will return with me and will enter on the duties intrusted to him by Lord Whintley. I think this is fair, eh, Mr. Clearsite?"

Clearsite was bound to confess that it was so; but, somehow, he formed no very favourable opinion of Cousin Frank, and was convinced that Lady Whintley's reference to her husband as "dear old George," was a clever bit of acting intended for his special benefit.

After all, he did not much regret Mr. Frank's distrust; the next day would bring about a solution in his favour, and Lady Whintley would in the future be bound, as a sort of reparation, to consider, with an extreme indulgence, all his actions.

The next evening he was installed in a position of trust at Caerdoal Castle.

In accordance with his wish, it was given out that he was a sort of steward intrusted with exceptional powers during Lord Whintley's absence. He had free access all over the house; to account for his nightly perambulations it was said that he was a sufferer from insomnia, and he had a small study allotted to him on the ground floor.

His meals were served in his own room; he used to

"In brief, my lady," replied the detective, "Lord Whintley called at my office yesterday."

Digitized by Google

walk down to the village, and was soon a popular *habitué* in the Whintley Arms, and at times would drop in for a glass at the less reputable publics.

In the housekeeper's room Mr. Jones, as he chose to be called, was ever welcome; and Biggs, the butler, confessed that Jones was a social fellow, and a cute one into the bargain, who thoroughly appreciated his (Biggs') general conversation and particular gossip.

Three days after his arrival at Caerdoal Castle, Clearsite was taking a cup of tea in the housekeeper's room, in company with Mr. Biggs, and being now on fairly familar terms with these two trusted retainers, he determined to touch delicately on the domestic relations of Lord Whintley and his wife.

"Charming place, this, Mr. Biggs," commenced the detective. "It seems strange that Lord Whintley can't be satisfied here without running over to such an out-of-the-way place as Mexico."

"He is clean mad on anything connected with antiquities; thinks of nothing else," responded the butler.

"Ah!" continued Clearsite; "you don't seem to be going into mourning for his absence. From what I can see, you are expecting company and are preparing for festivities."

"We always have guests at the Castle at this time of the year. The Lord Lieutenant's ball comes off next week, you see."

"And Lady Whintley is going?"

"Yes, of course, and we shall have her sister, Viscountess Brodley, and Lord and Lady Manton of Mossmere, here also, who will go with her."

"And Mr. Frank, of course?" said Clearsite, trying to look very knowing.

"Yes," replied Biggs; "he takes my lord's place in his absence."

Clearsite smiled again, somewhat to Biggs' astonishment.

"You see," added the butler, "Mr. Frank Graham was a ward of Lady Whintley's father, and they were brought up like brother and sister, and my lord always asks him to be here in his absence."

"Oh, he does, does he?" thought Clearsite. "I wonder what can be his game?"

"Lady Whintley is considerably younger than the husband?"

"Yes, considerably," returned Biggs; "but it was a regular love-match on her part. She is as proud of his discoveries as if he were Prime Minister, and it was as much as he could do to prevent her going over to Mexico with him."

Clearsite could not conceal his astonishment.

"True, is it not, Mrs Jellypots?" asked the butler.

"She is wonderfully attached to him," answered the lady; "and he seems to take it all as a matter of course, and never troubles about anything but his books and coins."

"Well, Clearsite, you see I know how to keep an appointment."

"He is wider awake than you think," reflected Clearsite; "but both my lord and my lady must be very clever to keep their troubles so completely to themselves."

"This ball will be a big affair then?"

"Rather," replied Mr. Biggs. "It is what they call the biggest society function of the county for the year. Of course to you, Mr. Jones, being in your confidential position, I may say that to-morrow I go to London to bring Lady Whintley's jewels from the bank. They are worth over thirty thousand pounds, and it would not be safe to keep them down here."

"No, I should think not," ejaculated Clearsite. "Too much of a bait for burglars, if they got an inkling of the matter. Have you ever, Mr. Biggs, had a visit from any of these gentry?"

"Once," replied the butler, "and a daring attempt it was, too. A fellow found out from my lady's maid all about the jewels. It was just before the Lord Lieutenant's ball, and while the family was at dinner a ladder was put up against my lady's dressing-room window and the thieves entered. Luckily, an under-gardener caught a glimpse of them, pulled away the ladder and aroused the house. Mr. Frank, and some other gentlemen, who were staying here, rushed upstairs in a trice, opened the door and found two of the burglars on the floor, and a little fellow in a police-inspector's uniform holding them fast. He explained that he had shadowed the two men, and entered the room by the ladder after them, and had thus caught them in a trap. He asked the gentlemen to help him take them to some place of safety, till he could, with the assistance of a couple of servants drive the rascals over to the lock-up in the nearest town. The two burglars were locked up in one of

Digitized by Google

the stables, the police-inspector taking the key. He then went into the dining-room and had a glass of wine, everyone looking on him as a hero. After a little he said he would have a look at his prisoners. Several of the company offered to accompany him but he would not hear of taking anybody out into the cold. He said his investigation would not take above twenty minutes, and away he went. After half-an-hour, as he did not return, someone went to see what detained him. then it was discovered that burglars and police-inspector had disappeared, and after communication with Scotland Yard, it appeared positive that the Inspector was no other than the famous burglar known as 'Slippery Swad,' and that he wore the disguise of a police-inspector under his great coat, in case of emergencies.

"Clever, wasn't it? The three men got off, and they say 'Slippery Swad' has never been caught."

"Quite right," answered the detective, "he has not, and there is a reward of £500 for his capture. He is the artfulest——" But Clearsite drew up short, not wishing to show he knew much about such things, and added —"burglar out, I should say, from what you have told me."

"Yes," answered Biggs, "we were always afraid he would return, for when he posed as the inspector, he asked to go over the place, to see if no other attempt had been made in any other room, and thus learnt all about the castle. But my lord had a system of electric bells fixed to all the doors and windows, called, I believe, 'burglar discoverers,' and these are turned on when the family are at meals, or in bed, as you know, Mr. Jones, and the fact was notified in the public papers; so that, probably, Mr. 'Slippery Swad' heard of this arrangement, and does not consider another attempt quite safe."

Clearsite, when he was alone reflected deeply on what he had heard. His observations at Caerdoal Castle confirmed absolutely the conversation of the housekeeper's room.

Lady Whintley was a loving and devoted wife. Her cousin, viewed by herself as a brother, was apparently trusted by her husband implicitly.

Everybody evidently looked upon Lord Whintley as a man whose every thought was taken up by study, and who took little or no interest in what was passing around him; and yet what a different aspect did the detective's personal experience of Lord Whintley put on matters generally! Could the man be a maniac?

Clearsite was fairly puzzled. There seemed, at present to be no clue to the mystery; all he could do was to wait, and in his case waiting was paid for, which was an extra inducement to patience.

The next day, Biggs, the butler, went to London, and returned safely with the jewels, and the day following, Clearsite received a telegram, worded as follows:

> "Opportunity has surpassed my expectations. Am back in London. Meet me on the lawn to-night, outside castle, at twelve. Be careful that I am not observed.
>
> W—Tley."

"Sharp work," thought the detective. "If he is a madman, there is a decided method about his madness. Anyway, I will put him thoroughly to the proof when I see him to-night."

Clearsite felt so confident in his powers of observation, that he was quite impatient for the meeting, which would, he was convinced, furnish him with a solution of the mystery.

Before half-past eleven, everyone at Caerdoal, excepting the detective, was in bed, and a few minutes before twelve, he opened the glass doors of his study, which led down, with two steps, on to the lawn, and himself noiselessly descended to his rendezvous.

The clock from the castle turret had scarcely struck twelve, when he saw a figure glide cautiously from the shrubberies towards him. The moon was shining, and he had no difficulty in recognizing his employer, dressed just as he had seen him when he called at his offices.

"Well, Clearsite," said the detective's visitor, advancing to his side, and speaking in a low, distinct voice: "archæological mummy, as I daresay you have heard me described, you see I know how to keep an appointment; and you, man, have you any news for me?"

"Very little, my lord. I have been much puzzled."

"Fooh!" interrupted the visitor, with a shudder; "it is cold here to talk! let us go in. What room have they given you?"

"The little study, opening on to the lawn."

"Good! That is handy. Go on, I will follow you. A strange way to steal into one's own castle, is it not? But I am a strange man. Forward, Mr. Clearsite!"

They entered the study, and the detective's visitor drew a chair to the fire, and made himself comfortable.

"So they have bamboozled you, eh, Clearsite?"

"My lord," returned the detective, "as yet I am unable to give a decided opinion one way or another."

"More time needed, eh? Never mind, Clearsite, I have news for you. I have found out positively that the day Mr. Frank Graham went up to London with you, he pawned Lady Whintley's diamonds. I presume the jewel-case was obtained from the Bank by a written order from Lady Whintley, and on its return a seal was put on it in the presence of Mr. Graham, but the stones were unset, and have been replaced with crystals, and the gentleman has been able to pay a debt of eight thousand pounds, for which he was being closely pressed by bill discounters of my acquaintance. What do you think of that?"

The detective eyed his visitor with admiration. Who would believe that such a quiet-looking little man could be so sharp? He had missed his vocation. What a detective he would have made! And what a cunning pair Lady Whintley and her cousin were!

"Have you positive proof, my lord?"

"Well the circumstantial evidence is, to my mind, convincing. First, I have proof that Graham pledged diamonds for a total amount of twelve thousand pounds at three different pawnbrokers. Secondly, I know the bill-brokers, who held his bills for £10,000, and whom he paid on that day. The only link wanting in my evidence is, that the diamonds were Lady Whintley's; but she has valuable diamonds, worth considerably more than that sum, and if they were not hers, where did he get them?"

"True," said Clearsite. "Yet the doubt is an important one."

"You are right. I hope I may be deceived. I know my wife always sends for her jewels from London, to wear at the Lord Lieutenant's ball. Do you know if she has them yet?"

"Yes my lord. Biggs fetched them yesterday."

"Good! Then we can soon decide. Can you distinguish crystals from diamonds?"

Digitized by Google

"I would not like to assert positively, my lord."

"Never mind. I am a connoisseur in precious stones. I suppose Lady Whintley sleeps in her same room?"

"I believe so. The second door on the landing."

"Is the dressing-room door locked?"

"No, my lord; her maid sleeps there since you have been away."

"And the jewel-case is in Lady Whintley's room?"

"That I cannot tell."

"I will have a look for it, and if I find it, we will examine the stones."

So saying, the visitor took off his boots.

"But, my lord," interposed the detective, "if you are discovered?"

"Well, if I am? I suppose I have a right to do as I like in my own house, eh, Mr. Detective?"

And creeping from the room with the noiseless footfall of a cat, he left the detective alone.

Clearsite did not exactly like his position; but it was not long before his visitor returned, carrying a brass bound jewel case.

"I have no key to open it Clearsite," he said. "I must break the lock."

"That will betray the act, my lord."

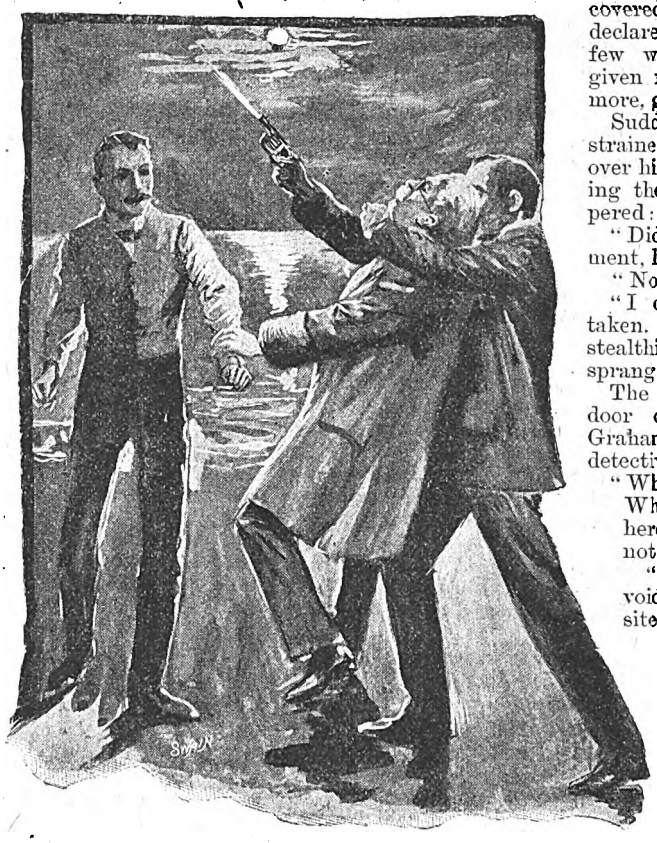
"I suppose it will, but it cannot be helped."

And before the detective could oppose the act, the lid was forced, and the jewels, necklace, ornaments for the hair, bracelets and the other trinkets were strewn on the table.

"My lord, this was most foolish."

"Perhaps it was, but you see I was right. There is not a diamond here. Everyone is an imitation!"

"Are you sure, my lord? They look full of fire, and you see they are set hollow."



The detective had thrown him backwards, the pistol-shot firing upwards.

"Why man, surely you know that crystals nowadays are set just like diamonds? I have made a special study of gems; and the lot of stones there, are not worth fifty pounds."

The man's head fell on his arms, and tears stood in his eyes.

Clearsite was moved at the sight of his distress, and tried to suggest mistakes; a desire of Lady Whintley to help her cousin as a sister a brother.

"I assure your lordship," he added, "I have carefully watched her ladyship, and I believe her to be fondly attached to you."

"Do you? Are you saying what you really believe? Thank you, Clearsite; you have given hope once more," said the man, looking up. "I will take these back to her room, and to-morrow I will come here, the first thing before she is up and can have discovered that I have broken open the jewel-case, then I will have an explanation. Perhaps my action was hasty, but a husband's feelings do not brook delay."

Replacing the jewels in the case, and taking it with him, he once again left the room.

He must have stumbled over something, for Clearsite's sharp ear detected a slight sound; but he was back again in a few minutes, and put on his boots.

"I will leave you for to-night, Clearsite," he said. "To-morrow the first thing, expect me. If, before I come, anything should be discovered I authorise you to declare the truth. Your few words of hope have given me fresh life. Once more, good night."

Suddenly a look of strained attention passed over his face, and approaching the detective, he whispered:

"Did you hear a movement, like a footstep?"

"No my lord."

"I did—I am not mistaken. Hark!" and moving stealthily to the window he sprang out.

The next moment the door opened, and Frank Graham stood before the detective.

"Who was your visitor? What was he doing here? I am sure I did not mistake the voice."

"If you recognised his voice," returned Clearsite, "it is useless for me to delay the discovery that must come to-morrow."

"What do you mean?" exclaimed Frank roughly. "Are you that man's confederate? How dared you receive him here?"

"Dared, Mr. Graham," said Clearsite, "is a strong term. Since you recognised Lord Whintley, how dare you speak of him as you do? Surely he has the right to come here when and how he chooses."

"Lord Whintley! What do you mean? Are you mad?"

"You said you recognised the voice of the person in conversation with me?"

"Yes—yes—as that of the notorious burglar, who once imposed upon us all here—as the man known as 'Slippery Swad.'"

Clearsite's face became awful in its expression of baffled rage, as he ejaculated:

"Ah; I see it all. It was he who personated Lord Whintley. He has imposed even on me, and has made me a confederate in stealing Lady Whintley's diamonds. He cannot have got off far. Let us follow immediately."

Digitized by Google

"Wait a moment," returned Frank calmly. "Let us first consider what direction he will probably take. We kept very close a discovery we made on his former visit, namely, that he came and departed by means of a boat, which, while he and his confederates were on land, was moored in a creek on the seashore, at about ten minutes walk from the lodge gates. Possibly he will repeat this experiment. He will run across the park, but there is a door in the yard, opening to a short cut to the shore, which reduces the time distance by at least five minutes. Quick, and we shall yet catch him."

The two men started immediately, Frank still in his stockinged feet, and Clearsite regardless of his hat.

They soon reached the confines of the park, and from a little eminence, saw that Frank was right in his conjecture, as there was, in the creek, a boat with two men in it, evidently waiting for someone who had landed.

"We are in time," said Frank, shrinking back into the shadow of the park trees, and advancing in the direction from which he expected "Slippery Swad" would appear.

Clearsite followed.

In a few minutes they perceived the man they were expecting. He darted from the park at a smart trot and directed his steps towards the boat.

Frank impetuously sprang forward and confronted him.

Events pass rapidly at such crises. The burglar's presence of mind was ever at call.

He scarcely stopped, as he pulled a revolver from his pocket, and pointed it straight at his assailant, and, in an instant a sharp report rang out.

Luckily indeed for Frank, Clearsite's experience in criminal catching had come to his aid, or the young man's chance for life would have been small.

The detective had allowed Frank to face the burglar; he himself had rushed unperceived behind him, and throwing his arms round his neck at the critical moment, had thrown him backwards, the pistol-shot firing upwards.

The men in the boat immediately made off, and Frank and the detective returned with their captive to the Castle, where he was temporarily secured in a cellar, under lock and key.

Frank undoubtedly owed his life to Clearsite, and readily enough promised that, with the exception of Lord and Lady Whintley, no one should know how cleverly the detective had been duped.

Clearsite, consequently, drew the £500 for the capture of "Slippery Swad," and, in addition, received a handsome present from Frank.

Moreover, the detective's name was in everybody's mouth, and his reputation was considerably increased, as he received all the glory of bringing such a notorious culprit to justice.

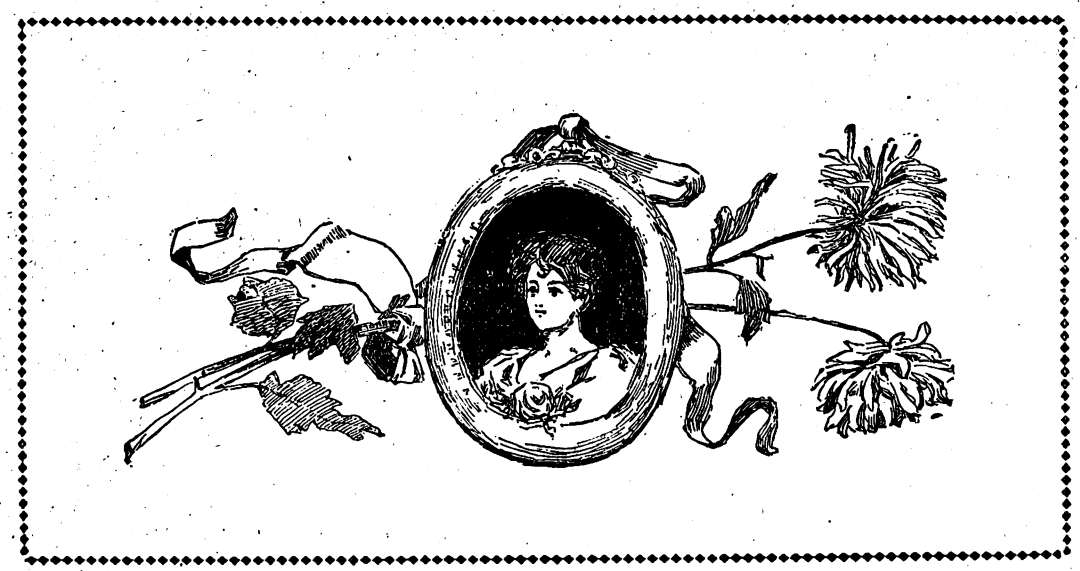
When brought up for trial "Slippery Swad," in the pockets of whose fur-lined overcoat Lady Whintley's diamonds had been found—he having only replaced on her table the empty jewel-case—was condemned to a lengthy term of penal servitude, which he richly deserved; but before being removed from the dock, he somewhat astonished the judge and the court by exclaiming:

"And how about my confederate? Surely I thought I should be safe if I engaged a detective."

Clearsite became very pale and fidgeted about uneasily, particularly when the criminal winked at him knowingly; but without further explanation, "Slippery Swad" was removed to the cells below, and his professional engagement with Clearsite was never made public, till this true history was written.

And even here, names are so concealed, that the pseudonym of Clearsite effectually hides the individuality of the detective who was so cleverly imposed upon by one of the sharpest of modern burglars.

Ida Dawson.



Digitized by Google

The Rolling Platform.

MONSIEUR Legrand, of Chambéry, read thoughtfully the following advertisement aloud to himself, in the dignified seclusion of his office:

At Whitsuntide, the Company of the South-Eastern Railway of France will issue return tickets to Paris for all classes, available for eleven days, from the 25th of May to the 4th of June, inclusive. These tickets can be taken at all Stations of the Company.

Monsieur Legrand took a pencil and made a calculation of the cost of the journey for himself, Marius Legrand, silk merchant and draper of Chambéry, his wife and his daughter Céleste.

"Three first-class tickets, 234 francs; other expenses, 250 francs. Lodging: when I go to Paris, I pay four francs for my room; with the Exhibition going on, will have to give double. For three people eighteen-twenty with attendance—so, for nine days, 180 francs. So much for food, so much for carriage hire, theatres, etc. Total 790 francs—at least 800 to 900 francs, let us call it 1,000 francs (£40) at once. It is agonising to spend so much money. But Céleste will be enchanted. Ever since she was seven years old, have I promised her a visit to Paris. And this is the year of the Exhibition! I can afford this folly, I will do it. Va!"

Without waiting any longer, Monsieur Legrand opened the door of his office that communicated with the rest of the house and shouted in a loud voice, "Eloise, Céleste, pack up. We go to Paris on the 25th."

He was answered by two shrieks of joy.

Monsieur Legrand had not been to Paris for fifteen years. And why? Because this dear man was so fat, moving was disagreeable to him. When he entered a room first you saw his waistcoat and then, some time after, the rest of Monsieur Legrand. For a long time he had said good-bye to his feet and could only see them in a looking-glass. When, therefore, it was a question of moving his enormous person he thought twice about it, and it was only his charming good heart and wish to give pleasure to his wife and daughter that induced him to undertake this great expedition.

Madame Legrand was a great contrast to her husband, she was as thin and flat as he was round and heavy. She was also as discreet and reserved as he was expansive and noisy. Céleste, their daughter, had the talent, or rather the good fortune, to conciliate in her person the best qualities of both parents, and formed a most seductive whole. She was charmingly proportioned and added to this a smiling face, with large, dark eyes and golden hair, and red lips that opened on two rows of pearls. In fact she was acknowledged to be the grace and the beauty of Chambéry.

This journey was, no doubt, a great event.

It caused good Monsieur Legrand much agitation. It was only when they were safely off, shut in a compartment by themselves, that he heaved a sigh of satisfaction and mopped his forehead with one of his own best silk handkerchiefs. Then he counted all the small parcels, made sure of his pocket-book, all his keys, and counted the change in his purse. I have said they were alone in their compartment. Monsieur Legrand took a quarter up himself and was able to repose at ease, without the fear of cramping other people. When approaching a large station, he thought it wise to take precautions, however; he disposed the parcels artfully on the disengaged seats, and when the porters, as French porters always will, at large stations, flung open the door, shouting out "Dijon, ten minutes," Monsieur Legrand blocked up the opening with his fairy form. All the travellers who approached retreated before this fortification, and his plans would have been crowned with success, had he only continued them a few minutes longer. But, thinking all would go well, he moved back a few seconds before the train departed, and in this moment of time a young man quickly jumped in.

"The carriage is full," said Monsieur Legrand angrily.

"Not quite, I think," said the newcomer coolly; "it seems to me four or five places are still vacant."

He sat down peacefully in the corner facing Céleste. He was a well-dressed young man with a distinguished air. He drew a newspaper out of his pocket and proceeded to read it, without troubling himself more about Monsieur Legrand than if that gentleman were still in Chambéry.

Suddenly a packet in the net above Céleste fell on her hat, and she gave the charming cry of a frightened bird. The young man sprang to his feet, seized the packet, inquired if his fellow-voyager were hurt—then resumed his seat, but not his reading. This accident had permitted him to study Céleste, and he judged her charming countenance more worthy of study than fights in the French Chamber of Deputies. At the same time Monsieur Legrand, touched by the politeness of the young man, felt his anger evaporate and began a conversation with him. The young man replied pleasantly to the father, while admiring the daughter. Soon Monsieur Legrand had told him his name, his business, his place of residence and many other details. But to all, the young

Digitized by Google

man only said, "Ah!" It was not compromising. While he talked pleasantly, he kept to generalities and told them nothing of himself or his business. Monsieur Legrand remarked that they were going to see the Exhibition, they talked a long time on the subject.

"What I desire to see above all, is the Palace of Costume," said Céleste.

"I, the Beaux Arts," said Madame timidly.

"I, the Rolling Platform," exclaimed Monsieur Legrand. "To move round without moving oneself—what a splendid invention! We will go on it to-morrow morning at ten o'clock precisely."

The young man then explained the working of the Rolling Platform, the best way to get to it, and especially indicated with care the point at which it was best to get on. They said good-bye to him at the station in Paris, with the greatest friendliness. Monsieur pressed his hand effusively, Madame Legrand bowed gracefully and Céleste smiled upon him in the most enchanting manner.

"*Ciel!*" cried Monsieur Legrand, "I have forgotten to ask the name of this most charming young man." He rushed after their late companion, but alas! he was not built for running and soon had to give up the chase.

He returned. "Alas! it is ended," said he, "we shall see him no more. What a misfortune!"

Madame Legrand was also sad, Céleste seemed unconcerned. Young ladies sometimes can see far into mysteries, and Céleste had a presentiment that she would again see this delightful young man.

When the next day, at ten o'clock precisely, the family Legrand arrived at the point indicated to ascend the Rolling Platform, the first person they saw was their travelling companion.

Monsieur Legrand gave a cry of joy, Céleste blushed. After greeting them with much amiability, the young man, to show them how to do it, jumped lightly on to the lower platform, which only travels at the rate of four kilometres an hour, and from that he jumped on to the second, which goes round twice as fast. Céleste followed him with the same lightness.

But it was quite a different operation for Monsieur and Madame Legrand. He had no agility, and as to Madame, full of fear, she did not dare to place her foot on the rolling machine: so that the young people were soon far away from the father and mother, who remained paralysed in the same place, vainly asking how they were to rejoin their daughter.

"Happily," said the good father, naively, "she is in good hands."

At last, in fact, in a quarter of an hour, the Rolling Platform had rolled round and back to the same point and a well-known voice called to them:

"Oh! how amusing it is."

It was Céleste, leaning on the balustrade, by the side of their amiable friend. Neither seemed to be tired of their present employment. So this time Monsieur and Madame Legrand, with great courage, mounted on the platform in the best way they could. Once there, they did not venture to move, but remained firmly clutching the sticks with round heads, placed at intervals to support the passengers. So they followed the young people in a maze—but at a long interval. At last they were delivered by their daughter herself, who approached, smiling and holding the hand of her friend, no doubt only to assist her in keeping her balance. They lunched together, and together visited the different palaces and pavilions. They only left each other in the evening, then making an appointment for the next day.

"It is too tiresome," cried Monsieur Legrand, on entering his hotel, "I have again forgotten to ask the name of this too charming person. To-morrow I must remember."

But the next day he again forgot. He only remembered at the end of four days, by which time they had become so intimate with him that he never quitted them from morning till night. He finally told them to address him as Henri Leblanc, and as Monsieur Legrand knew this was a name of good repute in the commercial world of Paris, he was quite satisfied. Of course it did not follow that their friend was a member of the important firm of the "Bon Marché," but still the name of the principal partner was the same, and all things are possible.

Anyhow, the Legrand family were out for a holiday and were not disposed to let unworthy suspicions cloud their pleasure in Monsieur Henri Leblanc's society.

It must be confessed the confiding father of the family was a little imprudent. Being lazy and disinclined for exertion, he got into the habit of handing Monsieur Henri Leblanc his purse to take tickets for the various entertainments they went to, instead of struggling himself to the box office; so, by degrees, Leblanc became general paymaster—let it be well understood—with Monsieur Legrand's money.

The days passed all too swiftly till the ninth day came; on the next day their return tickets expired, their holiday was ended. They must bid a sad farewell to the delights of Paris and return to the quieter pleasures of Chambéry.

Céleste was nearly in despair; charming as Monsieur Henri Leblanc had invariably been still he had said nothing that distinctly or definitely implied a wish to annex for ever her charming self. Could it be he was trifling with a damsel who had devastated—yes, the expression is not too strong!—devastated the hearts of Eastern France? So Céleste on this last day put on her prettiest frock and most becoming hat, determined to hasten matters to a crisis. Also Monsieur Legrand, answering to a hint from Madame, filled his purse well, to provide for a fitting last entertainment to their delightful friend.

"As I am at the Credit Lyonnais, my dear," remarked the good merchant, "I may as well draw sufficient money to pay our hotel expenses and travelling extras. It will save me another journey to the bank. I will therefore write a cheque for 800 francs."

The prudent Madame demurred to this.

"Is it not unsafe to carry about so large a sum in the crowded Exhibition?" she said nervously; "we are specially warned by the police to beware of pickpockets."

But Monsieur Legrand only laughed at her fears and stuffed his purse gaily with 100 franc notes. Not only this, but he explained the whole transaction to Monsieur Henri Leblanc, who had come to fetch them from their hotel in the morning to go to the Exhibition.

"It is safer to carry the money with you," their mentor said gravely, "than to leave it in the Hotel at the mercy of the servants," and he related one or two stories of hotel robberies that much horrified Madame Legrand.

"The money can, however, be left in charge of the manager," she ventured to remark timidly.

"No, no, my good friend," said Henri, "believe me, it is better to trust to oneself only in these cases. What is the manager after all, but a paid servant of the company? I know nothing definite against him, but still ——"

Digitized by Google

So Monsieur Legrand trotted forth with the whole 800 francs in his purse, and they all went gaily in at the Grand Entrance in the Place de la Concorde. They went to the Palais de l'Optique and saw the reflected pictures of the observations taken of the moon by the enormous telescope, which truth compels me to say were not admired by them.

"The moon resembles exactly the appearance of a patient recovering from a bad attack of smallpox," said Céleste, shuddering. But she found pleasure in the exhibitions of electric light effects in the same palace, the imitations of storms, thunder and lightning, and the curious examples of the Röntgen rays. From there they passed to the Palais de Costume on the right. It was the ladies' fourth visit to this enchanting place. Monsieur Legrand remained on a chair outside while Henri Leblanc accompanied Madame and her daughter on their round of inspection.

Monsieur Legrand's purse had some time before been intrusted to his dear young friend to pay the extra one franc fifty centimes each required at the entrance of both the Palais de l'Optique and the Palais de Costume. Monsieur Legrand sat outside and amused himself by planning a veritable feast in the way of a dinner in the evening. At last the others appeared.

"There is yet time," exclaimed Céleste, "for just a round on the charming Rolling Platform before we go to our lunch."

They took their way to the nearest point for getting on, and arrived there, having climbed a steep staircase to do so. Monsieur Legrand sank breathless on the seat p ovided at the side.

"Excuse me for one moment," said Monsieur Leblanc hurriedly, "I see a friend I must speak to—I will return immediately."

He sprang on the Rolling Platform and was out of sight in a few seconds.

They waited, chatting gaily, for him to come round again on the platform. They waited half-an-hour—an hour—in fact, they may be waiting there still, for the nice, courteous young man whom they never saw again.

SADI GRANT.

"I CANNOT say yes, Walter. I shall always be a sis—"

"Sister to me? No, you won't."

"Yes, Walter; your brother Charles proposed to me last night, and I accepted him."

A BAYSWATER young man is quite "gone" on *Hamlet*. He was reading it to the girl of his heart last week. "Or if thou wilt need marry, marry a fool," he read.

"Is that a proposal, dear?" she asked.

"Yes, darling," he replied.

And they settled it there and then.

THE angriest man on earth was a fellow who was walking home about eleven o'clock at night, when a stranger drove up alone in a dog-cart, and said:

"Ain't you tired of walking?"

"Yes, I am," said the man; "much obliged," and started for the vehicle.

"Well, why don't you run a while?" said the man in the trap as he drove off.

A Splendid Offer.

AT the special request of a large number of readers we propose to repeat the offer made some time ago:

We will give a beautiful **INDIA INK and CRAYON PORTRAIT**, size 15×12, mounted on plate sunk mount, 24×19, to anyone who will bring or send us 7s. and a Coupon from the

ILLUSTRATED WEEKLY NEWS.

These portraits are of the finest artistic merit. They are quite permanent, being finished by the Air Brush with Indelible India Ink, making them more permanent than any of the old styles of portraits, and they will last a lifetime.

They would cost you, if obtained through an artist, many times as much.

Have you Father, Mother, Sister, Brother, or Child's Photograph which you wish Enlarged?

Perhaps some dear one has passed away whose likeness is now faded, and could be preserved before it is too late.

Special Offers to Relatives of Soldiers and Sailors.

Doubtless there are amongst our readers many thousands who have relatives at the front—brothers, or husbands, or fathers, or sons. Doubtless some of these brave fellows will never return to the old home. Perhaps you have a photograph of your husband, or your brother, or your son, which you want to preserve for years to come, and yet you have not the means to pay two or three guineas to have this done in the ordinary way. We, therefore, shall make a reduction of a shilling on every photograph of a Soldier or Sailor sent to us.

You will certainly get a genuine bargain by availing yourself of this offer. The enlargements can be made from any photograph, large or small, tin-types, or any kind of glass picture, provided the print is legible. All the enlargements are of the head and shoulders only.

Write your name and address plainly in ink on the coupon to be found in the current number of the

ILLUSTRATED WEEKLY NEWS.

Write your name and address plainly in ink on the back of the portrait you are sending us. Get a postal order for 7s. (if the photograph be that of a soldier or sailor get a 6s. postal order). Place all these in an envelope, or make a securely packed parcel of them, and address it to the PORTRAIT EDITOR, *Pearson's Weekly*, Henrietta Street, London, W.C. The money and coupon must accompany each order, otherwise your photograph will be returned to you.

Any number of enlargements can be made from one photograph.

A Reduction of Threepence

on each enlargement, if the order is for two or more from the same photograph, will be made, but a coupon must be sent for each enlargement required.

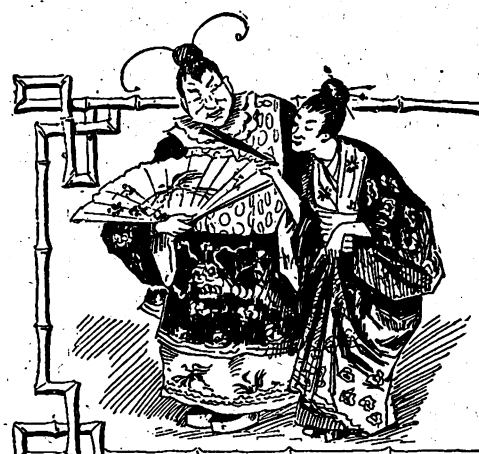
This offer will remain open until Saturday, August 25th, and orders will be treated in rotation. The sooner you send the sooner you will get your photograph.

All photographs—particularly those on glass—should be securely packed. Although all possible care will be taken, we do not hold ourselves responsible for photographs damaged or lost in transit.

A sample enlargement is on view at these offices. Below are other addresses where the enlargements may be seen:

Portsmouth.—A. B. Bennett, 408 Commercial Road, Landport.
Southsea.—L. Hillyer, 9 Green Road.
Glasgow.—William Love, 221 Argyle Street (opposite Central Station), and William Barr, 88 Sauchiehall Street.
Liverpool.—F. W. Edwards, 122 Pembroke Place, and Henry Jones (tobacconist), 184 Oakfield Road.
Blackpool.—Coppock (newsagent).
Newcastle-on-Tyne.—Messrs. T. and G. Allan, 18 and 20 Blackett Street.
Sunderland.—Edward Thompson, 263 High Street West.
Manchester.—J. Matthews, 88 Oxford Street, and Messrs. M. Carr and Co., 38 Alexandra Road, Moss Side.
Stockport.—Sisson, 49 Middle Hillgate.
Darlington.—North of England School Furnishing Company, Blackwellgate.

Digitized by Google



Mr. Bowser's Tribulations.

XXII.—He Establishes a Home for Friendless Dogs and is Surprised at Results.

THE Bowsers had just finished dinner when the area bell rang, and a minute later a discussion was heard between the cook and a small boy who had a dog at his heels.

Mr. Bowser hurried down stairs and was absent for a quarter of an hour. When he returned, Mrs. Bowser looked at him in a way that called for an explanation, and he explained:

"It was a boy with a dog. I have shut the dog up in the shed."

"But what do you want with a dog?" she queried.

"Nothing, my dear. Have you ever noticed how many homeless dogs there are in the streets?"

"No; I never did."

"I didn't suppose you had, knowing how selfish and cold-hearted you are; but I have. At this very minute there are probably a thousand friendless, homeless dogs wandering about the city."

"And is that our fault?"

"In one way, no. In another way we have a duty to perform. As human beings—as men and women with souls and hearts—we should take heed of the sufferings of the brute creation. What is more sad than to see a poor dog skulking about in fear and hunger? That he is an outcast and outlaw is not his fault. The world owes him a living, the same as it does a man. Humanity owes him food and kind treatment."

"Perhaps you are going to found a dogs' home?" asked Mrs. Bowser after awhile.

"You have hit it exactly," he replied, as the cat came out from under the sofa and sniffed the atmosphere as if she suspected the presence of a canine. "Yes, madam, I have established a home for friendless dogs, and it already has an occupant. I have arranged with several boys to bring me every friendless dog they can find. Each canine shall have bed and board for a couple of weeks at least, and I have no fear that the public will not take them off my hands. You are not with me in the charity, of course, but I shall carry it through just the same. There goes the bell, and that means another dog."

Mr. Bowser opened the door to find another boy and another dog. He was paying the lad and giving him words of praise at the same time when the f mily cat, which had followed him down stairs, took a hand in.

With a yeowl and a howl she lit on the dog's back, and for two or three minutes Mr. Bowser, the boy, the dog and the cat were all mixed up. Then the cat retreated, and the dog was conducted to the asylum.

"Phwat's all this about?" demanded the cook, as Mr. Bowser returned through the kitchen.

"My dear woman, I am being kind to homeless dogs," he replied.

"And are others to come?"

"I hope so. Yes, I am in hopes to pick up about fifty more."

"Then I quits my job in the mornin'! I have never

"What is more sad than to see a poor dog skulking about in fear and hunger?"

Digitized by Google

yet worked in a dogs' home, and, please heaven, I never will! No use to talk to me, sir. I can stand a cat or two about, and I can put up with a cranky man, but I'm no lady assistant in a dogs' home."

"I suppose you've been conspiring with the girl," said Mr. Bowser, as he got back up stairs. "But she can

"You miserable old dog-thief!"

leave and be hanged to her. I know I am right in this thing. I know that my course is dictated by the sentiment of mercy, and the dogs' home shall go on in spite of everything."

Mrs. Bowser was slipping upstairs without a word in reply when the bell rang again and dog No. 3 appeared. He had scarcely been put in the shed when Nos. 4 and 5 turned up.

The boys were having wonderfully good luck in coming across wanderers, and it was cash down and words of encouragement in every case.

By ten o'clock Mr. Bowser had nine dogs in the shed, and after exhausting the scraps in the kitchen he had sent to the butcher's for meat and bones. He was enjoying that complacency felt by all men who have nobly performed a duty when there came a loud peal at the front door. He hastened to open it, to find a woman on the steps. She had something to say, and she began at once:

"A nice sort of man you are, I must say! Where's my dog?"

"Your dog, madam?" he queried.

"Yes, my dog! He was stolen out of the yard half-an-hour ago, and the boy was seen to enter this house. So you've got to encouraging boys to steal dogs, have you? I'll have him or bring the police here!"

"My dear woman, don't get excited. If your dog is here, he was taken by mistake, and I am sorry for it. I received him as a homeless, friendless canine."

The dog was found among those in the shed, and the woman went away muttering and scolding.

She had not been gone ten minutes and Mr. Bowser was about to lock up for the night, when the door-bell was almost jerked out by the roots. It was a man this time.

He pushed his way into the hall, and, shaking his fist under Mr. Bowser's nose, he shouted:

"You miserable old dog thief, but I am going to drive your head through the wall!"

"What—what's the matter?" was the stammering query.

"The matter is that you are encouraging a band of Hooligans to steal people's dogs and that one of them has stolen mine and brought him here. Trot him right out, or I'll thump you till you can't holler!"

"My dear man——"

"Trot him out, I say!"

The shed was visited and the missing dog recovered, and his still indignant owner talked fight till the gate closed behind him.

Mr. Bowser was wondering over the wickedness of his assistants when Mrs. Bowser came down stairs.

"Don't you think it would be a good idea to turn the rest of the dogs loose and abolish the home?" she presently asked.

"Never!" he shouted in reply. "I set out to establish a home, and I'll do it or perish in the attempt!"

At that moment the sounds of an awful racket came up from the shed. The seven dogs left had entered into a battle royal, and the noise was one to rouse the whole neighbourhood.

Mr. Bowser dashed downstairs and out into the yard, and in another second he had the door of the shed open. He was going to yell at the dogs and stop the row, but no sooner was the door thrown open than the fighting, struggling seven made a rush. So did Mr. Bowser.

Instinct warned the dogs that he was to blame for the row, and they stopped fighting among themselves to snap at his heels. It was a neck-and-neck race, with a bulldog trying to find a place to hang on to, but Mr. Bowser not only reached the fence, but went over it into the next yard and wiped out a bed of flourishing onions as he struck the earth.

It wasn't five minutes before twenty men and boys appeared, and one of them had wit enough to let the dogs out. They went out snarling and howling and fighting, with the bulldog having the best of it, and amid the general uproar Mr. Bowser climbed back into his own yard and got into the house. Mrs. Bowser was quietly awaiting him.

"Well, how many bites did you get from your homeless, friendless dogs?" she asked as she surveyed his tattered trousers' legs.

He turned red and glared at her and swallowed the lump in his throat, but he made no reply. He was so mad and scared and upset that he couldn't even charge her with conspiracy, and after seeing that the front door was locked he followed her upstairs and simply managed to growl out:

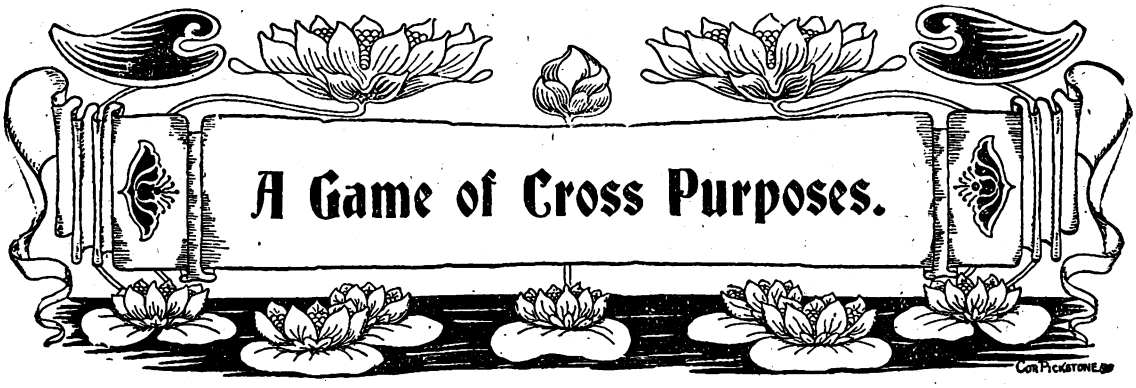
"Woman, you and I will settle this thing in the morning!"

M. Quad.

Next week:

He Tunes His Own Piano, and Thereby Saves £5.

Digitized by Google



"I THINK I was frank—I don't think I deceived you, Meg. Unless a fellow has a practice left him by his father, ready to step into, it's going to be uphill work, dear. I—I thought I stated things clearly enough before you came out, didn't I, sweetheart?"

There was a break in Eric Blandford's voice as he faced his young wife—the wife of barely a year. That year had been long enough to convince him that the unalloyed bliss he had imagined married life to be was all a myth—and further, that his wife was painfully, incurably English.

When, five years before, they had met at an informal dinner party at the house of his own pet, particular chum, he had thought her delightfully so. Her quiet manner, both in dress and voice—her perfect intonation when she spoke (which was seldom) came as a welcome relief from the noisy dash and freedom both in manners and dress, of the young Australian girls of the party.

Two generations back, Eric himself had been English, pure and simple too—for his father, a colonel of an English regiment retired on half-pay, had come out to settle in Tasmania and to end his days there. The end had come sooner than he had expected, and before Eric, his second boy, was out of his articles.

Then had come the uphill pull, and for lack of healthy competition in Hobart, Eric had come to Sydney. It was there, in the early days of his struggle with the world, that he had met Margaret Weyman, and it seemed to him that a strong hand had been stretched out to help him.

She had only looked at him with those steadfast grey eyes of hers in a way that said as plainly as words, "I believe in you"—and a man will give up the whole world and all that is therein—or better still, conquer it—to win the woman who tells him that.

An impetus had been given to his ambition and it was not long before he had his foot upon the first rung of the ladder of success.

It was at this time that the English mail brought him much bad news. Meg had suddenly lost her father from heart failure, and her mother, whose devotion had been proverbial, had survived him but a day.

More than that, it had come as a severe shock to his children, of whom, fortunately, there were only two—that, when all had been settled by his lawyer, the comparative luxury and comfort in which they had been reared must henceforth be a thing of the past; for they had lived, like many others, up to every penny of their income.

Jack, Meg's only brother, who was one of the spoilt and only boys one meets with so often, had calmly informed her that one of them must turn out as there was "only just enough," as far as he could see, "for one to scrape along on."

Like the cad that he was, when a little self-denial would have made enough for both—he had put it so that a girl of spirit such as Meg's could take it only one way.

With Meg, that way was soon decided on. She was fairly accomplished and had been given what is vaguely known as a liberal education.

She determined to turn the latter to account by taking a post as governess, and had already obtained a morning engagement as an opening, and was beginning to like her work, when she received from Eric Blandford—who had written her as a friend these five years—a formal offer of marriage.

The letter had followed on his success in his last law exam., and was to tell her that he was now fully qualified and in partnership with a fellow who had been articled with him.

"There will be no home for us at first, Meg, save the home that we can make of each other's society; but I think we can be very happy in rooms, at least, for a time."

So Eric had written, and then he pleaded, as men do, the theory of the "half loaf better than none," and though he could not be much with her, they would see each other every day, and he would know she was cared for and not dependent on any stranger for that which he, and he only, had a right to give her.

That was nearly a year ago now—but on the wet, dark Australian winter morning when the Blandfords started that ever painful and utterly useless policy of "having things out," it might have been ten, so far away did it seem to both.

They had got beyond mere disillusionment, and had reached the period of mutual recrimination.

Very hard, very bitter had grown the little white face of Meg, with its clear-cut, sharply-defined features, as she descanted at length, and for quite the fiftieth time, on the absence of good taste, refinement, or tact in the boarding-house of Mrs. Miggleson.

How vulgarly coarse those girls were—with their cockney twang and shoppy conversation—as if it were not possible to leave their type-writers at the office for once.

Then those hateful meat breakfasts that were so coarse, and so unlike the dainty English refinement she had been used to. And the men—well—they were beyond even Meg's power of description, and certainly were of a type she had never known at home

Digitized by Google

"But, Meg, dear, you forget," protested her husband, "they are English; their fathers were as English as yours, or at least, your husband's. You will see it all in time—it is only the natural result of climatic influence."

So Eric argued, but all to no purpose—and there was much more that Meg contrived to say, with a selfish woman's heedless thought of the pain she was inflicting, while Eric went through the painful process of dressing; and then, finding any words of his useless, he left her without even their good-bye kiss—and they had never forgotten that before.

He turned at the door as an afterthought struck him.

"Oh! by-the-bye, the Sessions begin to-day, Meg. I may not be home to lunch, and am afraid I may not be back to dinner even. Don't wait for me, dear, go up alone. You can bear it perhaps for once. It's not for long, now."

He paused, his hand on the door; but there was no sign of relenting on the cold, pure face that was like a vase of crystal, in which he saw himself with all his weaknesses, his delusions, his mistakes, with cruel distinctness.

He snatched a hasty breakfast, and thought hard as he ran for his ferry-boat.

"Poor little girl—perhaps it was hard on her—hard in any man to expect a woman to give up so much—all the little comforts and refinement, such as a temperament like hers would demand. What right had any man to ask it?"

Now it chanced that the first thing Meg noticed when she listlessly commenced to dress was a small, red-leather bound book, a note-book apparently, that she had never remembered to have seen before, and with the natural curiosity of her sex she took it up, opening it at the fly-leaf. There, in the bold, clear hand that she knew so well, she found the simple words written "My Diary," and underneath, her husband's name in full.

She felt a sneak—that is, the less feminine half of her did. The other half said:

"Why not look, he has no business to hide even this from you."

With the true instinct of a woman, she turned to the end first. The entries ended on the day before. They were very simple.

"Lunched at the A.B.C., 6d. I am getting economical for Meg's sake. I am a selfish brute, I know, but I'd do anything to make her happy, if I knew how. It used not to be so difficult—or perhaps it seemed easier and I didn't notice it."

She read on—turning back over a week of similar entries—reading now on her awakened conscience at the end of each roll and coffee lunch, "for Meg's sake," then came a week-end entry that, to Meg, seemed to be written in such large type that it blotted out aught else.

"No smoke for a week—astonishing how well a man gets on without a smoke when he sets his mind to it—it's quite easy."

Then the letters got so large that Meg had to brush her arm across her face to make sure she was reading properly, and two big splashes fell on the open page before her. To some women tears are the eye-openers of the soul.

All that day she racked her poor little brain. What could she do to show Eric, to tell him she hated herself for being the selfish little brute that she was, thinking only of herself, and never of the daily sacrifice of his life for her. How unhappy she had sent him to his work that morning; if only she could go over to the office now and tell him.

She bathed her eyes and went in to breakfast which she had suddenly remembered. But no, for all through the long, dreary day the rain came down pitilessly, in sheets, as it only can rain in Australia. The wind rose too, and there was a talk of the ferry-boats being delayed and perhaps stopped, for they could not make their wharves.

If it would hold up so that she might meet each one in the dusky evening light, in case he came, to tell him all and to welcome him.

But Fate was not kind in one little respect to-day as it seemed, for the rain did not abate one jot.

She had finished her last book, too, and was reduced to flattening her little nose on the window pane as she had done when a child, watching the rain as it swirled down the gutter of the steep, rock-hewn road to the ferry at the Point.

Her sensitive nature, once aroused, magnified her thoughtlessness into a crime, and she was feeling utterly miserable when a knock at the door of her room was followed by Mrs. Miggleson with a cup of tea.

Now, not being a first-class boarding establishment, it was not customary for boarders at Mrs. Miggleson's to be supplied with afternoon tea—it was entirely an extra, and therefore all the more refreshing to Meg who, in her distress of mind, had forgotten to order it.

Even the motherly face of Mrs. Miggleson (like Mrs. Rumbelow, of Davy Garrick fame, she rejoiced in the possession of "seven blessed children") was refreshing, as she set down the cup with a jerk and a "thought you'd like a cup o' tea, Mrs. Blandford, seein' as it was a wet day."

Meg almost forgot it was Australian tea, and such an exhilarating effect had it, that she soon set about devising some new plan of showing her penitence.

To go out was impossible. Eric, too, had said that he might not be in to dinner. Surely he would be in soon after, a happy thought struck her.

Amongst her English treasures was an evening bodice that she had never worn; but it was an exact copy of the one that Eric had seen her in that first day they had met—five years ago—when each looked out on such a different view of life.

It was a thick corded silk—white—a tiny square, cut *à la Greque* at the neck, and edged with a key pattern in gold thread. He had mentioned it often after in his letters and of how it suited her pure classical features.

So far she had had no opportunity to wear it; for her life had been mapped out on far different lines from that of her first visit, when she had been merely travelling with her well-to-do parents.

She reflected a moment—how they would all stare when she went up to dinner—the ill-bred women, the boorish men; but she would bear it all "for Eric's sake."

She dressed, plucked up her courage in both hands—and went in to dinner. Her over-wrought nerves fancied she heard the front door open as she turned the top corner of the flight that led to the dining-room.

She took her place amid a flutter of mixed feelings that no one seemed to take any pains to disguise, and struggled with the heavy meat meal in which there was none of the simple dainty refinement she had been accustomed to at the home table. She felt restless, nervous and ill at ease in a way she could hardly account for by her distress of the morning.

Digitized by Google

As soon as possible she hurried back to her room, and in a fever of anxious expectation paced to and fro on the cold floor-cloth which covered it.

A hurried slam of the door—no bell—no, the key was in—he would not wait—and Eric Blandford stood in the doorway, his face blanched with an indefinite fear of he knew not what, staring in amazement at his wife.

"You here, Meg?" he panted.

She ran to him, laying a little white hand on each outstretched arm.

"Here? why yes, dear, where else should I be?"

"Oh, nowhere, of course; forgive me, Meg, I was a fool; but I came in an hour since, and you were not here—and I thought—oh, never mind! it was very foolish what I thought; but you seemed so miserable this morning—I thought, Meg—I—thought you had run away—gone."

The last word was almost inaudible, and ended with a little cry that would have been hysteria in a woman. The man was worn out in nerve and mind and brain, and this had been as he thought the last straw.

She nestled her head in under his arm in a winning, bird-like little way she had, and drew down his head to kiss him. He picked her up in his arms like a child and carried her to the basket lounge that stood in the window recess.

With the tact and sympathetic nature of a strong man he asked no questions, only held her there in all the strength of his manhood's love till she had sobbed her tired, rebellious heart out. For she was tired—tired of fighting that strong conviction that told her she had married the best man in all the world.

At last she looked up through her tears.

"So you did come home after all to dinner, Eric?"

"Yes, I got Wright to do my work, because you know you said you couldn't go up alone to dinner here again—and I thought I'd find you here in our room—but never mind; only, why this, dear?"

He held her at arm's length.

"Are you going out? You didn't tell me."

"Not unless you take me, Eric. Don't you think, dear" (coaxingly) "that we might be extravagant for once and go to the theatre this evening, it's *Pinafore* this week?"

"And so you put this on" (touching her sleeve gently) "to please me only."

"Isn't that enough excuse for wanting to look pretty, sweetheart," she whispered; "but suppose you get some dinner while I put out your things."

EDNA S. GAMBLE.

"MAY I have the pleasure of seeing you home?" he bashfully asked.

"Certainly," she graciously replied. "There is a big hill just in front of the house, or, if you prefer it, you can climb a big tree in the cow-field. Go anywhere so that you can get a good view."

"AH, how have you amused yourself at the art exhibition?"

"Oh very much! I have admired no picture but yours."

"Really?"

"Yes, indeed; because there was so many people standing before the other pictures that I gave my whole attention to yours to save crowding."

HAVE YOU GOT THAT TEN POUND NOTE?

Thirty Ten-Pound Notes Going Begging!

YOU CAN HAVE ONE FOR THE ASKING!

THE latest scheme of *PEARSON'S WEEKLY* is unquestionably one of the most astounding that has yet been placed before the readers of any paper. Broadly speaking, the Editor places you in the position **of getting ten pounds by simply asking for it.**

The idea is this:

Thirty men are wandering about the country, each with a sealed envelope in his pocket. Each envelope is of linen, tough and unbreakable. No one but the Editor knows *exactly* what is in those envelopes, so the contents cannot be forged. Each contains, as a matter of fact, a letter signed by the Editor authorising the first person who asks for it to the sum of £10.

NOW YOU SEE HOW YOU CAN GET £10 FOR ASKING.

We don't expect you to rush out at once and ask every man you meet if he has the envelope. That would be foolish—a mere waste of time. Moreover, you would probably get a rebuff.

What you should do is to quietly watch everyone you come in contact with. If you think the man you see is likely to be one of these men, you can, in an inoffensive and quiet manner, simply say: "By-the-way, have you seen this scheme?" and show him this page. If he is *not* one of the £10 gentlemen he will say he hasn't seen the scheme, and will be interested, and thank you for putting the chance of making £10 in his way. If he is one of the Ten Pounders he will quietly and unostentatiously take out his pocket-book and hand you the sealed letter.

This you will at once post to us in a registered envelope, and **WE WILL SEND YOU A CHEQUE FOR £10.**

THE TEN-POUNDERS

Will travel by the train. Will wear ordinary clothes.
Will stop at all sorts of hotels. Will smoke and drink.
Will attend places of entertainment.
Will look in shop windows.
Will loaf about the beach or parks.

In fact, will behave just like ordinary mortals.

They will wander about our big cities, they will alight from trains at wayside stations, and walk about villages and small towns, and they will altogether give every opportunity to people to get those £10 notes.

If you are at this moment in the train one of these men ***may be opposite you, or sitting next to you!***

Just casually show him this page. If he's one of them you'll get £10.

You will at once say: "Oh, yes, but I might ask a thousand people, and yet not get the right one."

Of course you might; but then, you might ask three, and the third might be the right one. Don't think because you simply move in a limited circle during your day's work that you're not likely to see the right man. All these men will intrude themselves unostentatiously into people's daily lives. They may converse with you on any subjects but those which will give you a hint regarding the ten pounds, unless you broach such subject yourself.

Don't think that you have to ask everyone you meet. Just show the page to a fellow passenger by boat or train, to a chance acquaintance on the beach or on the parade. No harm is done if he's not the right chap. You can both just laugh over it.

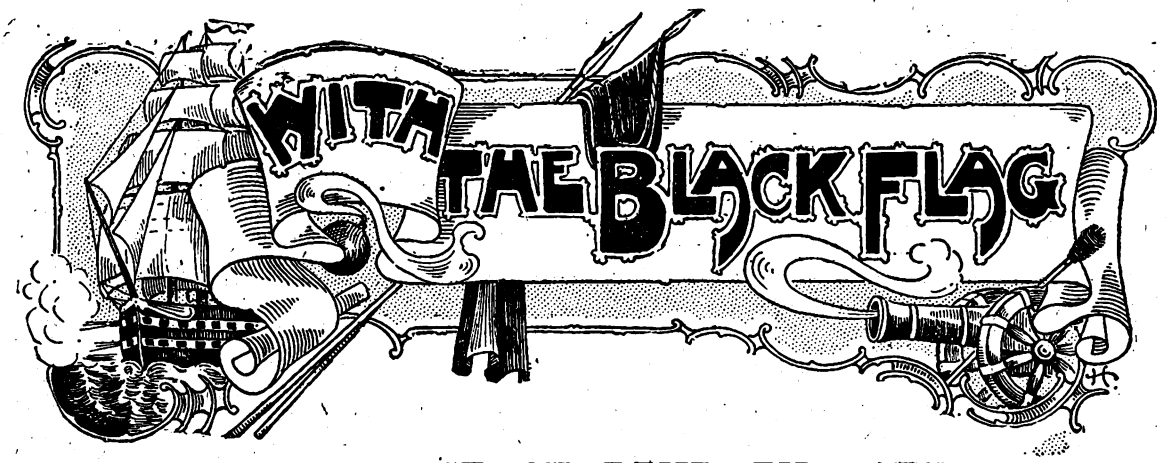
ONE THING IS CERTAIN.

The Three Hundred Pounds is wandering about the United Kingdom at this moment. Someone has got to get it. Why not you?

As each £10 has been asked for advertisements will be inserted in the newspapers published in the locality in which the claim has been made.

Every day the Ten Pounders will write to the Editor and tell their experiences—where they had breakfast, where they lunched, whom they sat next to, what those people were like, what they were talking about, and what they ate—in fact, will say just exactly what they have been doing every day. Some of this information will be published in the ***Daily Express*** every day and in ***Pearson's Weekly*** every week, so you will know just how things are going along.

Digitized by Google



A ROMANCE OF LAND AND SEA.

By William Westall.

Author of "With the Red Eagle," "The Phantom City," "Nigel Fortescue," etc., etc.

CHAPTER XI.

I Start with Dispatches for Bolivar.

The christening performed by an urbane old priest, who fortunately took my orthodoxy for granted, came off as had been arranged, and was followed by a feast at which many guests were present and many toasts drunk. To one of these I was called upon to respond, rather to my dismay, for though I knew Spanish indifferently well, my vocabulary of fine phrases was rather limited, and I had not acquired the art of turning the pretty compliments which the occasion required.

Nevertheless, I did my best, and Pepita was good enough to say that I acquitted myself to admiration. But Pepita was a bit of a wag, if a lady can be a wag, and liked to tease as much as to please.

"Your accent is pure Castilian," quoth she, "and what you said about our darling being born under a lucky star and at a time when the newly-risen sun of liberty is chasing away the last of the black clouds of despotism which have so long darkened this beautiful land, was very nice and very American."

And then she laughed, as well she might, for I had not enough Castilian at my command to say anything so flowery and absurd.

When the time for parting drew near she became more serious, affecting a great interest in my welfare and inquiring whether our expedition was likely to be so dangerous as had been said.

"I can only tell you what I heard. The Vice-President thinks it will be dangerous, and Don Iago is of the same opinion, but I daresay they exaggerate. Besides, dangers are made only to be overcome, and I have no doubt we shall return to Angostura safe and sound," I answered, with somewhat more confidence than I felt.

"I hope you will, Señor Wyvenhoe. It would be terrible if any harm—if you were——" And then, as though the thought were more than she could bear, Pepita covered her face, and added, in a voice broken with emotion, "If you were to fall into the hands of those cruel royalists think how sad it would be for us all, especially for"—here a long pause—"especially for your dear little godson."

On this the fan was turned aside, revealing a merry face and a pair of mischievous black eyes.

"And would be sad for nobody else?" I asked, laughing at my own discomfiture, for I had been foolish enough to think her emotion real.

"*Si*, señor, for us all. Luisa and I would be very sorry—really. So take care you come back safe and sound and bring Don Iago with you."

And I thought that they might be sorry—for a few minutes. The christening party was the last dissipation in which my compadre and myself indulged before our departure. We had to prepare for the sterner work before us, and there was much to do and several important questions to consider. The first related to the sort of craft we were to take.

Arismendez offered us either a launch or one or more flecheras, as we might prefer. Launches are large, clumsy boats, with a single mast and a big sail, and a caroza or awning in the stern sheets; flecheras, as distinguished from war flecheras, long canoes, cut out very light and paddled by twelve or more Indians, and are as swift as their name "arrow boats" implies.

Their greatest fault is the scantiness of their passenger accommodation, which is limited to a low, narrow cabin wherein there is barely room for two persons. Yet, flecheras being independent of the wind and faster than launches, we did not hesitate in our choice.

"You take flecheras," said the skipper, and we took his advice.

The next question was how many. A large expedition might attract attention and so invite attack, a single boat would be unable to withstand the river pirates, who at that time infested certain parts of the Orinoco, so we asked the General for two flecheras, and as Indians, though the best boatmen, are not warlike, we found ten Zambos who agreed to paddle on condition of having a hand in all the fighting and plundering that might come in our way. It was also arranged to take with us a young fellow of the name of Bonanza, known both to Arismendez and Santleo, but he had nothing to do with the dispatches and did not take the oath.

Our weapons were four double-barrelled guns, one barrel rifled the other smooth, twice as many pistols for ourselves and a dozen muskets for the Zambos, and all carried machetes, long broad-bladed, wooden-handled knives, equally adapted for cutting through bush and cutting down enemies.

So our fighting strength consisted of fourteen well-armed men, enough, as we were assured, to enable us to defy all

Digitized by Google

the ordinary perils of the water. As for those of the land we should have to trust more to strategy and good fortune than to numbers or strength.

When all was ready we received the dispatches and took the oath, which was to the effect that we would neither deliver them nor divulge their contents to any other person than Don Simon Bolivar, the Supreme Chief, that if we were in danger of capture by the enemy and unable to escape we would effectually destroy all the papers placed in our charge; also, that no torture, fear of torture or of death should induce us to betray to the enemy any knowledge we might possess of their nature or of the condition of the Republic, which was both portentous and comprehensive, and a grim incident that happened on the same day emphasised its significance.

A courier had arrived from the army without his dispatches, of which he had been deprived by the Spaniards. It had been impossible, as he averred, to destroy them. After hearing his report and asking him a few questions, Arismendez ordered the poor devil to be straightway hanged, and when we left Angostura his body was swinging from a gibbet.

It was a cruel and, as I thought, an impolitic deed. The man might have been surprised or taken prisoner in circumstances which rendered the destruction of his dispatches impossible, and had he deserted or said that after destroying them he had escaped, when escape seemed impossible, he would have saved his life instead of being punished for telling the truth.

Santleo agreed with me.

"The General is too much given to killing people," he said. "They all are. It is a warning to us. If we are surprised with our dispatches, which the saints forbid, we won't return to Angostura, *mio amigo*. We have not sworn to do that."

"Do the Spaniards ever torture prisoners?"

"I believe so, and they say that Morillo sometimes does it out of pure devilry, not merely to extort confession."

"And the patriots?"

"I never heard of any of our generals sanctioning the torture of prisoners, though I should not be surprised if some of the baser of them did. Spaniards were always cruel. We have all some Spanish blood in our veins, and an admixture of Indian or negro does not improve the strain."

"Some Spanish blood! Why, I thought you were of the blue blood?"

"You are mistaken."

"But there is nothing of the Indian or negro about you," quoth I, glancing at Santleo's red-brown hair and blue eyes.

"No, sir," he returned proudly and emphatically. "I thank Heaven that the mixture in my blood is of the noblest on earth. It is agreed that we start to-morrow at daybreak, is it not? It should be earlier, only I think several of our friends who don't rise before the sun have expressed a desire to see us off."

"*Bueno!* It is agreed," I replied, and so the talk ended, Don Iago being obviously indisposed to say aught more about himself, which was provoking, the little he had said having whetted the curiosity which Pepita's account of him had excited.

The friends who came to see us off were Señor Calzada, with his two fair daughters, and a few others, including of course the skipper, who if he felt as unhappy as I did must have been rather miserable, for we had become warmly attached to each other, and I was loth to lose him, yet we tried to put a good face on it and were both outwardly cheerful.

"I wish I were going with you. You will see more than I shall," he said as we walked down to the quay.

"But I shall not see Mrs. Barnish. It would take a good deal of Venezuela to compensate you for missing her."

"You are right. I would not swap her for the whole country, with its alligators, mosquitoes, centipedes, and snakes thrown in. You may laugh, Wyvenhoe, but your turn will come."

"It has come—and gone, thank goodness. I may marry sometime as a matter of duty, but I don't think the woman exists whom I could like as well as I like you, dear friend."

We found Santleo and Bonanza at the river side, and were presently joined by the Cazadas. Luisa looked unhappy, and had hard work to control her voice and restrain her tears. Pepita was unusually quiet and subdued.

"Do take care of yourself and don't run into unnecessary danger," she whispered. "We shall all look anxiously for your news."

I observed that Don Iago and Luisa were also having a few words apart.

After being embraced by Señor Cazada and several other caballeros and shaking hands with Cautley, we went on board the flecheras, the moorings were cast loose, the patrons (pilots) gave the word: "*Vaya con Dios*" (Forward in God's name), and we sailed away, followed by a chorus of *adios* and the skipper's hearty "Good luck and a pleasant journey."

Santleo and I had to sit as close together as two "insides" in a narrow coach, our shelter being a sort of open tent in which we could neither lie down nor stretch our legs.

"Luisa and Pepita are nice girls, and I have known Luisa longer than you have known Pepita," said Don Iago, suppressing a sigh.

"You are sorry to leave her?"

"Yes, and I think she was sorry to be left, poor girl

We sailed away, followed by a chorus of *adios*.

She and her people have been very kind. They made me feel at home, and partings always remind me of——"

And then, without completing the sentence, he sighed again and relapsed into silence, and I, being also in a melancholy mood, made no attempt to keep up the con-

Digitized by Google

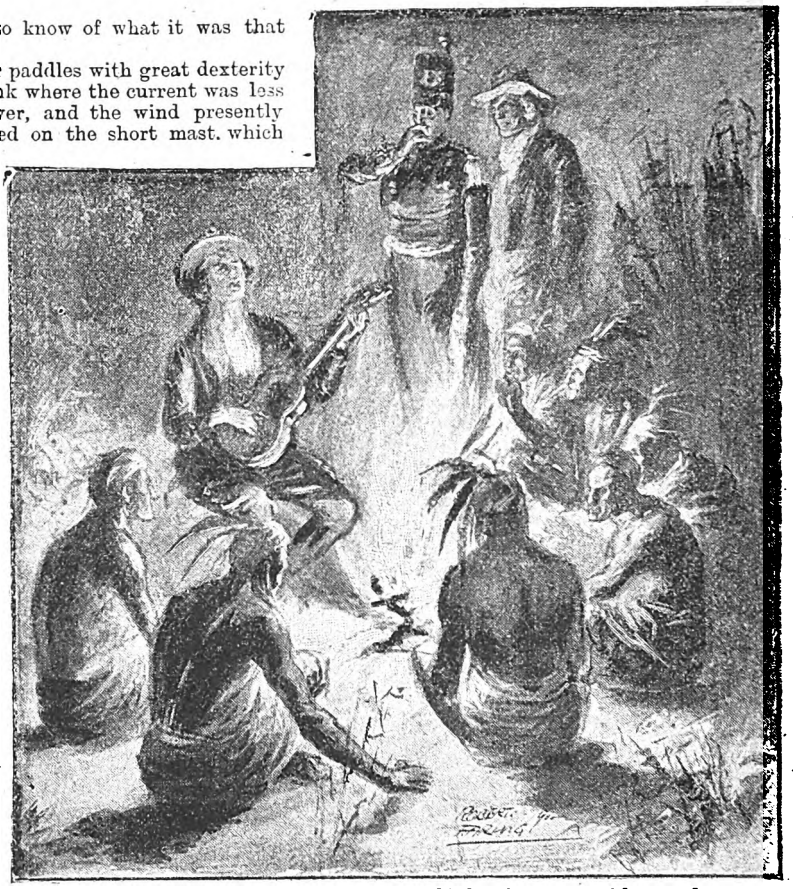
versation, though I should have liked to know of what it was that partings always reminded my compadre.

The Indians rowed well, handling their paddles with great dexterity and keeping the canoe near the right bank where the current was less powerful than in the middle of the river, and the wind presently getting up a small square sail was hoisted on the short mast, which proved a great help. The crew of our flechera numbered twenty-four, exclusive of the patron, of whom sixteen paddled, two abreast, while the remainder rested, and when their turn came relieved as many of their comrades. The other boat being smaller had fewer men, nineteen all told.

Now and then, by way of variety, we changed places, Bonanza joining Santleo and myself John Ready, or *vice versâ*. Above Angostura the river scenery is of a different character from that lower down. The country is higher and for the most part less densely wooded, and in many parts quite open, affording views of well-watered savannahs thronged with innumerable herds of wild horses and cattle, and groups of small islands, shaded with trees and covered with luxuriant vegetation, stretched from shore to shore.

But the patrons always give overhanging trees a wide berth; snakes lurk in the branches, basking and flashing their brilliant colours in the sun, and though the greater part were probably harmless, the dreaded cascabel (rattlesnake) was generally among them, and a few of these dropping into the boat would have caused trouble.

And so we fared all day, the Indians neither stopping nor slackening, even during the hottest hours, and when evening came we landed on a sand bank, which seemed a convenient place for passing the night. Wood was gathered, a fire kindled, and coffee made. We had brought with us a supply of *tasajo* (jerked beef) and biscuits, and the Indians found in the sand several nests of turtle eggs, which make excellent eating, and formed a toothsome addition to our repast.



Bonanza fetched his guitar and sang some old Spanish songs of love and war.

After supper Bonanza fetched his guitar and sang some old Spanish songs of love and war, then several *chansons du pays*, chanted in a wild recitative, the Indians joining in the chorus, so that we had quite a musical evening.

A gay dare-devil caballero was Antonio Bonanza, with a dark skin, a handsome face and gipsy-like eyes, full of quips and cranks, spirits that nothing could damp, and an incessant talker.

When the singing and the talk round the fire were over we rolled ourselves in our cobijas and lay down on the sand, which made an easy bed, but the mosquitoes made sleep impossible; we could only turn and groan, and turn again, and as a last resort creep to the lee side of the fire whereon the men had heaped green wood, though, owing to the pungency of the smoke, the remedy was almost as bad as the disease, and we rose at daybreak weary and unrefreshed. Then, after a breakfast of coffee, plantains and biscuits, and a plunge in the river, we continued our journey.

The next day and the next, and the day after that were merely repetitions of the first. The scenery was always fine, the animal life always abundant and wonderful, but the constrained position we were compelled to adopt by day and the mosquitoes by night took the edge off our enjoyment. Of human life we saw little. Nearly every village we passed had been burnt by the royalists and deserted by its inhabitants, save, perhaps, a few squalid women and wandering Indians.

Now and then we landed to stretch our legs and replenish our larder with our guns, but we never ventured far from the boats, for we had been warned that the country, as well as the river, was infested by robbers, and that the Indians were not to be trusted, except to betray us to the enemy—foreign or native—there being still Venezuelans who had not renounced their allegiance to Spain.

About halfway between Angostura and Caycara we came to a pass known as La Boca del Inferno (Hell's Mouth), the most remarkable and impressive part of the Orinoco I had yet seen. The river first narrows, then widens out, then narrows again, forming a vast and beautiful pool in which hundreds of alligators, porpoises, manatees and water-hogs, and millions of fish disport themselves.

Higher up is the Boca, a point where the main body of the mighty stream is forced between two immense pillars of rock and hurled into the pool like a hurricane. Even the largest trees are sucked under as soon as they enter this strait, not to reappear until they have passed the pool.

At the first view of that portentous flood of urgent water, lashing against the rocks up which it leaps in tongues of foam, whirling its spray high in the air, rushing wildly between its confines, I thought we had come to the end of our journey, that further we could not go. But thanks to the courage and dexterity of our boatmen we won through, sometimes warping, sometimes rowing, after a long and hard struggle, and presently finding a suitable spot for a bivouac rewarded them with a good supper washed down with a double allowance of aguardiente.

Digitized by Google

"How about the robbers and pirates who, as it is said, infest these parts? Are there any?" I asked Don Antonio as we sat by the fire.

"At any rate they seem to be rather scarce. We see none," quoth he.

"Wait a bit, there is plenty of time, and river pirates no more show their colours than land robbers announce their coming," said Santleo laughing. "We may have seen both without knowing it. I did not like the looks of that big launch we passed just before entering the narrows."

"What was there wrong with the launch?"

"With the boat itself—nothing; it was the crew I was thinking of. There were too many of them, several armed. However, we have nothing to fear from her; she is going down stream and the rapids are between us."

"Fear! We have nothing to fear from any of them armed as we are," exclaimed Bonanza.

"That depends on circumstances. You are spoiling for a fight, I think, Don Antonio," said Santleo smiling.

"Well, I should not object to a brush with the rascals, just to keep our hands in."

"I should, and so I think would Señor Wyvenhoe. We have our dispatches to think of, and there is neither glory nor aught else to be gained by an encounter with pirates. However, as their aim is plunder and they don't like hard knocks they are not likely to trouble us unless we grow careless and let them take us at a disadvantage."

I don't think we grew more careless as touching pirates, for we always set a watch at night, and whenever we met a large launch or several canoes in company kept them at arm's length and looked to our weapons, for we had heard it was the pirates' way to give friendly greeting, ask for news, or, pretending to be traders, offer something for sale, and so take their victims unawares.

But we went oftener ashore to stretch our legs than we had done, and bought plantains and tazajo from the Indians, which, seeing that some of them were supposed to be in league with the robbers, was perhaps not very prudent. But immunity always did make for indifference and always will.

One day we found a village which had escaped destruction and were cordially welcomed by the alcalde, a polite, fair-seeming old gentleman, who assured us that no royalist troops or robbers had been seen in the neighbourhood for a long time, and offered us quarters for the night, of course for a consideration.

It had perhaps been wiser to refuse, but the temptation of a quiet night in comfortable beds was irresistible, and after a good supper we turned in and slept the sleep of the just, for though the patio where our cots were placed was not free from mosquitoes, they were of a much less blood-thirsty sort than those nearer to the river, and did not disturb us.

The alcalde, who averred himself an ardent patriot, though very courteous was also very curious, asking with some persistence questions which it did not suit us to answer. He knew we hailed from Angostura, we could hardly hail from anywhere else, and it was obvious from his manner and his remarks that he had a shrewd suspicion we carried dispatches and were going to the front.

When morning came he first invited, then urged us to prolong our stay

"You had better," he said as a final argument. "*El rio es malo*" (the river is bad).

"How so?" I asked him. "The river was good enough when we left it, and the weather has not changed for the worse."

On which the old gentleman wagged his head portentously, looked preternaturally solemn, and drew his thumb across his throat with a significance there was no mistaking.

Don Iago laughed.

"You mean we may have our throats cut," he said. "You need have no apprehension on that score. We can take care of ourselves, and those who interfere with us are more likely to get their throats cut than to cut ours. *Vamonos, amigos. Adios*, Señor Alcalde."

"*Adios*, señores," he answered surlily. "All the same, *el rio es malo*, and you will regret not having heeded my warning."

"I distrust that old fellow," said I when we were under weigh.

"So do I for several reasons, one of which has only occurred to me a few minutes since. If I had thought of it last night, as I ought to have done, I should have been against accepting his hospitality," returned Santleo.

"And what is that?"

"The fact of his being there and the village not having been destroyed. Royalist troops were undoubtedly hereabouts not many months ago, and if the alcalde had not made himself useful to them they would have burnt the place down about his ears. As likely as not he is a royalist at heart, and gave us quarters only to find out who we are."

"But what could be his motive for pressing us to prolong our stay?"

"Suppose he is in league with the pirates and had con-

All the muskets and rifles went off, doing dire damage among the pirates.

Digitized by Google

trived a nice little scheme for surprising the flecheras while we were fooling round here? Or suppose there is a detachment of Spaniards not more than seven or eight leagues off, that he has sent an Indian scout with word that there are three rebel officers in the village whom he has reason to believe are carrying dispatches to Bolivar?"

"He would want to keep us here until they came?"

"Just so."

"*Por Dios!* Let us go back and give the old traitor his deserts," exclaimed Bonanza.

"I could not consent to that. It would be murder and of no earthly use. The best thing we can do is to hurry to the boats and get away quickly," said I. "Is not that your opinion, Don Iago?"

"Of course, and the more quickly the better. Double quick march!"

On this we went on at a run, though it was warm work, and were greatly relieved to see the flecheras lying in the cove where we had left them. After what had happened I should not have been surprised to find them either plundered or gone.

So soon as we were out of the cove and away from the trees sail was made, the wind being fair, and we went on our way, if not exactly rejoicing yet feeling devoutly thankful that we had come off so well. At any rate, it was my feeling, and I know it was my compadre's.

Had the alcalde got a few men together and fallen on us while we slept he might have taken both us and our dispatches; but for so bold a course he probably lacked both the resolution and the means, or as we had arms he may have feared for his skin. Treachery was more in his line, and from what subsequently came to pass I have not the least doubt that had we tarried an hour or two longer the boat would have been captured, and we should have had to fight for our lives, with scant hopes of saving them.

Two hours after leaving the cove, though owing to the winding of the river we had not gone far as the crow flies, four men in a canoe half-a-mile ahead were observed paddling about as if they were on the look out for something, and they no sooner saw us than they disappeared, which in the light of our recent experience struck both Santleo and myself as suspicious, and the flecheras were ordered to keep further out.

Soon afterwards two flecheras full of men and two canoes shot out into the river, no doubt from the creek into which the small canoe had disappeared.

This was more suspicious still, and though it by no means followed that they meant to molest us we made ready for action, opened the ammunition boxes, loaded our rifles and pistols, and the Zambos were ordered to load their muskets, all of which was done with as little movement as possible so as not to attract the attention of our possible enemies, who, after going halfway across the river, had headed up stream and were almost abreast with ourselves.

"I think they mean mischief," said Don Iago; "but if they are pirates and what I have heard of their ways be true they won't bear up and engage like men, but pretend to be friendly and try to take us unawares."

"And if they do?"

"What say you?"

"Don't give 'em a chance—fire first."

"So say I."

"If we are sure their intentions are hostile."

"Sure we cannot be; we can only judge by their ways, and it were madness to throw away a chance. However, as we are not to fight unless it cannot be avoided let us try to give them the go by. That will show whether they mean honestly."

The idea was a good one, and the crews of the two flecheras were ordered to increase their speed gradually. The strange flecheras followed suit, paddling in a style which showed that we had no chance of outpacing them. On this our fellows went slower, but slow or fast the strangers kept abreast of us, as yet, however, out of speaking distance.

"You see," remarked Santleo significantly.

The Zambos were now ordered to prime their muskets and lie down in the bottom of the boats, and we put our pistols in our belts and laid out pieces and swords within arm's length. The second boat with Bonanza and Ready on board

We were still talking when an Indian came up at a run, breathless and panting.

was close by on our right and between us and the left bank of the river.

Meanwhile the strangers were edging towards us, but we kept steadily on our course as if we neither feared nor suspected them. Presently one of the flecheras drew nearer, leaving the other and the canoes a few hundred yards in the rear, probably in order not to alarm us.

"*Buenas dias amigos!*" (Good day, friends!) sang out a man in the bow of the leading flechera, at the same time holding up a bunch of plantains and a basket of cassava-bread as though he wanted to trade, but the flash of machete blades and the gleam of gun-barrels belied his friendly overtures.

"Bear to the left," I said to the pilot, and then to the Zambos: "Fire!"

On which all the muskets and rifles went off, doing dire execution among the pirates, who immediately replied, killing one of our Indians and wounding several, but our volley caused so much confusion and disabled so many of their rowers that the enemy's boat, left for a minute to herself, swung round with her prow to the stream.

"*Vaya con Dios!* Row for your lives, men!" cried Don Antonio, and without more ado drove right into the pirate flechera, turning her over like a log.

It was a brave deed and well timed, for the second

Digitized by Google

flechera had just come within range, but we had done enough for safety, and leaving her to pick up the people who were struggling in the water we went ahead followed by a few musket shots and a flight of arrows from the canoes, which hurt nobody.

When Santleo and I had done what we could for the wounded I ordered the dead man to be thrown overboard, on which the Indians howled like Irishmen at a wake, and the patron told us that it was a part of their religious belief that the body of an Indian cast into the river became a voracious alligator and avenged himself for the indignity by preying on mankind. He said also that unless we would let them bury their departed comrade in their own way they would stop rowing and desert at the first opportunity.

We consented naturally, and when, three or four hours later, we came to a likely looking place, ran into a small creek and made fast to the side. The body was then put into a hammock, which was slung on a pole and carried by two Indians, who were occasionally relieved.

Santleo, Bonanza, and myself followed the funeral procession, leaving Ready in charge of the boats, only the patron and about a dozen of the Indians going with us.

After walking nearly an hour we came to a glade, which the Indians thought suitable for their purpose. Leaving them to prepare a grave and celebrate the funeral obsequies untroubled by our presence, we went off in pursuit of game, following a track made by cattle and deer through the brushwood, and taking with us a Zambo to carry whatever we might shoot.

Don Antonio, elated by our praises of his gallantry, was in unusually high spirits, chattering almost incessantly, and had just broken into a song when without a word of explanation he darted off like a deer and the next moment disappeared at a turn in the path.

"What a harum-scarum fellow he is," I remarked, laughing.

"No doubt of that. All the same he is as brave as a lion and as sharp as a hawk. What has he seen, I wonder? A petticoat, perhaps."

"I daresay. He is a great admirer of the sex. However, we shall soon know. He won't go far."

We were still talking when an Indian came up at a run, breathless and panting.

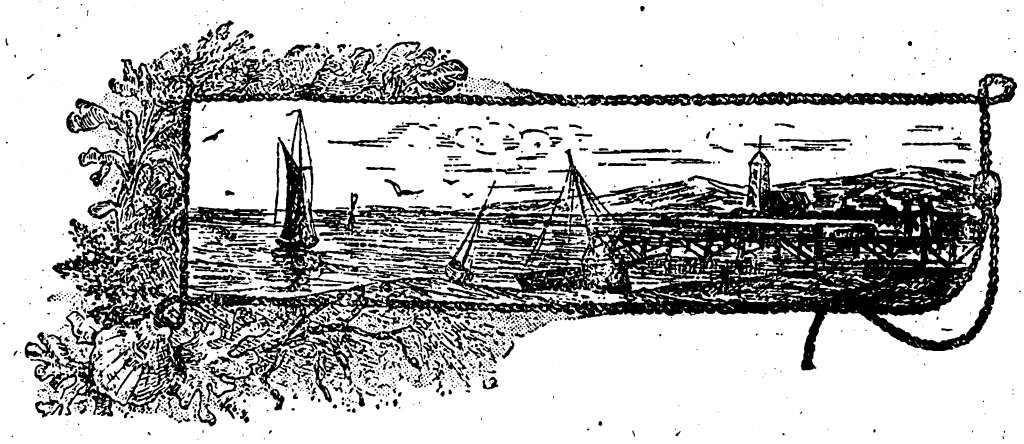
"Soldiers! soldiers!" he gasped, trembling like a leaf.

We thought the man was mad, but when he had recovered his wind and pulled himself together he said that having seen several lancers through the trees he had run on to warn us, and as he was evidently in earnest and could have no interest in deceiving us we were constrained to believe him.

Had Don Antonio been with us we should have hurried back to the boats at best speed, but as leaving him was out of the question we primed our pistols and cocked our guns, and going cautiously forward presently perceived our friend leading a troop horse which bore on its back a lancer, his head, which was bleeding profusely, hanging on one side, his heels on the other, and apparently lifeless.

Bonanza's usually bright face showed great concern; he looked continually about him, his eyes were never still. When we met he whispered, glancing backward: "As you value your lives no noise." Then he led the horse into a side path, beckoning to us to follow him.

(To be continued.)



Digitized by Google

SHORT STORIES ABOUT LANDLADIES.

We devote, every week, two pages of *Short Stories* to pithy, humourous anecdotes similar to those which appear in these columns. A prize of £1 1s. will be sent to the reader who submits the best storyette this week, and a copy of "An American Emperor," by Louis Tracy, to each of those whose attempts are used. The anecdotes may be either original or selected; in the latter case the source *must* be stated. The prize of One Guinea offered for the best Storyette in this competition has been won this week by Mr. E. M. Wood, of 28 Croydon Road, Bournbrook, Birmingham. Attempts this week must deal with Stories about CATCH PHRASES (such as "THERE'S 'AIR") and must reach the Storyette Editor, *Short Stories* Office, Henrietta Street, Strand, London, W.C., by Monday, September 10. Post-cards only, please.

Smart Woman That.

A LADY on the look-out for lodgings knocked at the door of a house where the notice, "Apartments" was shown.

"Come in," said the refined landlady, who answered the door in her walking out costume. "I have not been accustomed to letting," she said, as her visitor sat down. "My father was in a good position, and kept a coachman."

"Indeed," said the lady, "I wanted a bedroom and share of sitting-room."

"This is my sitting-room, and I didn't think I should have to give it up," said the landlady, "still, between one lady and another lady——"

"How much?" began the visitor.

"It is hard to go into these details," furtively wiping her eyes. "You may think it strange, a reduced lady——"

"Oh, I am sure you are, I should give as little trouble as possible, a tea, dinner——"

"This is my father's likeness," said the landlady briskly. "He was a perfect gentleman. A lady——"

At this moment a man entered with a heavy tread. It was a policeman.

"Sorry to disturb you, ladies, but I have a warrant here for the landlady on a charge of abstracting a £5 note from the desk of her late lodger, Mr. Sharpnose."

"Oh, and I have nearly taken her apartments," said the true landlady, pointing to her visitor. "This is terrible, and I thought her a real lady."

And in spite of protestations the innocent visitor was hustled off to the police station, where she had some trouble in making them see the mistake they had made. Meantime the "lady" landlady had time to clear off.

E. M. W.

Why She Wanted Him Saved.

THE other day a party from Yorkshire were on a boating excursion, and by some accident suddenly upset, to the great distress of the people on shore.

One old lady outdid all the others in her entreaties to save "the young man with the red hair."

Her appeal was heeded, and the young man was saved.

The onlookers congratulated the old lady on the rescue of her son, but she exclaimed that he was not her son.

"Your nephew, then?"

"No, he ain't no relation of mine, but he owes me 7s. 6d. for board and lodgings."

S. C.

Looking Ahead.

A LANDLADY, keeping a large lodging-house near Dublin, was surprised the other day when the servant came and told her that a man had called and asked permission to look over the establishment.

Thinking he wanted lodgings she made no objection, although naturally she thought it a strange request, and before he left she asked him why he wanted to make such a close examination of the premises.

On this he naïvely explained that they had had a meeting in the village and drawn lots for the various properties in the neighbourhood which they were to have when the Socialists were in power.

He had drawn her house, and he wanted to inspect his lot.

W. L.

Mr. Bowser and the Landlady.

IN order to deaden his disappointment at the failure of his farm-house scheme, and also as a kind of solatium to his wife and the cook, Mr. Bowser decided that they should spend a few days by the sea, and accordingly they visited the popular seaside town of Fleece-'em-all, and put up at a lodging-house kept by a very voluble female, who described herself as a "pore, hard-working, struggling widow."

For a time, to wax poetical, "all went merry as a marriage bell," but it was not destined to last, for the fates, with their usual perversity, had decreed that Mr. Bowser's feelings should once more receive a rude shock.

In an evil moment he asked for his bill, which was handed to him with commendable promptness.

And such a bill! It was enough to "stagger humanity," and Mr. Bowser reeled and sank into a state of utter collapse beneath its overpowering influence.

In the course of a few minutes he had recovered sufficiently to ring for the landlady, and when she appeared he received her with a torrent of expletives and wound up as follows:

"Madam, I was under the impression that by staying here we were assisting a poor struggling woman, instead of which I find that we have been intrusting ourselves to the rapacities of a human pelican."

"What, me a pelican?" screamed the landlady.

"Yes, you," replied Mr. Bowser, "for nothing but a pelican could show such a monstrous bill!"

A. V.

Digitized by Google

How He Got Warm.

In Cambuslang, Glasgow, lives a landlady noted for the small fires supplied to her lodgers. The house is situate near a large ironworks, which belches forth large tongues of fire.

One winter evening she was much surprised on entering one of the rooms to find the occupant with the window raised and he was sitting with his feet hanging outside.

Visions of suicide rose vividly before her, so she said in her most motherly pay-the-bill tone of voice:

"Don't you think you would be better in bed?"

"Yes," was the reply, "I was just warming my feet in front of the ironworks before I go."

C. V. W.

"Settled" in Threepenny Bits.

I am a curate; a proverbially pale, not young, but poor curate. Until quite recently I was in lodgings, and being, although a curate, honest, it was my wont to settle with my landlady every Monday morning.

One Monday I was paying her as usual, and with the money I gave her were two threepenny bits.

"Ah, sir!" playfully said my landlady, "you curates are all the same; you knows how to find 'em. Why, the last gentleman who was with me—a curate gentleman as well, sir—'e used to settle with me every month, sir, and every time 'e used to pay me in threepenny bits!"

T. A. W.

The Lodgers' Revenge.

Two young friends, on finishing their apprenticeship as printers, secured situations and lodgings in a Lancashire town. They purchased their own provisions, and every Saturday they bought a certain quantity of flour, which their landlady converted into "home-made" bread for them.

But as time went on, their loaves gradually diminished in size and weight, until, at length, the painful fact that that good lady was appropriating their flour forced itself upon them. They thereupon resolved on revenge.

It was their usual custom to dine on Sundays at their landlady's table. On that day a large meat pie formed the principal item of their menu; so on the very next Saturday after their discovery, they purchased a few pounds less of flour, buying instead a quantity of plaster of Paris to compensate for the deficient weight.

The flour and the plaster of Paris they carefully mixed, and awaited the result.

Sunday arrived, and, as usual, at the dinner the pie, which had been baked early in the day so that it might be "nice and cold," was prominent. Grace having been said the good lady commenced operations on the pie, but to her astonishment, try as she liked, she could not cut its crust, the knife slipping as from the back of a turtle.

Amused at the woman's efforts, the young men lost control of themselves and laughed loudly.

"What have you got to laugh at?" cried the perspiring dame.

"Oh, at nothing particular," was the reply, "only take our advice, and make certain that when you go to our flour-bag, that you don't help yourself from the one in which we keep plaster of Paris!"

J. M.

Done!

In a Northern temperance hotel, a party of visitors were making merry one evening in one of the upper bedrooms, after having provided themselves with a supply of the best "mountain dew."

The worthies, however, had a fancy for whisky hot, but the difficulty was to get the hot water without causing any suspicion as to its intended purpose. Finally, by the aid of "palm oil" (in the shape of a shilling), the boots was induced to bring up a large jug of hot water "for shaving."

But Nemesis awaited the drinkers. As the boots was ascending the stairs with the hot water, the proprietress (a very prim and strict old lady) met him, and inquired his destination.

"It's hot water for shaving for twenty-two, ma'am."

"For shaving at half-past nine at night; never!"

"Well, ma'am, that's what the gentleman says."

"All right, then, wait a minute."

The landlady opened the nearest bedroom door, entered, and picked up some soap. Returning to the boots she threw the soap into the hot water, with the remark:

"If the gentleman wants it for shaving he can't object to the soap; so take it up now."

E. H.

The Boarder at Breakfast.

"I have been reading a very interesting article on coffee," said Mrs. Smith, as Mr. Hunker passed up his cup for refilling.

"Being about a beverage, the article couldn't be dry," observed Mr. Hunker playfully, and then added: "Three lumps of sugar, please."

Something like a frown passed over the landlady's face at the boarder's remark, but she continued:

"The article was one which deserves a large circulation, I think, for the good of the race. It was on the injurious effects of coffee drinking. The author said we are becoming a nation of coffee topers. The pernicious effects of too much coffee drinking he set forth in an exceedingly strong light. Among the serious results likely to follow, he enumerates a sallow skin, shattered power, and in some cases he thought consumption might be traced to the inordinate use of the beverage. The author said that appalling statistics could be produced of the ravages of the coffee-drinking habit among the English people."

"It was coffee he was talking about, was it?" asked Mr. Hunker, as he rose to go.

"It was, Mr. Hunker."

"Then I don't think we need worry ourselves."

O. P. W.

Next Friday

WILL APPEAR THE FIRST NUMBER OF

"The Curiosity Shop."

Remember that name, please, when you ask for it next Friday—"The Curiosity Shop."

ORDER IT TO-DAY.

Digitized by Google

CLEOPATRA'S ASP.

ACTORS accustomed only to the short journeys and civilised surroundings which are connected with a tour through the English provinces, can have little notion of what it is to be "on the road" in the Western States of America. It is not only that the country and the people are less civilised, but both are so different. Side by side with the strongest marks of primitive habitation you find instances of the latest invention.

The Pullman car startles the antelope and the prairie dog in its passage; advertisements of Mustang Liniment are daubed upon immemorial cliffs; and every little township of wooden houses has its church, its newspaper, and its Lyceum.

It was in the latter building (which for the benefit of the uninitiated I may explain, serves much the same purposes as an English town hall) that the travelling company that I had arranged to join at Kansas city, in the spring of 188—, usually gave its performances. It is surprising, I may remark in passing, how advanced the Americans of the West rn "cities" are in the arrangement of these local theatres. In most of them some decent stock scenery may be found; and the rooms are nearly always clean, and the general arrangement most systematic.

The company I was about to join was one of those struggling combinations of which there are so many travelling the States. Upon the basis of a small amount of capital and a large stock of histrionic enthusiasm, the "leading man" of the company, who was also the manager, had "organised" the troupe for the exposition to the benighted denizens of the Far West of the beauties of the legitimate drama in general, and of his own acting in particular.

His wife was a little woman from Florida, and the darkness of her complexion and a certain blueness of the tinge of her finger-nails spoke pretty decidedly of an admixture of negro blood in herself or in her ancestors. I found, soon after I joined the company, that she had been tried in Shakesperian leading parts, but had so egregiously failed in them that even to the partial eyes of her spouse the fact was evident that a substitute for her in these *rôles* must be found. The result was an advertisement in a New York theatrical paper, and my acceptance thereof, decided partly by the fact that I had been "resting" for a tediously long period, but more by the opportunity which seemed to be offered to me of gaining experience in the higher walks of the drama.

I found the manager, who rejoiced in the Transatlantically aristocratic name of Calhoun, extremely polite, indeed, perhaps rather too much so, considering that his wife was a member of the company. I must say, however, that this amiability on Mr. Calhoun's part arose much more from histrionic selfishness than from anything approaching to gallantry. Like most enthusiasts, he would have sacrificed anything to improve the effect of his performances; and the fact that in me he found a leading lady, who, whilst competent to sustain the characters allotted to her to the satisfaction of his audiences, was yet sufficiently modest to adopt his views of the proper treatment of a dramatic situation, had, I am sure, more to do with his cordiality than any personal admiration for myself. I need hardly say that the "views" alluded to generally dictated giving a prominence in his own performances and a retiring reserve in mine which was not in every case warranted by the author's text.

As for Mrs. Calhoun (Pepita, as her husband called her—an example we may as well, for the sake of brevity, follow), she showed her dislike for me from the moment we met. It was, perhaps, too much to expect an actress who had made a failure in "leading business," and who had been relegated to the Charmians and Emilias of Shakesperian representations, to welcome with cordiality the individual who came to take her place.

At the same time, I think Pepita might have been a little less demonstrative of her antipathy. When we met in the passages of the various theatres which we visited she swept past after the slightest of nods, turning to me with marked disdain her rounded, though somewhat swarthy shoulders; and whilst I was upon the stage I often caught a glimpse of her standing in the wings, glaring upon me with eyes that shone with the lurid glare of bitter detestation.

I soon discovered that, in addition to her hatred of me as a dramatic rival, Pepita cherished a feeling of jealousy of another kind. Knowing how deeply artistic egotism drowned every other voice in Mr. Calhoun's breast, I was much amused at this ridiculous fancy on her part; and I am much ashamed to say that, to annoy Pepita, I often elaborated the "business" between Mr. Calhoun and myself, especially in scenes of an amorous

Digitized by Google

nature. I had, however, to be careful how I did this; for the tragedian, whose mind was entirely occupied with himself and the effect which he was producing upon the audience, was inclined to be uneasy at my thus putting myself forward; and I saw clearly that the day on which I cast him distinctly into the shade would be the day on which I should receive a firm, but courteous "notice."

I will pass over several weeks of experience of this sort, during which I had firmly established myself in the good graces of the various members of the company (with the exception always of the hostile Pepita), and come to the time of our visit to the little city of Selma, in the State of——.

I generally made a point, in the places in which we played, of making the acquaintance of a few of the more respectable of the inhabitants. Manners are much franker and more simple in this particular than with you in England, and a well-conducted young woman in a travelling company is received with hospitality by the unconventional people of the Western townships.

During our stay at Selma I had made the acquaintance of the family of Deacon Clay, which consisted of one strapping girl and three stalwart sons, all about (or over) six feet in height.

The eldest and most stalwart of these three was named Saul, and it was he who in the forenoons during the first three days of our stay at Selma showed me the "lions" of the place, the waterfall, the saw-mill, and the "Maiden's Leap"—for Selma, like other places, had its romantic traditions. On the fourth, as I, like Oliver, "asked for more," he proposed to take me on a visit to "Old Leathers." I consented, and on our way to this curious personage's abode he gave me some information about him.

Old Leathers, it appeared, was a harmless lunatic, who lived on odd jobs and the charity of the neighbouring farmers. His particular weakness was a friendship for snakes in general, and rattlesnakes in particular. To avoid the danger of being bitten by these reptiles, he invariably wore a suit of soft leather, boots, jerkin, and all—hence his cognomen.

We started from the town in one of those boxes upon wheels which are dignified in the West by the name of "waggons"; and after a jolting drive of several miles arrived at a glen between two "bluffs." At the top of this Saul fastened the horses, and led me carefully down the narrow path which wound its way to the bottom of the little valley.

It was bestrewn with masses of rock of all sizes and shapes, three or four of which, thrown together by some convulsion of nature, formed a sort of cave between them. Pausing some twenty feet above this, Saul hallooed, and a figure, which I saw at once must be Old Leathers, appeared in answer to the summons, like a demon through a trap in a pantomime.

The old man was eccentrically clad in the suit of leather in which I had been prepared to see him attired, and the skin of a raccoon with the tail hanging gracefully behind, formed a charactistic covering for his grey head. His features were deeply marked with age and a hard frontier life, but had an appearance of haleness and health only seen in those habituated to an open-air existence.

"Here's a young lady come all the way from New York to see you," said Saul, with pardonable exaggeration. Old Leathers took off his cap and bowed with the air of a polished courtier. "Can't you show her your pets?"

"Why, yes," said the old man. "But you must not be frightened," he continued with a genial smile. "It's not every one that fancies 'em. Keep quiet and I will bring them out."

Though considerably nervous, I concealed a cowardice which I felt that Saul would have despised, and was silent, whilst the old man took a flute from his pocket, and began to play one of those "Christy Minstrel" airs which are so popular in the United States.

Then I saw a sight which astonished me. From under each of the numerous blocks of stone which were scattered around came a snake. "Copper-heads," spotted with copper-coloured splotches not only on the head but all over the body; "garter-snakes," grey and yellow-green, were there; but the majority of the audience at Old Leathers' concert belonged to the species designated in natural history books as the "deadly" rattlesnake.

They came forward and curled and wound themselves about Old Leathers' ankles, their heads gliding upwards over his legs, moving as if in caress, and then falling to the ground, rising again to repeat the motion. The quaint figure of the old frontiers-man; the grotesque contrast between the strains of "Mother, I am dying fast," and the general surroundings; the background of the rocky cliffs and irregular rock-strewn grass; and the sight of the ever-moving, silent reptiles, whom my fancy and their constant restless motion multiplied into thrice their number, had a strange effect upon my senses.

Louder and longer sounded the soft notes of the flute; faster and faster coiled and uncoiled themselves the supple bodies of the snakes; till, at last, I felt a sort of mesmeric drowsiness coming over me, and had I gazed at this strange spectacle much longer, I believe, despite my horror of snakes in general, and "rattlers" in particular, I should have left the spot where I was standing and joined in a tarantala dance with Old Leathers' favourites.

But the music ceased, and almost before he had time to put up his instrument every snake had disappeared as suddenly as it had come.

I pressed the old man to take a reward for his exhibition, but he courteously refused.

"If you would like to buy one, miss," he said. "I sell many to menageries, and send some to England." Seeing my horror, he added: "You would not be the first, miss. Only this morning——"

"Oh, no!" I interrupted him in horror.

Thanking him for his courtesy, we departed as we had come, but by what seemed an easier path.

As we climbed it I noticed on the ground a glove. On picking it up I saw it was a woman's, and abstractedly put it into my pocket, and we gained the waggon and drove home as fast as Deacon Clay's two trotters could carry us.

It had been arranged that we should play *Antony and Cleopatra* on that particular evening, by particular desire of the deacon and leading inhabitants of Selma, and I asked Saul to drive quickly that I might be back in time for the "call" at twelve.

On arriving at the hall, I found a warm altercation going on between Mr. Calhoun and his wife. She had formerly attempted the part of Cleopatra, and I believe it was the one in which she was least unsatisfactory.

But I really believe that her strongest objection to my undertaking the *rôle* arose from her distaste for the demonstrations of affection which the great dramatist's

Digitized by Google

lines suggest between the amorous Antony and the Egyptian queen.

I was obliged to be a listener to this connubial dispute; and from what I heard I gathered that the conduct of Pepita had of late not been entirely exemplary. She had, it seemed, been "making too free" with a party of "cow-boys" (cattle drovers from Texas) who had honoured Selma with a visit; and it was as much to teach her a lesson as to secure an adequate representation of the part that her husband refused, in not too civil terms, to alter the cast of *Antony and Cleopatra*, Pepita might play Charmian if she chose; otherwise she might "leave it alone."

At this refusal the passionate temper of the *mestizo* flared into flame. She first of all poured out upon the devoted head of her husband a flood of abuse which I need not write down here; and then turning to me, she scolded me soundly for having "supplanted" her, as she called it.

"Yes," she said, her black eyes flashing, her nostrils dilated, and her hand clenched in a style that, if she could only have reproduced it on the stage, would have made her successful as a *tragedienne*, "you have taken my bread out of my mouth, and you have taken my husband; but, mark my word, you won't live to enjoy either!" Then, her eyes falling upon the glove which happened to be protruding from the pocket of my ulster, she cried: "Thief! Would you take everything?" snatched the glove away, and dashed, weeping wildly, out of the place.

I was surprised to discover that it was Pepita's glove which I had picked up, and an uneasy wonder how it came to be left where I had found it hovered, so to speak, at the back of my brains for some hours. But, as these were also occupied with the very harassing work of rehearsing, it was not strange that my "secondary musings" had no definite result.

There was a sort of suppressed hostility in Pepita's manner when we met at the theatre in the evening. She was paler than usual, and more reflective and abstracted. She played Charmian as if in a dream. There was evidently something on, or in her mind which made her manner so unusual. Once, when her husband attempted to enter her dressing-room, she slammed the door in his face, and bolted it on the inside.

The play proceeded, as usual, till we came to the well-known scene of Cleopatra's suicide in the last act. The actor who played the clown was ushered in by Cleopatra's handmaidens, and in answer to my question, "Hast thou the pretty worm of Nilus there, that kills and hurts not?" delivered the speech set down for him.

While waiting for my cue, I was harassed by a sound for which I could not account. It was a gentle "whirr," like a dry pea rattling in its pod. I tried dreamily to localise this noise; and it is a curious instance of the difficulty of decision in these cases that it was not until I had actually taken the basket into my hand that I found that the sound was caused by something inside it.

The exigencies of the stage leave no time for hesitation. Come what may, the business of a scene must not stop. I took the basket from the clown, and, after speaking the lines which precede the action, raised the lid, and took what I presumed was the usual "property" snake from its interior.

I shall never forget the shudder of repulsion that ran over my body as I felt the clammy, oozing thing which I had grasped. A sort of restriction of the muscles took place which prevented my loosing my hold, even when I saw that it contained a large rattlesnake, which, stirred to a high pitch of anger by its restraint, was drawing back its head, with its neck in exactly the shape of a note of interrogation, its mouth open, and its little eyes sparkling with rage, whilst it agitated its rattle savagely. In another moment it darted its nose against my neck with a force that was startling, and, overcome with sickening horror, I fainted.

* * * * *

When I came to myself I was suffering an intolerably burning pain in my neck. Saul Clay was standing near the sofa in the dressing-room, to which I had been carried after I had fainted.

In a few words of deep feeling he told me that he had witnessed the accident, and, though not able to prevent the snake biting me, had applied the rough, but generally effective, frontier remedy of placing some gunpowder upon the bleeding wound and igniting it.

It was to this readiness of action on his part that I probably owed my life. The snake had escaped in the confusion.

I was brought to the belief that, but for Saul's remedy my fate would have been sealed, by a shocking occurrence which happened the same night.

It appeared that Mrs. Calhoun had determined to leave her husband, and fly with one of the cow-boys I have already alluded to. Late in the night she took the keys of the building from her husband's pocket, and came to the theatre, probably to procure some expensive dresses which were in her room behind the scenes. Whilst groping about for a light she must have trodden upon the snake, which probably dropped through a chink in the stage into her apartment; and when the janitor came in the morning, he found her stiff in death. Some letters in a man's hand, which were discovered in her pocket, explained her plans.

This painful event broke up the company. Learning that I was about to undertake a tedious journey back to New York, the good deacon persuaded me to remain with him till I might be able to hear of another engagement.

I remained; and it was not long before one was offered me. The most perspicacious of my readers will have already foreseen that it came from Saul Clay, and that the part which I was to fill was that of his wife.

I accepted the *rôle*, and he says that I fill it to satisfaction; in fact, "leave nothing to be desired."

A blue mark on my neck, which nothing can erase, is the only memento which I possess of the painful accident which led to our marriage.

FRANK DESPSER.

"BESIEGED WITH B.P."

A complete record of the Siege of Mafeking.

By J. EMERSON NEILLY.

War Correspondent of the "Pall Mall Gazette" in Mafeking.

Crown 8vo, Price 1s. net, post free, 1s. 3d.

To be had of all Bookstalls and Booksellers.

Digitized by Google

THE WOMAN WHO COULDN'T STAND DRAUGHTS.

My wife's aunt felt a draught. She felt it in her feet, which, at the time, were planted on a breadth and a half of our parlour carpet. My wife's aunt is very sensitive to draughts. She was born in a remote corner of Aberdeenshire, where there is an easterly or northerly gale twenty-nine days out of every month, and people have to blanket horses in their stalls after they are fed, to keep the wind from blowing the hay out through their hides. My wife's aunt was brought up in her father's mill, which had neither doors nor windows, but plenty of holes cut for them, and yet the first thing she found to complain of in our parlour was a draught of air.

"This is the draughtiest place that ever I was in," said my wife's aunt. "I don't see, Howard, how you can reconcile it with your conscience to expose your wife to the peril of catching her death o' cold."

"Our health has been excellent hitherto," said I; "but if you think that this draught is a serious danger, I will have it stopped. I am greatly surprised at it, because our landlord vowed that there was a free circulation of air in every room, and my knowledge of his veracity led me to think that we should have to manufacture oxygen for breathing purposes by a chemical process."

"It's blowing half a gale here now," said she, "and it's as much as my life is worth to sit in it. Can't you give me something to put my feet on? The wind blows all along the floor."

I selected a chair which I thought would stand the pressure, and hoisted her feet into it, though I had no idea it would prove injurious to her health. North-easterly snowstorms have been her daily food for years, and a forty-knot breeze is regarded as next door to a calm where she came from. Then our aunt announced that she had traced the draught to the open grate in our parlour.

We had no fire in it, for the rooms are heated by steam on mild days, such as the one in question. So, under my aunt's supervision, I stuffed the chimney full of paper, and how I shall ever get it out again when we want a fire is more than I can tell If I thought the landlord had skipped a payment on his insurance policy I might burn it out, but otherwise I would not risk the chance of making money for him.

It was desperately hard work to plug up the chimney, but it did no good. Auntie was sure that she should blow away. So Maude closed the folding doors behind the "pourteers." She did not tell me that she had done this, and so, when I rushed through the curtains in search of something to drive into the seams round the skirting, I brought up with a sounding bang against the closed doors. I have done that trick four or five hundred times since those curtains were put up, and yet I have not taught my nose to pick out the soft spots on the doors.

After tinkering with the skirting for half-an-hour, and accomplishing nothing but a stiff back, I asked our aunt whether the breeze was moderating. She gave me no encouragement. She had talked so much about draughts by this time, that both Maude and I were able to imagine that we felt the cold breath of the tomb blowing on the back of our necks.

We made some further investigations as to the source of the draught, and had almost decided that it came from the dark and mysterious cavities into which the folding-doors withdrew when our aunt permits them to be open. It is often possible to hear strange and melancholy sounds by listening at that one of the three caverns which leads dimly in the direction of our neighbours. The sounds of pianos get in that way, and why, I asked, should not other deleterious influences invade our dwelling by the same track?

In view of this possibility, we began to plug things into this place and poke them back with a long stick. We used old newspapers, and almost anything, in fact, which we did not want in our flat. The hole appeared to have a capacity about equal to that of the bottomless pit, but our supply of rubbish was good, and our diligence exemplary.

I think that we might still be engaged in trying to fill that cavity if the gentleman who rents the flat next to ours had not come over to inquire what was our object in thrusting ten or a dozen sacks of rubbish, besides two or three pairs of old trousers, into his parlour. He said that the newspapers were out of date, and the clothing did not fit him, and, in short, he begged us to desist.

"I'll tell you where the trouble is," said our aunt at this stage of the game; "your windows don't fit. There are cracks round them big enough to crawl through."

There was undoubtedly some truth in her allegation. Our landlord has built a great many houses, and the parts of them were furnished to him by wholesale. Sometimes he was not so careful as he ought to have been in putting things together. Several of our windows were intended, I believe, for other houses in different parts of the town.

It seemed best to follow our aunt's advice, and get a man to put weather strips on the windows. It will not surprise anybody who knows me to hear that I went into the weather-strip game in the gentle spring instead of in the autumn. I engaged the weather-strip artist to come the next day. By this time the newly-discovered draught had given Maude such a cold that she could not speak above a whisper, and she and poor Carlo took cough medicine every hour.

I superintended the adjustment of the weather-strips. It was necessary to keep the windows open while the work progressed, and in the course of the operation I contracted a chill that will probably never leave me in this world.

Our servant, too, has a cold. She suffers because of her obedience to our orders, which is the last fate I should ever have predicted for her. By keeping the windows closed, according to directions, she raised the temperature of that room to a point which made it necessary for her to go about her work clad in as little as was consistent with her ideas of propriety.

Consequently, whenever she was obliged to go into any other room she felt the difference in temperature to a which was too much even for her iron constitution. So she bought a quart bottle of Irish whiskey and went home to her relations, who welcomed her with an enthusiasm second only to that with which they welcomed the bottle.

But our aunt continued to be quite well, There is no sustaining power like that of happiness, and when she found that the draught which she had invented had laid us all up, her joy was full. It may have been on that account that she did not take cold herself.

PERCY WEEKS.

Digitized by Google

A Jolly Good Thrashing.

MANY people are in the habit of assuring their friends that they "enjoy very poor health," not meaning by this assertion to express contentment with their condition, but the contrary. When I, however, tell you that I once had a jolly good thrashing, there is a special intention in every word of the phrase.

The castigation was jolly, because I thoroughly relished every blow as it fell on my body; and it was good, because it saved my life. The circumstances in which I took this very unusual form of gratification were as follows:

I was living at Trimurtigherry, where I had a small cotton-cleaning and pressing factory. The cotton grown from indigenous seed in that district has but a poor staple, and, in fact, is a crop only cultivated on soils which are considered too poor for cereals.

This inferiority of quality naturally deterred shippers from placing orders freely with me; and in the hope of demonstrating to the ryots the advantage of paying more attention to the industry, I procured a variety of seed from America, and formed a small model plantation near my bungalow.

It succeeded very well, and as the balls ripened, I used carefully to gather them myself, in order to keep the different kinds distinct, and to test the yield.

I was engaged one morning in this manner, and was in the act of plucking some pods off a tree, when I felt a sharp bite on my right wrist. At the same instant I saw a snake drop to the ground and writhe rapidly away.

I noticed a bright, yellow line on each side of the upper surface of the reptile's head convergent on the snout, and I feared, only too justly, that I had been bitten by a tic-polonga, the *daboia Russellii*, one of the most common of venomous snakes. If anything were needed to confirm my misgivings, it was supplied by a glance at my injured wrist.

A look was sufficient, and I instantly knew that the wound had been inflicted by a poisonous serpent.

The two fatal marks where the creature's fangs had pierced my skin were only too plainly visible.

"At least my destroyer shall not escape," I thought, and springing forward, I crushed the snake, which proved to be a tic-polonga, under my heel, just as it was reaching a crevice in the earth, where it would have been safe.

Revenge was certainly my primary impulse in killing the reptile, but I had a secondary object, which was to ascertain its age and size, as the consequences attendant on a poisonous snake-bite are materially affected thereby.

The tic-polonga attains a length of fifty inches, and death generally rapidly supervenes on the bite of a full-grown specimen, especially if the wounded part happen to be one of the extremities, such as a finger or toe which can be fairly seized between the animal's jaws. The venom is in that case injected deeply into the flesh, and commingling at once with the blood, is rapidly diffused through the veins and arteries, and reaching the heart, paralyses the action of that organ.

But if the part attacked present a wider surface, so that the epidermis may perhaps only be abraded and the subcuticle remain unpierced, the chances of remedial measures proving efficacious are greatly increased, while the consequences of any wound inflicted by a *daboia* of not more than twenty or twenty-four inches may generally be counteracted.

The degree of danger from snake-bites also depends considerably on several other conditions, such as the health of the patient; whether the snake has recently made a meal or bitten any other; and, finally the time of the day, as in the early morning, when the air is raw and chilly, a snake is languid, and will strike with comparatively little energy, whereas during the heat of the day it is active and generally very fierce.

The circumstances of my case seemed decidedly against me. The tic-polonga I had killed was at least thirty inches long, and its poison glands must consequently have been fully charged at the moment it bit me—it was after nine o'clock, and a very hot day, and the bite on my wrist was deep.

The only point in my favour was that I was in

Digitized by Google

excellent health. I knew the awful gravity of my situation, and was aware that unless some remedies were applied immediately, I should certainly be dead in three-quarters of an hour at the longest.

There was no surgeon or apothecary within fifteen miles of my factory, but I fortunately had some knowledge of the proper method of dealing with such cases as my own, having once seen a ryot being treated for snake-bite by the remedies I proposed to apply to myself, only I remembered, with melancholy interest, that the unfortunate Hindoo had died, notwithstanding the unremitting exertions made to save his life.

The treatment for snake-bite is ligature of the limb above the wound, free incision, sucking, cauterisation, bathing the wound with ammonia, and taking ammonia or brandy internally.

Remembering these directions, I rushed into the bungalow and made a very efficient *tourniquet* with a walking-stick and a wet towel, which I passed round my fore-arm, effectually stopping the circulation. I also summoned my boy, Veerapen, to my assistance, and as I had no ammonia in the house, I ordered him to open a bottle of brandy with all speed.

Whilst Veerapen was getting the cognac, I slashed my wrist freely all round the injured part with my pocket-knife, particularly probing the punctures made by the serpent's fangs, and as the blood spurted freely from the wound I sucked it with the vigour and desperation of a man who knows that a delay of only a quarter of a minute in eliminating the virus from his system may seal his doom.

I noticed with horror that my arm was swelling rapidly, and I began to experience a difficulty in respiration, which I knew was a most unfavourable symptom. Some powerful excitant was necessary immediately to counteract the effect of the poison, yet it seemed as though Veerapen would never bring the brandy, and I called wildly to him to come to me.

He ran into the room with a bottle of the precious liquor in his hand, but in his confusion he could not find a corkscrew, and he was too much dazed and terrified by my misfortune to think of the ready expedient of knocking off the neck of the bottle. However, I soon sent it flying, and pouring out half a tumbler of brandy, I drank it at a gulp.

The spirit revived me, and thus nerved to renewed action, I bade Veerapen call the cook to bring some burning sticks from the kitchen.

With one of these glowing firebrands I seared my bleeding and quivering flesh, never flinching under what in ordinary circumstances would have been excruciating agony, but rather cherishing the pain which was a possible means of saving my life. But I feared my case was past all help, for I was sensible that the contractions of my heart were growing very feeble, and respiration became more and more difficult.

I felt the keenest anguish, and I knew that there remained only one final stage, that of falling into a faint before death supervened.

Just as my senses were deserting me, I was able to clutch the bottle of brandy, and once more poured out a large quantity into the glass. With an effort I just managed to quaff the requickening spirit, which acted on my prostrated nerves like a magic draught.

I rallied; and with a fierce determination to live, I braced my senses together for a final struggle with the potent poison which was now coursing like liquid fire through every vein in my body.

The brandy had no intoxicating results, its ordinary

THESE FELLOWS DIDN'T LIE.

"All these fellows can't be telling lies, can they?" said Mr. Mulcahy to himself, laying down the paper he had been reading and seeming to debate the point in his mind.

Yet he knew the world, and how many statements, even from good people, have to be taken with a grain of salt. Nevertheless, he concluded to risk it; and now, he says, he is thankful he did. The story, put short, is this:

Mr. William H. Mulcahy, whom a letter directed to 27 The College, Mitchelstown, co. Cork, Ireland, will always find, was in his younger days passionately fond of hunting, and rarely missed an opportunity of following the hounds. He then resided at Ballinora, Carrick-on-Suir, and regularly hunted with the Tipperaries, the Kilkennies, the Wexford and Kildare, and Lord Waterford's packs.

"Being hardy and robust," he says, "I took small care of myself; I often got drenched to the skin and let my clothes dry on me. To that, and to irregularity in eating, I attribute what came afterwards.

"I began to lose tone and appetite, and food didn't agree with me as it used to. As time wore on I got worse and had to give up hunting.

"Presently I had to live on soup and milk, and my tongue was furred like lichens on a rock in the woods. Then my heart began to act badly. The least effort made it palpitate violently, and when I lay down you could hear it. Many a night, unable to sleep I got up and smoked and read till morning.

"Under this sort of thing my strengh went out of me, and my breathing was so bad I couldn't walk fifty yards without resting.

"Once, as I was leaving a shop in Clonmel, I heard a man say, referring to me: 'Ah, well; he is about at the end of his tether.' Yet I have since attended the funerals of many who were there that day. What poor stuff, my friend, some prophecies are made of. Up to that time no medicine or treatment had helped me.

"Then I read about Mother Seigel's Syrup and letters from people who had been cured by it. All these fellows can't be telling lies, I said; I'll have a try of it myself.

"The first bottle set up my nerves like tuning a fiddle. I began to get good sleep. After that I felt hungry, and when I smelt breakfast I wasn't long getting down stairs.

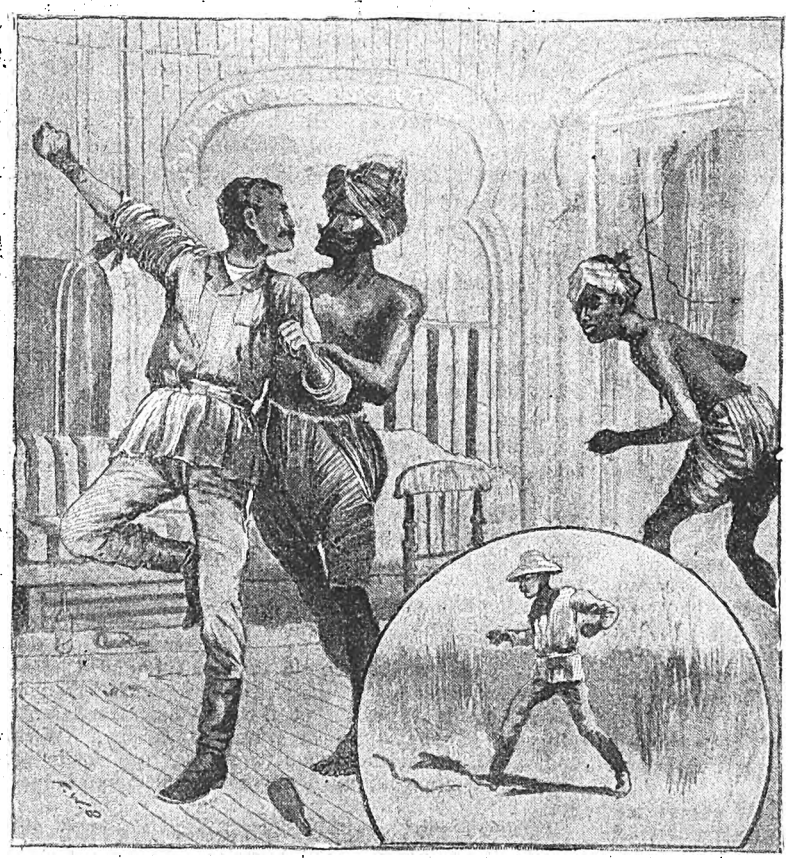
"To cut my story short, I rapidly picked up my weight and strength and have since been healthy and active. No need to assure you and the public of my faith in Mother Seigel's Syrup."

The statement of which the above is a condensation was sworn to by Mr. Mulcahy on January 24th, 1900, at Mitchelstown, Co. Cork, before Mr. Joseph L. F. Fairbrother, a Commissioner for Oaths for the Supreme Court of Judicature in Ireland; the Commissioner adding that he personally knows the deponent.

Digitized by Google

effects being neutralised by the virus in my body. The giant Alcohol had for once to combat with a rival mightier than himself, and my life depended on the issue of the struggle.

Knowing I might at any moment lapse into the fatal comatose state, I hastily gave my instructions to Veerapen and the cook while my mind remained clear. I directed them to hold me by my arms, one on either side, to keep me walking about, and on no account to suffer me to lie down or go to sleep. I explained to Veerapen that my life depended on my being kept awake, and I ordered him to check the fatal drowsiness by thrashing me with my own horsewhip if necessary, and not to spare it.



I turned upon my servant with an amount of fury which caused him to retreat.

Veerapen armed himself with the whip as ordered, and he and the cook began marching me up and down the room.

An overwhelming faintness soon came upon me, and I should have gone to sleep as I walked, had not Veerapen then administered a sharp cut across my calves.

The pain stung me into activity, and I turned upon my servant with an amount of fury which caused him to retreat in hot haste. But remembering why the blow was given, I thanked him for it, curbing my passion and telling him to resume his cure of me. I begged him, no matter what my present anger might be, to continue, by the severe means I had placed in his hands, to prevent my falling asleep, as I would handsomely reward him if he saved my life.

I cannot recollect all that passed; but Veerapen told me that I alternately commanded and intreated with tears in my eyes to be allowed to go to sleep if only for a minute, but that the only attention he paid to my threats or intreaties was to lay on all the harder with the whip.

The blows roused me from my state of torpor for a few minutes only at a time, but during these intervals of consciousness I thoroughly relished the cure I was voluntarily undergoing, and experienced a positive pleasure in feeling the stinging cuts showered on my back, arms, and legs by my lusty attendant.

The struggle for life was protracted, but gradually the pulsations of my heart became more regular, the load which had oppressed my breathing was slowly lifted from my chest, the fatal yearning for sleep rolled away, and I knew the mortal risk was over.

Perhaps Veerapen had a few old scores to pay off—anyhow, he discharged his duty so thoroughly that, by the time I was out of danger, I was black and blue from head to foot, but I bore him no grudge for these striking marks of his fidelity.

I know I consumed a great deal of brandy, but I did not think I had finished as much as six bottles. Veerapen, however, assured me I had not only taken that quantity, but had wished to have more, only he refused to let me have it.

He produced half a dozen "gentlemen-commoners" as vouchers to his assertion, and if he and the cook had not grossly exceeded the limits of sobriety that night, I might have been persuaded that I alone had swallowed a full gallon imperial measure of old cognac. As it was, I formed an opinion that my worthy servitors had been drinking my very good health and speedy recovery, and I did not reprove them for the jollification on such an occasion.

I gave my faithful boy twelve months' pay, and to the cook, six, as a reward for their timely services. I do not think anything could induce me to part with Veerapen, or Veerapen to leave me as long as I remain in the country.

The effects of the poison did not altogether disappear for some time, but manifested themselves at intervals in muscular spasms, which were very painful and accompanied by great depression of spirits. Time, however, cures all things, and I am to-day as sound as though I had never been within an ace of losing my life through the bite of a tic-polonga.

JAS. HOGG.

Digitized by Google

WHITE CALICO FREE

Per Post. Superior heavy quality. Remnants, 3 to 4 yards long. 32 inches wide, 2/6 per Dozen yards; yard wide, 3/3 per Dozen yards. Free from "Dressing." Samples Free. Satisfaction Guaranteed.—EMDEN & CO. (F Dept.), *Manufacturers*, Levenshulme, Manchester

Have You Eczema?

or any form of Skin Disease? If you have, do go to your Chemist or Store, or send stamps or P O. for 1/3 to the Antexema Co., 83 Castle Road, London, N.W., for a bottle of "ANTEXEMA." It gives immediate relief directly it is applied, and soon cures even the most obstinate cases. A Booklet on Skin Troubles is enclosed with each bottle.

All orders are sent securely packed, free from observation.

ALL FAT PEOPLE

can safely Reduce Weight and cure Corpulency permanently by taking TRILENE TABLETS (Regd.) for a few weeks. They are small, agreeable, harmless, and never fail to IMPROVE both HEALTH and FIGURE without Change of Diet. An English Countess writes: "*Your Trilene Tablets act admirably.*"

Send 2s. 6d. to THE TRILENE CO., Sole Proprietors, 66 Finsbury Pavement, London.

SAMPLES OF TESTIMONIALS.

Princess Liechtenstein writes from Landsberg, Austria: "Pray send your excellent tablets directly." Mr. Canham, 87 Alexandra Road, Norwich: "Tablets cured my wife of extreme stoutness; it has never returned." Mrs. H. Cox, 23 Watnall Road, Hucknall Torkard, writes: "The Tablets reduced me 1½ stone." Mrs. S. Alexander, 102 Dixon Street, New Swindon, says: "They reduced me 28lb., and I am cured." Mrs. Darnley-Smith, of Landscove Vicarage, Ashburton, says: "Tablets have reduced me very much." Mrs. Crossley, of Rose Hill, Torver, Comston, says: "I weigh much less and can breathe so much easier; I am delighted."

DO YOU KNOW

that with every copy of THIS WEEK'S

HOME NOTES

A Paper Pattern of a

CHILD'S OVERALL

is

GIVEN AWAY?

HOME NOTES is the best and daintiest of ladies' weeklies.

Order a copy at once.

ONE PENNY

A MAGNIFICENT COMPLEXION GUARANTEED

By the free use of LILLIE POWDER. It nourishes, heals, soothes, and brings Health and Beauty.

Order it of your Chemist and refuse all substitutes, as they may be injurious.

Three Tints: Blanche Naturelle, and Rachel.

Of all Chemists, Hairdressers, Stores, &c.

THE LILLIE SYNDICATE,

3 Henrietta Street, London, W.C.

SEND FOR

DR. EVANS'S (U.S.A.)

Pamphlet on Nervous Diseases of All Kinds. THIS PAMPHLET describes all the symptoms which arise from Diseases of the NERVOUS SYSTEM. It is up-to-date, having been compiled after years of labour and experience in the Treatment of these Maladies. It is complete, practical, and can be readily understood and acted upon. It gives pure and simple advice to Sufferers. Send stamped addressed envelope to GEORGE WRIGHT, Esq., Colne House, REMBRANDT ROAD, LEE, LONDON, S.E. (*Name this Paper.*)

TOO STOUT

I was for years, by chance I came across a simple home remedy that reduced me from 17st. to 10st. 12lb., and I will willingly send particulars free to any sufferer enclosing stamp. Mrs. L. E. FELL, 195 Oxford Street, London, W.

The Only Efficacious Substitute for Cod-liver Oil.

DEVONSHIRE CREAM

(Really Genuine.) In Patent Air-tight Tins. ½-lb., 1/4; 1-lb., 2/4; 2-lb., 4/-, including Tin and Postage.

Mrs. Conyers,

MORCHARD BISHOP, DEVON.

VARICOCELE.

Every man suffering from Varicocele and the allied troubles, should send for treatise, describing their Causes, Symptoms, Results, and Successful and Painless Treatment without surgical operation or the use of cumbersome trusses and electrical appliances. Will be sent sealed, post free, three stamps.

S. S. MURRAY,

7 Southampton Row, London, W.C.

"WORTH A GUINEA A BOX."

BEECHAM'S PILLS

FOR ALL

BILIOUS & NERVOUS DISORDERS,

Sick Headache, Constipation, Wind and Pains in Stomach, Impaired Digestion, Disordered Liver, and Female Ailments.

SALE OVER SIX MILLION BOXES YEARLY.

In Boxes, 1s. 1½d. and 2s. 9d. each, with full directions.

Prepared only by the Proprietor,

THOMAS BEECHAM, St. Helens, Lancashire.

Sold by all Druggists and Patent Medicine Dealers everywhere.

THE

BEST OF ALL BEVERAGES

AND THE

CHEAPEST.

GOOD!

IT'S

MASON'S

Extract of Herbs

8 Gallons Prime Beer for 6d.

Sample Free for 9 Stamps.

AGENTS WANTED EVERYWHERE.

NEWBALL & MASON,

NOTTINGHAM.

Digitized by Google

The Brain Gymnasium

IN these competitions a prize of £2 will be awarded each week to the competitor whose attempt we receive giving the correct solutions of all the puzzles. If more than one is absolutely correct the prize of £2 will be given to the first correct attempt dealt with.

If no lists of absolutely correct solutions are sent in the first prize will be awarded to the competitor whose attempt is first dealt with showing the fewest mistakes.

Each week we shall award in addition to the above, either ten of our silver plated pencil-cases or ten popular six shilling novels, to be distributed amongst the competitors whose attempts are absolutely correct and have failed to win the first prize, or, if no complete lists of correct solutions are received, to those whose attempts show the fewest mistakes.

Write all your solutions on one sheet of paper, putting the number against each. Post the batch in an envelope marked "Brain Gymnasium," to reach the Editor, SHORT STORIES, 18 Henrietta Street, Covent Garden, W.C., by first post on Monday, September 17th, 1900.

Readers are invited to submit puzzles, acrostics, conundrums, word-squares, etc., for publication on this page. A gold-plated pencil-case will be given to each reader whose attempts are used. All attempts must be vouched for as original, and, of course, it is distinctly understood that the sender of a puzzle must neither compete in the competition nor divulge to anyone the solution. Any reader found infringing this rule will be severely dealt with.

No. 211.

Form a square word from equivalents of the following: A Boer General, an official in ancient Rome, a town in Lancashire, exalted, belief.

No. 212.

CARP, NUT, BE, ORE.

The letters in these words, put in their proper order, make one word.

No. 213.

A BB C EEEEE F G H IIIII LLL NN OOO RR SSSSS TT WW Y

These letters, when re-arranged, will form a well-known proverb.

No. 214.

My FIRST in Hebrew, represents
A liquid undulation,
And for a thousand things as well,
'Tis an abbreviation.

My NEXT, when double, is a sign
In musical notation,
Which means, to play with lighter touch,
And greater modulation.

My WHOLE you'll find will stand for those
Who form our legislation,
And when reversed, it is the time
Which follows culmination.

No. 215.

DOUBLE ACROSTIC.

Initials and finals give two Shakespearian characters.

1. A jewel.
2. A well-known fairy.
3. A goddess.
4. A fabulous liquor.
5. A boundary.
6. A master-passion.
7. A fertile spot.

No. 216.

One-half of easy, one-third of pantomime, one-ninth of character, two-fifths of generation, and two-fifths of India. These twelve letters, re-arranged, give the name of a town in India.

RESULT OF BRAIN GYMNASIUM.

Nos. 187 to 192.

THE first prize of £2 has been awarded this week to Mr. D. G. Jelley, of 3 Cantwell Road, Plumstead, whose solution was the first correct one dealt with.

A copy of "Phil of the Heath," by Harold Child, has been sent to each of the following:

F. G. Melville, Totterdown, Bristol.
T. P. Cowling, Plough Road, Rotherhithe.
J. S. Ryan, Abbott's Road, East Ham, E.
A. E. Whiteman, Leigham Court Road, Streatham.
Miss E. Grace, St. George's Place, Knightsbridge.
W. M. Dalziel, Abercromby Street, Glasgow.
Mrs. Bowden, Albert Bridge Road, Battersea.
G. Richardson, Waltham Cross.
L. Short, Park Road, Hampton Hill.
J. G. Usher, Baltinglass, co. Wicklow.

SOLUTIONS OF BRAIN GYMNASIUM COMPETITION.

Nos. 193 to 198.

No. 193. Cod.

No. 194.

16	3	2	13	34
5	10	11	8	34
9	6	7	12	34
4	15	14	1	34
34	34	34	34	34

No. 195.

M
SET
MELON
TOO
N

No. 196.

BOA
OWN
ANDOVER
OZONE
VOTED
ENEMA
REDAN

No. 197. HAMMOCK.

No. 198. These essays are beneath contempt.

SHORT STORIES ADVERTISEMENT RATES.

Single column, per inch, per insertion	£0 10 0
Double " " "	1 0 0
Full page inside, facing page of matter, either white paper or 2nd or 3rd page of cover, or back page, per insertion	10 0 0
Half-page " " "	5 0 0
Quarter-page " "	2 10 0
Eighth-page " "	1 5 0
Front page, whole " "	12 10 0
" half " "	6 5 0

All spaces above one-eighth of a page are charged at per page rate.

Series discount: 5 per cent. for 13, 10 per cent. for 26, 15 per cent. for 52 insertions.

Black blocks are charged 25 per cent. extra. All advertisements are subject to approval. All copy must be sent in by Noon on Tuesday, Sept. 11th, if intended for the issue on sale Sept. 25th, and dated September 29th. The Proprietors reserve the right to hold over or suspend the insertion of any advertisement without prejudice to other insertions on order. All communications should be addressed to the Advertisement Manager, "Pearson's Weekly" Offices, Henrietta Street, London, W.C.

Printed and Published by C. ARTHUR PEARSON LTD., at Pearson's Weekly Buildings, Henrietta Street, London, W.C.

Digitized by Google

£3,350 IN CASH PRIZES

FINAL CLOSING OF ALL COMPETITIONS.

No further advertisements of any will appear again. If you do not compete now you may lose £100 Cash. The offer will never be repeated.

In the first place make up the best sentence you can out of five words, each word commencing with a letter of **"CHINA."** Thus, for example: **"C**hinese **H**onour **I**s **N**ow **A**bhorrent." You can cut out and use the following form if you like.

Be sure and mark envelope, left-hand top corner, "Short Stories," and forward to A.B. Cycle Co. Limited, 59, 60, 67, 68 & 69 Chancery Lane, Holborn.

I*_____ of†_____

hereby declare that the sentence below is the only one I have sent in for this competition.

C	**H**	**I**
N	**A**	**Date of Posting.**

* State whether Mr., Mrs., or Miss. † Full address to ensure result reaching you.

Don't forget to enclose Two Penny Stamps.

Competition closes on Saturday, September 15th, 1900.

We will give you full details of the above cash prizes, in which there is nothing to pay for any prize, and where every competitor is a Cash Prize-Winner, when we send you the results of this Competition, in which for the best solution we offer:

A £23 A.B. CYCLE FREE,

AND FURTHER PRIZES OF

2nd Class Prizes	...	**£23 Cycle for £9**	**5th Class Prizes**	...	**£23 Cycle for £12**
3rd Class Prizes	...	**£23 Cycle for £10**	**6th Class Prizes**	...	**£23 Cycle for £13**
4th Class Prizes	...	**£23 Cycle for £11**	**Consolation Prizes**	...	**£23 Cycle for £14**

56 Cycles have been won Free of Cost.

FULL NAMES AND ADDRESSES CAN BE HAD ON APPLICATION.

TAKE PARTICULAR NOTICE.—Competition is NOW OPEN, and CLOSES on Saturday, September 15th, 1900.

Enclose two penny stamps for postage of Result of Competition. As so few are able to call and inspect the machines, **we guarantee to refund the full amount paid for any prize if the owner is not perfectly satisfied** with it on arrival. Results will be declared as soon as possible. Prizes unclaimed in a week or ten days are passed on to the next winner in rotation.

£100 **If you can purchase our cheapest machine, brand new, from us, or an agent, dealer, shipper, or factor can buy one for less than FIFTEEN SOVEREIGNS, we will promptly hand you a £100 BANK OF ENGLAND NOTE.**

Send your reply to the Managing Director, marking your envelope *Short Stories*,

A.B. CYCLE CO. LTD., 59, 60, 67, 68 & 69 CHANCERY LANE, HOLBORN, W.C.

Digitized by Google

OROCO SOX

A New Invention to keep the feet warm and dry yet allowing perfect ventilation

18 pairs post free for 1/- State size required.

A boon for tender & tired feet

WILL SUIT YOU DOWN TO THE GROUND.

OROCO M'F'G. Co. WIGAN.

SCRIVENS

PARASITENE

is a new and important remedy for GOUT, RINGWORM, ECZEMA, and all IRRITANT SKIN DISEASES.

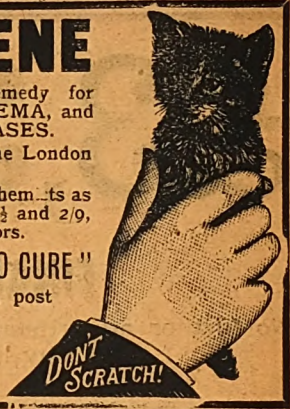
Prescribed by members of the London Medical Profession.

Can be obtained from all Chemists as a Lotion or an Ointment at 1/1½ and 2/9, or Post Free from the Proprietors.

"SKIN DISEASES & HOW TO CURE"

By Parasitene Treatment, post free from

The WEDNESFIELD CHEMICAL SYNDICATE Limited, WOLVERHAMPTON.



Reckitt's PARIS Blue.

The Best is the Cheapest.

A FREE TRIAL FOR 2/6

DESCRIPTION:

- New Sun Shade Eyepieces.
- Telescopic Slides Ormolu Gilt
- Ebonised Adjusting Screw.
- Crocodile Leather Covered Body.
- Nickel and Gilt Lens Mounts.

J. N. MASTERS LTD, will send one of these handsome FIELD and MARINE GLASSES, price value 14/6, complete with Crocodile Leather Case and Sling, to any reader who mentions *Short Stories* on receipt of 2/6. If you do not approve of them, we will return your 2/6 in full. If you approve of them you send us 2/- on receipt, and 2/- each month for five months; but should you prefer to send the balance at once, send only 10/6, as we allow you 1/6 discount; or you may send 13/- at once, and if you do not approve of the Glasses we will return your 13/- in full.

J. N. MASTERS LTD., RYE, SUSSEX.

EVERY RING 18 CARAT COLD HALL MARKED, SET WITH REAL GEMS.

FOR SIZE CUT HOLE IN DISC OF CARD BOARD.

J. N. MASTERS LTD., RYE, SUSSEX.

Digitized by Google

HAVE YOU GOT THAT TEN POUND NOTE?
See this week's "Pearson's Weekly."

SHORT STORIES
A WEEKLY MAGAZINE FOR HOME AND TRAIN

No. 611. FOR WEEK ENDING SEPTEMBER 15TH, 1900. [ONE PENNY.

A HAIRDRESSER AND

DR TIBBLES' VI-Cocoa

"I RECOMMEND VI-COCOA TO ALL MY CUSTOMERS."

Mr. S. ALDER, 1 Scoresby Street, Blackfriars Road, S.E.: "I have much pleasure in recommending your valuable Vi-Cocoa to all my customers. I am a Hairdresser by trade, and have to stand on my feet sometimes for fourteen hours a day, which I used to find very trying. In fact, I used at times hardly to be able to keep awake, and, being a total abstainer, I used to drink a lot of tea, not caring for minerals, but that did not seem to make me feel any better. I always felt dull and heavy until I was recommended by one of my customers to try Dr. Tibbles' Vi-Cocoa, and since then I have felt much better, and I can keep awake all night if I like. Of course, some people will say we cannot afford to pay so much for our Cocoa; but I am sure if they try it they will find it come cheaper in the end.

"You can do what you like with this testimonial, and I hope that my fellow-tradesmen will be as much benefited as I have been, and find that it comes up to their expectations."

"UNDOUBTED PURITY AND STRENGTH."—*Medical Magazine.*
"IN THE FRONT RANK OF REALLY VALUABLE FOODS."—*Lancet.*

DR TIBBLES' VI-Cocoa

FAVOURED BY THE HOMES AND HOSPITALS OF GREAT BRITAIN.

Dainty Sample Tin Free to any Address on mentioning this Paper.

Address—Dr. TIBBLES' VI-COCOA Ltd., 60 Bunhill Row, London, E.C.

DAINTY SAMPLE FREE.

Advertisements should be sent to "Short Stories" Advertisement Department, Henrietta Street, London, W.C.

Digitized by Google

"WORTH A GUINEA A BOX."

BEECHAM'S PILLS

FOR ALL

BILIOUS & NERVOUS DISORDERS,
Sick Headache, Constipation, Wind and Pains in Stomach, Impaired Digestion, Disordered Liver, and Female Ailments.

SALE OVER SIX MILLION BOXES YEARLY.

In Boxes, 1s. 1½d. and 2s. 9d. each, with full directions.

Prepared only by the Proprietor,

THOMAS BEECHAM, St. Helens, Lancashire.

Sold by all Druggists and Patent Medicine Dealers everywhere.

THE
BEST OF ALL BEVERAGES
AND THE
CHEAPEST.

GOOD!
IT'S
MASON'S
Extract of Herbs

8 Gallons Prime Beer for 6d.

Sample Free for 9 Stamps.
AGENTS WANTED EVERYWHERE.

NEWBALL & MASON,
NOTTINGHAM.

WHY BE FAT?

When a lady, who has discovered a simple means of Self-Cure will be happy to send particulars of same to any sufferer from this distressing complaint. Free on receipt of stamped addressed envelope. ADDRESS:

Mrs. TREVOR WELLS,
63 *HIGH HOLBORN, LONDON, W.C.*

HAIR DESTROYED.

Send me an envelope (stamped and addressed) and I will tell you how to remove all superfluous hair **free of charge.** (Send no money.) Address, in confidence, Miss E. V. (Room 3), 195 Oxford Street, London, W.

ESTABLISHED 1851.

BIRKBECK BANK

Southampton Buildings, Chancery Lane, London.

2% on CURRENT ACCOUNTS, on the minimum monthly balances when not drawn below £100.

The BIRKBECK ALMANACK, with full particulars, post free. FRANCIS RAVENSCROFT, *Manager.*

A SUM of from 12s. to 25s. per week can be earned in spare hours or evenings by either sex everywhere.—Send addressed envelope for particulars to Box 24, Eclipse Works, 89 Aldersgate Street, E.C.

VIE D'OR FOR THE HAIR.

THE AMERICAN TREATMENT.

Vie d'Or puts 10 years on the life of the hair.

SOLE AGENT:
GUSTAV ROSSELLI, 4 New Park Street, Park Lane, LEEDS.

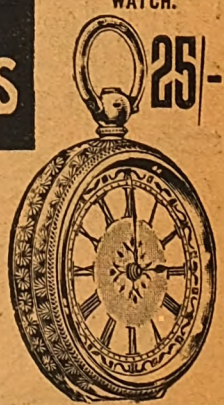
Price **2/9** post free.

DRUNKENNESS

CURED. This can be done with or without patient's knowledge. Send me a stamp and I will tell you how. (Send no money.) Address, in confidence, Mrs. C. H. (Room 81, 195 Oxford Street, London, W.

SENSATIONAL BARGAINS for LADIES

LADY'S MARVEL "ACME" WATCH.
25/-



A MONEY SAVING OF NEARLY 50 PER CENT.

Every Lady Reader of SHORT STORIES should send a postcard to H. SAMUEL and secure a

HANDSOME FREE GIFT.

Every applicant will receive **H. SAMUEL'S GRAND ALBUM** of Bargains, a magnificent work of nearly 200 Pages, adorned with **over 3,000 Illustrations** of wonderful Bargains in ladies' and Gents' **GOLD and SILVER WATCHES,** Clocks, **ELEGANT JEWELLERY,** Plate, **BEAUTIFUL DIAMONDS,** Cutlery, &c., &c., all of which H. SAMUEL supplies to you **direct** at Wholesale Prices. Every volume contains full particulars, and ten lists of **GRAND BONUS REWARDS.** Don't forget it is sent you **ABSOLUTELY FREE.**

H. SAMUEL'S LADY'S "ACME" WATCH,

As Illustrated, has a fine Three-quarter Jewelled Plate Lever Movement, Richly Decorated Dial (Plain, if preferred), and Highly Engraved Case. Warranted for FIVE YEARS and sent complete, with Key, Instructions, and BONUS FREE GIFT on receipt of 25/-.

A MONTH'S FREE TRIAL

is allowed with every article; thus the best opportunity is afforded of thoroughly testing the goods.

H. SAMUEL (DEPT. 29), 95, 97, 99, 101, 33, 89 & 121 MARKET STREET, MANCHESTER.

Digitized by Google

SHORT STORIES

No. 611.] [ONE PENNY.

For the Week Ending Sept. 15th, 1900.

SARREO.

"WELL, there's niggers an' niggers, some just as good as any white man," said Mr. Thomas Potter as he, the second mate of the island-trading barque *Reconnaisance*, and myself the supercargo, walked her short, stumpy poop one night, "though when I was before the mast I couldn't stand one of 'em bunking too close to me for a long time. But after a while I found out that a Kanaka or a Maori is better than the usual run of the Jack Dog who calls himself a sailor man nowadays.

"Why, I've never seen a native sailor yet as was dirty in his habits—they're too fond o' the water. Look at these Rotumah chaps aboard here—if there's a calm they'll jump overboard and take a swim instead of turning in when it's their watch below. Bah! white sailors ain't worth feeding in this island trade—lazy, dirty, useless brutes; a Kanaka is worth three of any one of 'em. Did you notice that large photograph in my cabin—that one showing a ship's company standing on the main deck?"

"Yes, I did, Mr. Potter."

"Well, that's the crew of the *Fanny Long*, and amongst 'em is a fellow I'm goin' to tell you about—a chap named Sarréo. We had that picture taken in Hobart after we had come back from a whaling cruise. We had been very lucky, and the skipper and owners had all our photographs taken in a group.

"I was second mate, and this Sarréo was one of the boatsteerers. He and I had been shipmates before, once in the old *Meteor* barque, nigger catching for the Fiji planters, and once in a New Bedford sperm whaler, and he had taken a bit of a liking to me, so whenever I got a new ship he generally shipped, too.

"Well, I was tired of whaling; I had two ribs broken on that cruise in the *Fanny Long* by a boat being stove in by a whale. So after I had got my money I walked out of the office, thinking of going to Sydney by the steamboat, when up comes Sarréo.

"'Got your money, Sarréo?' I says.

All rights reserved.]

Digitized by Google

"'Yes,' he answers. 'What are you goin' to do now' Mr. Potter?'

"'Going to Sydney to look for another sh'p.'

"'All right,' he says quietly. 'I come, too. I don' want to go whaling any more.'

"Sure enough, when I went on board the steamer, there he was sitting for'ard on his chest, smoking his pipe, an' waiting for me.

"In Sydney there was a fine big lump of a schooner just fitting out for a trading cruise to the Solomon Islands, and I happened to know the skipper, who worked it for me with the owners, and I got the berth of chief mate; and Sarréo, who used to come every day to the place I was staying at to ask me not to forget him, was shipped as an A.B.

"What sort of a looking chap? Well, he was a short, square-built chap, with a chest like a bullock. He was rather darker than a Samoan or a Tahiti man, owing to a seafaring life, and had straight, black hair. He only spoke as a rule when he was spoken to, and kept himself pretty much aloof from the rest of the hands, though he wasn't by any means sulky."

"Where did he hail from?" I inquired.

"Ah, now you're asking, sir. There was a beast of a supercargo—I beg pardon, sir, for forgetting myself—a reg'lar flash, bullying pig of a fellow, with us that trip. He put on as many airs as if he owned the whole blooming Pacific. Well, one day he was straightening up his trade-room, and calls for a couple of hands to help, and the skipper sent Sarréo and another native sailor to him.

"We were then lying at anchor in Marau Sound, in the Solomons, at the time, and the sun was hot enough to cook meat with, and presently the supercargo comes on deck and slings his fat, ugly carcass into a deck chair under the awning and says:

"'That's a smart fellow, that Sarréo, Potter. Where does he come from?'

"Now I didn't know, and said so; so Mr. Supercargo grunts and says that he'd ask him himself. Presently up comes Sarréo and the other native—they were going for'ard for their dinner.

"'Here, I say you,' said the supercargo to Sarréo, touching him on the calf of the leg with his foot as he was passing, 'what island you belong to, eh?'

"Sarréo turned like lightning, and I caught a sight of his face. He had dark, deep-set eyes, and they seemed to spit fire at the fat brute in the chair, and his two brown hands shut tight; but he said nothing, not a blessed word, only looked as if all the rest of his body was turned to stone. He stood like that for about ten seconds or so, then he bent his head close to the other man's face and put his two clenched fists out behind him.

In less than a couple of minutes Sarreo had the supercargo by the throat.

"'Here, Sarréo,' I says, collaring him by one arm, 'what's all these gymnastics? What's the matter?'

"He pushed me aside as if I was a feather, then he straightens himself up sudden, and, lookin' at the supercargo, spits on the deck at his feet.

"'You dog,' he says, 'when we get ashore I will fight you!'

"Warby, that was the supercargo's name, was no cur, whatever else he was, but though he seemed mighty sick when he heard Sarréo call him a dog, he jumped up at once.

"'You beastly Kanaka swine! You're drunk! You've been sneaking a bottle of gin in the trade-room, an' I'll give you a pounding,' he says.

"Then before any one could interfere they were at it, and in less than a couple of minutes Sarréo had the supercargo by the throat, lifted him off his feet, and dashed him down on the poop. He lay there stunned, an' I tell you, mister, I was mighty pleased, for we all hated him for his beastly bullyin' ways, and his foul talk. So none of us rushed at him too violently to pick him up.

"Presently up comes the skipper and orders me to put Sarréo in irons, though I could see he didn't half like doing it. But it had to be done, and I had to do it. However, Sarréo held out his hands to me as quiet as a lamb, and I led him for'ard and told him to keep a stiff upper lip; the captain, I knew, would let him loose again the next morning. He nodded his head quietly and said:

"'All right, Mr. Potter. But when we get ashore I will kill that man.'

"'Why, Sarréo,' I said, 'you mustn't talk like that; you've nearly cracked his skull as it is. Don't you go on that tack, or it'll be worse for you.'

"He nods again.

Digitized by Google

"'I know. But I have been looking for that man for more'n five year.'

"'Why, do you know him?'

"'Yes, I know him *now*. When I see him roll up his shirt-sleeve in the trade-room, an' I see some tattoo mark on his arm, I know him.'

"Of course I asked him what the supercargo had done to him, but he wouldn't tell me any more. So, telling one of the hands to give him his pipe and tobacco, I went aft and told the skipper that there seemed to be an old grudge between the two men.

"'Like enough. That fellow Warby is the two ends and bight of a blackguard. He was only appointed to this ship at the last moment, or else I would have kicked against his coming aboard. He's got a bad name.'

"Warby lay in his bunk for the rest of the day, but in the evening he came on deck and said to the skipper roughly:

"'What are you going to do with that nigger?'

"'Keep him in irons for a day or two, I suppose. What more can I do?'

"Warby looked at him for a moment, then he says, with a sneer, that in some ships the captain would have tied such a fell w up and given him six dozen.

"'No doubt,' says the skipper, looking him full in his ugly face, 'no doubt, especially in the sort of ships you've sailed in. But nothing like that is going to happen aboard this boat.'

"The supercargo muttered something under his breath and turned away. Next morning, however, when we were at breakfast, he asked the captain how long he meant to keep Sarréo in irons.

"'Till after breakfast.'

"Warby jumped up in a rage and said that he protested against such a man being given his liberty.

"'Why, he'll murder me,' he says at last with a white look in his face.

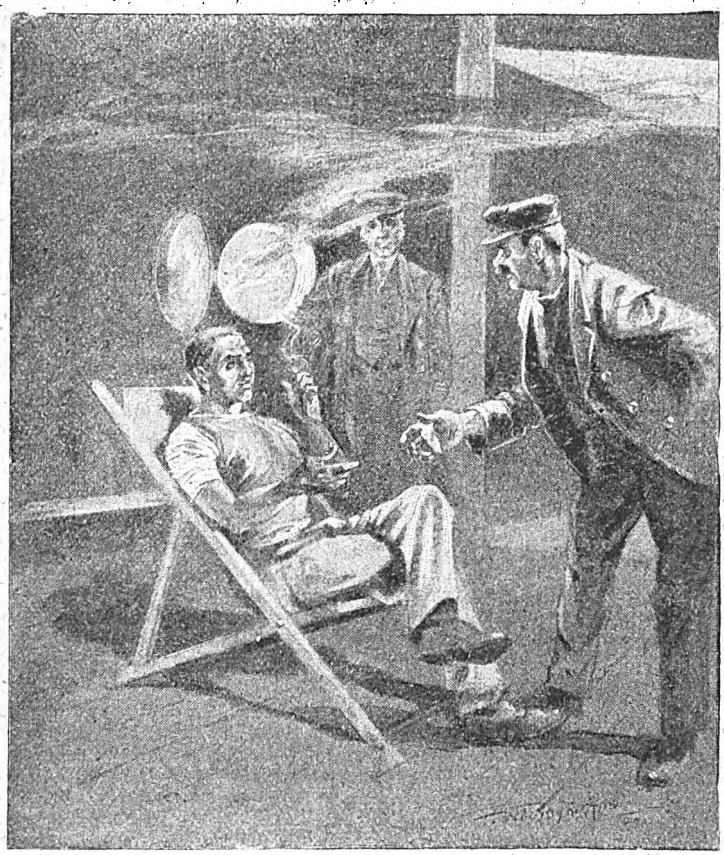
"The skipper laughed.

"'You make too much of the business, Mr. Warby. Why, he is one of the best and quietest men aboard. If you hadn't kicked him and then sworn at him, he wouldn't have tackled you. And I'm not going to keep him in irons—that's flat.'

"After breakfast I went up for'ard to take the irons off Sarréo. He was sitting against the windlass and smoking.

"'Here, Sarréo,' I said, 'I've come to take off your bracelets; but you must promise not to have any more rows w th the supercargo; if you won't promise, then the captain says he'll have to keep you in irons until we get to Fiji, and then send you to jail.'

"He promised, and from the quiet, soft manner in which he spoke I felt sure he was over his burst of passion, and was feeling a bit funky over it. However, he turned to very quietly, and was soon sent ashore with a watering party, he being in charge of the boat, which was manned by seventy native sailors.



Then Sarreo put out his big brown tattoed hand.

"When he came back with the first lot of casks he told me that the bush around the watering-place was full of pigeons. As soon as the captain heard this he said he would go ashore and shoot some, and Mr. Warby said he would like to join him.

"So off they went—skipper, supercargo, and Sarréo and his boat's crew. We on board soon heard the two guns firing, and were smacking our chops at the thought of pigeon stew for supper. I did not expect to see them back until about supper time, as the boat had to tow the casks off to the ship, which lay about half-a-mile from the beach.

"But about four o'clock I saw the boat pushing off in a dickens of a hurry, and then pull like mad for the ship. Knowing that there was no danger from natives at that part of the island, I couldn't make it out out, but in a few minutes the boat dashes up alongside, and looking over the side I saw that Sarréo was sitting beside the captain, in between him and Mr. Warby; his eyes were closed, and I thought he was dead at first.

"We had him lifted up on deck and then carried into the cabin in a brace of shakes, and I saw that he had a bullet wound in his shoulder; the ball had gone clean through. Then the skipper, who was never much of a talker, told me that Mr. Warby had shot the man accidentally. Of course I looked at Warby. His face was very pale, but his eyes met mine without flinching.

"It didn't take the captain long to dress the wound, and half-an-hour later, when I came below again, Sarréo

Digitized by Google

I saw the rifle go off and the nigger topple over.

was sitting on a chair down below smoking one of the captain's manilas, and looking as if nothing had happened. He smiled when he saw me and put out his hand.

"'I'm all right, Mr. Potter,' he said; 'not going to die this time.'

"I was just about to ask him how the thing happened when Robertson, that was our skipper's name, called me into his room. He was as solemn as a judge. Closing his cabin door, he said:

"'Sarréo will get over it all right, but the business is an ugly one; to cut it short, I fear that it was no accident, but that Warby tried to murder the poor fellow.'

"Then he told me what had occurred. Leaving the rest of the boat's crew to fill the water casks, they set out to shoot pigeons; Sarréo went with them to pick up and carry the birds. About an hour later they saw a wild boar rush by them. Robertson fired both barrels at it and wounded it, but it didn't stop. Warby had one barrel empty. He at once loaded with ball, and the three men gave chase, Sarréo leading, Warby following him close.

"On reaching some high grass at the river bank Sarréo plunged into it; then, a few seconds later, Robertson heard Warby call out that he saw the animal lying down, and fired. The captain was a short distance behind, but he and Warby reached the spot together, and there, sure enough, lying in the long grass, was the wounded boar, and Sarréo beside it, with the blood pouring from his shoulder. He was sitting up, supporting himself on his left hand.

"The skipper assisted him to his feet, and Warby tried to help, but Sarréo turned on him and reviled him, and said that he (Warby) had tried to murder him. The supercargo said that he had not seen him when he fired, but further talk was cut short by Sarréo going faint through loss of blood, so they carried him to the boat. That was the story so far, and Robertson asked me what I thought of it.

"Now I had been shipmates with Sarréo off and on for a matter of five or six years, and I never knew him to tell a lie; but at the same time I couldn't think Warby would be such a brute as to try and murder the man in cold blood.

"The skipper, however, took a very black view of the matter, and told me that if we met a man-of-war he would put Warby in irons, signal for a boat, and hand him over on a charge of attempted murder. Then we went out into the main cabin and sat down, and Robertson told the steward to call the supercargo.

"Warby came below at once. He gave a quick glance at Sarréo, then at the skipper and myself, and sat down quietly. In less than a minute the captain told him of his suspicions and what he intended doing if we met a man-of-war.

"I thought Warby would bluster and blaspheme in his usual way; but he didn't. He listened in silence. Then he rose and put his hands on the cabin table, and said:

"'Before Heaven, I swear to you both that I am innocent. I did not fire at that man; I did not even see him again after he disappeared into the grass—as Heaven is my judge, I did not. I did mean to take it out of Sarréo for nearly breaking my skull the other day; but then I remembered afterwards that he had cause to hate me, and I was only waiting for a chance to ask him to make it up.

"'Sarréo, I did you a bad turn a long time ago; but I'm sorry for it now—I have been sorry for it ever since. But I did not know where to find you, and I would not have known you yesterday if you hadn't looked into my face and spoken. It's ten years since that day, Sarréo.'

"The wounded man looked up searching-like into Warby's face all the time he was speaking; then his big black eyes drooped again, but he made no answer. So then Warby went on again, talking to the lot of us.

"'I was supercargo on the *Manola* brig, and Sarréo here was one of the hands. One day, in Apia harbour, a bag of dollars was stolen out of my cabin. The steward next morning said he had seen Sarréo ashore at one of the dance houses spending money very freely. The captain and I burst open his chest, and we found about twenty Mexican dollars among his clothes. Now, in the bag which had been stolen there were nearly five hundred Mexican dollars.

"'Sarréo swore he had not stolen the money, and that all the money he had spent on shore was five dollars, which he had brought with him from San Francisco. But the skipper and I believed he was the thief, and to make him own up and tell us where the rest of the

Digitized by Google

dollars were, we flogged him. Then we put him in irons and kept him in irons for a week. He still swore he had not taken the money, and I, believing he was lying, gave him another thrashing on my own account.

"'That night he got overboard and swam ashore, and we gave the money up for lost. Well, about a week after this, when the steward was ashore, the mate and I decided to make a thorough search of *his* cabin. We found nothing there, but we did in the pantry—we found the missing bag of dollars, all but the twenty which he had put into Sarréo's chest—stowed away in the bottom of half a barrel of flour.'

"As soon as Sarréo heard this, the poor fellow almost began to cry, and said:

"'I told you, Mr. Warby, I did not steal that money.'

"'No, Sarréo, I know you didn't—that is, I knew it when the steward owned up to stealing it; and told us afterward that he took twenty dollars out of the bag, and, seeing your chest lying open in the deck-house, he slipped in when no one was about and put the money among the clothes at the bottom.'

"Sarréo sighed, pleased-like, and then his brown face lit up.

"The big supercargo came a bit nearer to him, and then held out his hand.

"'Look here, Sarréo, the day before yesterday I was wrong, but you got my blood up, and I am sorry, very sorry, for the wrong I did you on board the *Manola*; but believe me, Sarréo, I did not fire at you.'

"Sarréo's eyes seemed to look right through the white man; then they turned towards the skipper and me.

"'*I* believe you, Mr. Warby,' said the skipper, coming aft and shaking hands with the supercargo.

"And I believed him, too, for he looked terrible distressed and cut up, so I shook hands with him, too.

"Then Sarréo put out his big brown tattoed hand.

"'And me, too, Mr. Warby.'

"The supercargo pressed it gently, so as not to hurt Sarréo's shoulder, then he almost ran past us on deck.

"Well, from that time out, that man changed, and he looked after Sarréo all the time he was laid up as if he had been his own brother instead of a Kanaka chap before the mast.

"After leaving Marau Sound we stood to the northward, being bound to Bougainville Island. It took us more than a month to get there, and by that time Sarréo was as well and strong as ever he was; and me and the skipper had got quite chummy with the supercargo, for we found out that he had a lot of good points about him.

"Just when we were about to brace up to round Bouka Island, and being about three miles off the land, we sighted part of the hull of a vessel ashore on the beach of a small bay. We stood in for a mile or so and saw that there was a native village at the head of the bay, and the vessel was a schooner of about a hundred tons. There were no signs of any boats, and she seemed to be stripped of both running and standing gear.

"We manned and armed two boats, one, with Mr. Warby in charge, being the landing-party, and the other as a covering boat in case the natives attacked. I had charge of the second boat and had four white sailors; Mr. Warby had Sarréo and four other natives. The skipper told us to have a good look at the vessel, then try and learn what the natives on shore had to say about her, and then come off and report.

"We pulled right in to the wreck as close as we could get, for it was low tide. Then Warby and I got out and walked over to it. We found that she was stripped of everything of value, even the chain-plates having been cut out, the decks were torn up and partly burnt, and the anchors and cables were gone; in fact, she was nothing but a shell.

"'Been looted by the niggers,' I said to Warby. 'Hope the poor chaps that manned her got away in the boat; better for 'em to drown than be eaten by these beggars about here.'

"We then walked back to the boats and pulled over to the village, which was about eight hundred yards away, Warby's boat, of course, going first. About thirty or forty natives came down to the water's edge and waited. They were all armed with bows, spears, and clubs, but seemed friendly.

"However, Warby jumped boldly out on to the beach, and telling his crew to keep her afloat in case he had to run for it, he went up to the crowd of niggers and shook hands with some of them, I and my men in the covering boat keeping our rifles out of view but quite ready.

"In about five minutes he sang out to me that it was all right. The vessel, the natives said, had parted her cables, gone ashore, and bilged on the reef in the night; and the hands, being too frightened to come ashore, had gone away next morning in two boats. Then he told me to wait a few minutes as he was going to the chief's house to look at the copper and other gear that the natives had taken from the schooner, and very likely he would buy it.

"We lay there, backed stern on to the beach, for about five minutes, looking at the house into which he had gone with the natives. Suddenly we saw him burst out of the house and fall on his knees, trying to draw his revolver, but in another moment he was being tomahawked and clubbed by a mob of yelling savages. Poor chap, he must have died very quickly.

"We opened fire at once, and they disappeared like magic, and then from every bush, tree, and rock they began firing at us in the boats with both muskets and arrows. One of my men was hit, and then, before I could stop him, Sarréo had jumped out of his boat and was running up the beach, rifle in hand, to where Mr. Warby's body was lying.

"He got there, I think, without being hit, just as a big native ran at him with a tomahawk. He hadn't time to put his Snider to his shoulder; but that nigger gave his last jump anyway, for I saw the rifle go off and the nigger topple over. In another five seconds he had lifted the supercargo up, thrown him over his left shoulder, and was running down to the boats.

"By this time I and two of my crew had jumped out of the boat and ran to meet him, firing as we went. We had just reached him when down he went on to his face in the sand—a bullet had smashed his hip.

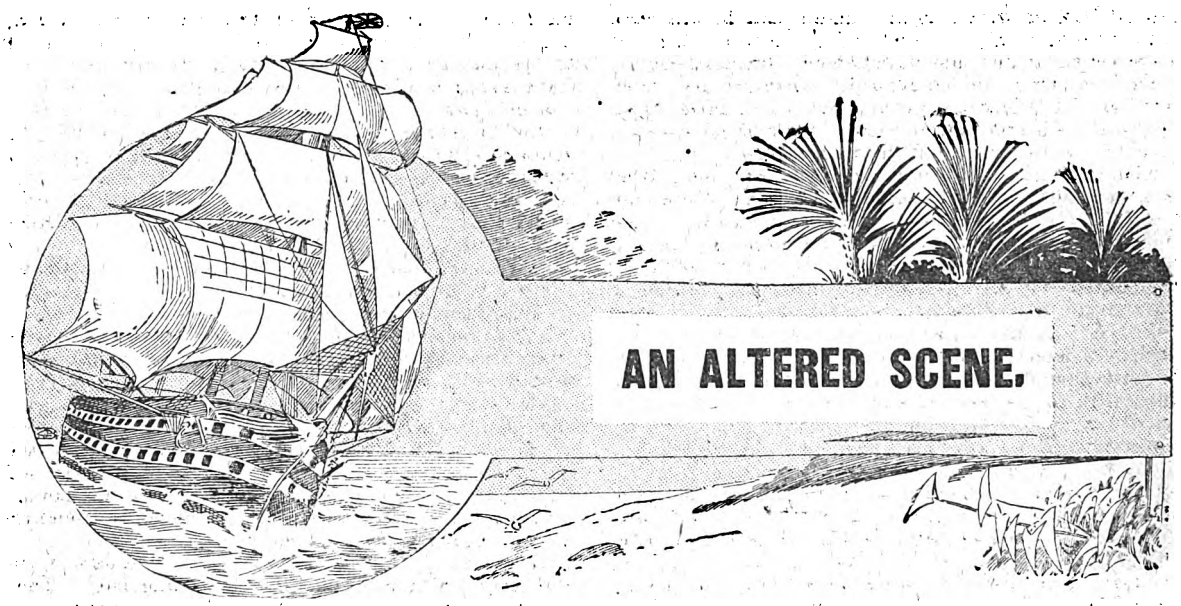
"Dropping our rifles, we picked him and Mr. Warby's body up, and luckily managed to tumble into the boat together and push off, covered by the fire from the ship, which carried two six-pounders.

"Sarréo lived two days—he died the same morning that we were getting ready to take Mr. Warby's body ashore to bury on a little island between Bouka and Bougainville. So we made only one trip ashore. Poor chap! He was a good, simple heart, and almost his last words were that he 'was glad Mr. Warby wasn't eaten.'

* * * * *

"Ah, as you say, sir, the South Seas ain't no place for a white man. Good-night." LOUIS BECKE.

Digitized by Google



AN ALTERED SCENE.

JAMES DUNN, lessee and manager of the Pearl Theatre, sat back in his chair and surveyed his reflection in the mirror over the mantelpiece.

"It's no good, James Dunn," he remarked, shaking his pencil at the image in the glass, which naturally did likewise. "The plain truth is that you are too old for the part—and 'part' in this instance signifies a multitude of duties. It makes you wince to confess that you are on the wrong side of fifty and not so able-bodied as you used to be, but you've got to confess it!"

He shook his head at his reflection and nibbled the end of his pencil for a few moments.

"Yes," he sighed, "I must have some help. I am no longer able to be lessee, stage manager, actor, and general help. In a little place like this, the public are not so exacting as in a big town, but when the pit and gallery begin to chaff you because a twinge of rheumatism makes you draw up your leg when you are lying dead on the stage—when they tell you that you can't make up young enough for the gallant knight, then it's time to alter things or the show won't pay. I must get a young fellow to do some of the business.

"I'll insert a judicious advertisement. What shall I say? 'Wanted, a young man that can do everything' would about suit, but that's a trifle broad. But I've always been lucky enough to fall on my feet, so I suppose I shall get through it all right. Oh, come in!"

The interruption appeared inopportune, but the letter which was handed to him could not have come at a better moment.

"Is he waiting?" he asked the boy. "Yes? Well, show him in."

A young man about twenty-seven was shown in a couple of minutes later. Tall, well-built; a face that, in respect of good looks, would not have taken a high place, but which showed intelligence and will. He was clean-shaven, and not over well-dressed. The most noticeable thing about him was that from his dark eyes there came occasionally a gleam of light which seemed to thrill and fascinate you.

"So you are Jack Dawson's son, eh? And you wish to know if I can help you into a situation? My boy, honestly you look as if you wanted one! Sit down there and talk."

Arthur Dawson obeyed, but he did not do all the talking; and in the end he was engaged as assistant to the lessee and manager of the Pearl Theatre.

"I fancy you'll succeed," said Dunn. "You'll have to do something of everything, and mind, you must understudy the men's parts so that you can take up one or other if any actor falls ill!"

Dawson entered upon his duties at once. His coming was viewed with considerable disfavour by the chief actors and actresses, but his kindly, unobtrusive manner, his genial smile and willingness to be useful, and especially the expression in his eyes soon changed all that, and within a week he had acquired as firm a position as many another would have gained in a year.

He showed ability, too. He seemed to be able to learn the lines without difficulty, and he adapted himself with facility to all the small parts which fell to his lot—soldier, courtier, walking gentleman, policeman, footman, and what not, all came easy to him.

The leading actor, who sometimes was not so ready with his part as he ought to have been, accepted Dawson's "prompt" with condescension; the leading lady bestowed a soft glance upon him as a reward for little attentions paid to her comfort, and the second lady—who had none of the proud, haughty bearing of her sister actress—thanked him very sweetly for what he did.

Dawson had not been in his post for more than a month when a disturbing element arose. The star, as the leading man was generally called, began to think that Dawson was seeking an opportunity to show that he could play the part which he was understudying better than the star himself; and although his pride revolted at the thought that the young fellow could ever be as good an actor as he, yet he felt an occasional qualm of uneasiness, and turned against Dawson.

Miss Maggie Adair, the leading lady, continued to

Digitized by Google

reward Dawson with a friendly smile until he answered that smile with one of those thrilling glances; then she drew herself up and murmured about "presumption."

Dawson merely smiled cynically when he discovered that he had offended Mason; but when Miss Adair returned his glance with a cold stare and passed him without a word, he started and turned pale.

There was one person in the company who had noticed this incident between the stage manager, as he was now generally styled, and the leading lady, and it was not the only thing she had noticed. Florence Graves, the second lady, had observed that Dawson was more solicitous about Miss Adair than about anyone else in the theatre; it could not exactly be said that he went out of his way and showed undue favouritism, but her keen eyes detected a fact which seems to have escaped the attention of everyone else, even Miss Adair herself. And when she awoke to this knowledge, Florence Graves went home and wept, asking herself why some despise a love which others crave and cannot get.

"Can't quite make out what has come over Dawson lately," mused Mr. James Dunn one evening, as he sipped at the contents of a glass just previous to going to bed. "He does the work all right, but he seems to be quieter than when he began. I suppose it was the newness of the thing that made him brighter at first, and now he has settled down to it, he goes about it in a more matter-of-fact way. Yes, that must be it. His father was just as cool, and it used to be said of him that it would take a strong charge of gunpowder to wake him up. On the same principle, the son would require nitro-glycerine!" and with a smile, the lessee went to bed satisfied.

As the weeks passed by, matters developed. Dawson's kindliness to everyone with whom he came in contact increased rather than diminished; he had a pleasant smile for the old and the weak, he would talk pleasantly to the children who played outside the theatre, and seemed to carry a sunbeam with him wherever he went, yet his face was always grave.

Only two people paid any heed to this; the lessee believed it to be the reflection of a cold nature and forgot that it did not accord with Dawson's warm heart, while Florence Graves felt a pang every time she saw it and remembered that it was the indication of unrequited love.

Miss Adair, to demonstrate her appreciation of Dawson's presumption, bestowed her smiles upon Mason, with whom in the ordinary course of business, she had to act the part of wife or sweetheart.

She would probably have been unable to explain why she had decided to "punish" Dawson by bestowing her favours upon a man for whom it had not occurred to her previously to entertain any affection; hers was one of those natures which act perversely at the slightest provocation and land the woman into the slough of misery unless they are awakened by some act of devotion or sacrifice—or by jealousy! For when the prize seems to be going to another, they desire to have it and are wakened to a knowledge of their real feelings.

Mr. Mason showed his appreciation of the course of events by returning Miss Adair's smiles and by making advances on his side, and in two or three weeks it came to be understood by the company generally that the couple would become man and wife. And in the meantime Dawson's face became even more grave, and Florence betrayed more nervous irritation in a week than she had previously shown in a whole year.

Whether Dawson was really waiting for his chance to take the place of the star for a night or two and prove his ability or not, the opportunity was long in coming. Mason was in the best of health apparently and was in his place every evening, although to the keen eye of the stage manager he was not always in good form.

A new play was produced. One of the chief incidents of the piece was a dialogue between two sisters; the younger alternately pleaded with and upbraided the other for her conduct towards a man whom she regarded as a traitor to a man with whom he pretended to be on good terms. The first man was envious of the other's position and of the fact that he was winning the affection of the elder sister; he was trying to supplant his "friend" in both ways—that was the notion that possessed the mind of the elder sister.

The younger sister believed that the elder was entirely mistaken and was giving her love to a man who was not worthy of it.

The part of the supposedly treacherous friend was the chief male *rôle* in the play and was naturally assigned to Mason. The female parts were both good, which rather displeased Miss Adair; she had her choice and fixed upon the younger sister, but the thing did not go well in rehearsal and the parts were changed, Florence Graves becoming the younger sister.

The author had to add more "fat" to the part of the elder sister in order to gratify the leading lady. Then the piece went well and Mr. Dunn looked forward to a successful and lengthy run.

The play was a decided success, but its result was not satisfactory to the leading lady and gentleman; for the critics praised Florence Graves more than anyone else.

They said that her acting was real, that she played her part to perfection—especially in the dialogue, and that she was destined to have a career.

Miss Adair blamed herself for not having kept to that part and she began to experience a feeling towards Miss Graves that threatened to develop into hate; this feeling of jealousy, for that was its real character, deepened when she observed that Florence made open advances to Arthur Dawson—unmaidenly advances, as she styled them. True, she had snubbed the man herself, but she did not like the turn that things were taking; Florence was deliberately trying to win Dawson, and he seemed willing to yield.

Miss Adair's bearing towards Dawson became more frigid than ever, but he never varied in his manner towards her—always the same coldly polite and deferential style, always ready to do anything that might be required.

"I think it is time that two members of this company were sent about their business," she remarked one evening to Mason, as he was escorting her home as usual. "Neither Mr. Dawson nor Miss Graves ought to be allowed to remain; the fact is, they are trying to oust us both! I have believed that of Dawson for a long time, and now he and this girl are too friendly and are working together."

It was a spiteful speech, and to tell the truth Miss Adair was half ashamed of it as soon as it was finished. But she had been particularly irritated that evening.

"Confound him!" said Mason. "I half believe that he worked those notices for her and left us in the background."

The vehemence of his tone startled her—scared her almost. And when she had left him she began to think very seriously. She had to admit that her remark had been almost on a level with his in point of spleen.

Maggie Adair felt that the fates were working for

Digitized by Google

Dawson and Miss Graves when, on the following evening, the leading actor did not put in an appearance and the young stage manager, as understudy, took his place.

Dawson threw his whole soul into the part, and the interview between Miss Adair and himself, where she called him a traitor and he indignantly protested, brought down the house. At the end of that act he was called before the curtain, a special honour that had not been accorded to Mason. His soliloquy after the girl's retirement from the scene, in which he spoke of his love for her, was voted grand.

In the next act the dialogue between the two sisters took place; it was enacted as it had never been before and never was afterwards. Had the author been in the house and heard the younger sister's impassioned speech he would have been as surprised as were Miss Adair and the rest of the company.

The elder sister completely lost her cues; she did not recognise the lines, and no wonder. Florence spoke as her heart dictated; the part came natural to her, it was all so much like the drama that had been played in private for months. She spoke of the worthiness of the "traitor," and of the unworthiness of his friend; she pointed out that the one loved her with all the strength of his being, loved her truly and honourably, while the other cared nothing for her in reality and would only marry her because he could make money out of her ability.

Then she went on with a passionate declaration—which was foreign to the part—that she had set herself deliberately to make love to the "traitor" in the most open manner in an attempt to bring her elder sister to her senses.

"I love him!" she concluded in a low tone that could be heard only by a few of the audience. "But I know that he loves you, and I have done this unwomanly thing, I have sacrificed my self-respect, my whole self, to make him happy. I believe you are good at heart; I know that he could be happy only with you. I feel that if you are awakened to this fact, you cannot but love him. Will you wreck his life and your own?"

By this time it had dawned upon both Dawson and the lessee that there was something wrong and they dropped the curtain. As it fell, Florence Graves sank to the floor in a swoon.

Luckily that was her last appearance for the evening. In the final scene, where the elder sister acknowledges her error and asks forgiveness of the "traitor" there was another piece of good acting, and the audience went away highly delighted with the play.

Arthur Dawson escorted the leading lady to her home that night. The next day there were two items of news for them; Mason had died suddenly in a fit, the cause of which was a clot of blood on the brain due to hard drinking, and Miss Graves was suffering from a severe attack of brain fever.

Florence was ill for a long time and never returned to the boards; she has a good typewriting business, with a staff of lady clerks, from which she derives a comfortable income.

Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Dawson are still acting the parts of leading actor and actress at the Pearl Theatre; they occasionally perform elsewhere, but they are warm favourites with the patrons of the old house, and cling to it.

Dawson is now partner in the business, and it is quite on the cards that when Mr. Dunn retires from the stage of life he will leave all his properties to the son of his old friend.

GEORGE KNIGHT.

HAVE YOU GOT THAT TEN POUND NOTE?

Thirty-five Ten-Pound Notes Going Begging!

YOU CAN HAVE ONE FOR THE ASKING!

THE latest scheme of *PEARSON'S WEEKLY* is unquestionably one of the most astounding that has yet been placed before the readers of any paper. Broadly speaking, the Editor places you in the position of **getting ten pounds by simply asking for it.**

The idea is this:

Thirty men are wandering about the country, each with a sealed envelope in his pocket. Each envelope is of linen, tough and unbreakable. No one but the Editor knows *exactly* what is in those envelopes, so the contents cannot be forged. Each contains, as a matter of fact, a letter signed by the Editor authorising the first person who asks for it to the sum of £10.

NOW YOU SEE HOW YOU CAN GET £10 FOR ASKING.

We don't expect you to rush out at once and ask every man you meet if he has the envelope. That would be foolish—a mere waste of time. Moreover, you would probably get a rebuff.

What you should do is to quietly watch everyone you come in contact with. If you think the man you see is likely to be one of these men, you can, in an inoffensive and quiet manner, simply say: "By-the-way, have you seen this scheme?" and show him this page. If he is *not* one of the £10 gentlemen he will say he hasn't seen the scheme, and will be interested, and thank you for putting the chance of making £10 in his way. If he *is* one of the Ten Pounders he will quietly and unostentatiously take out his pocket-book and hand you the sealed letter.

This you will at once post to us in a registered envelope, and **WE WILL SEND YOU A CHEQUE FOR £10.**

THE TEN-POUNDERS

Will travel by the train. Will wear ordinary clothes.
Will stop at all sorts of hotels. Will smoke and drink.
Will attend places of entertainment.
Will look in shop windows.
Will loaf about the beach or parks.

In fact, will behave just like ordinary mortals.

They will wander about our big cities, they will alight from trains at wayside stations, and walk about villages and small towns, and they will altogether give every opportunity to people to get those £10 notes.

If you are at this moment in the train one of these men ***may be opposite you, or sitting next to you!***

Just casually show him this page. If he's one of them you'll get £10.

You will at once say: "Oh, yes, but I might ask a thousand people, and yet not get the right one."

Of course you might; but then, you might ask three, and the third might be the right one. Don't think because you simply move in a limited circle during your day's work that you're not likely to see the right man. All these men will intrude themselves unostentatiously into people's daily lives. They may converse with you on any subjects but those which will give you a hint regarding the ten pounds, unless you broach such subject yourself.

Don't think that you have to ask everyone you meet. Just show the page to a fellow passenger by boat or train, to a chance acquaintance on the beach or on the parade. No harm is done if he's not the right chap. You can both just laugh over it.

ALREADY FOUR £10 NOTES HAVE BEEN CLAIMED.

Two have gone to London, one to Southend, and one to Norwich.

Full details appear in *Pearson's Weekly*.

Every day the Ten Pounders will write to the Editor and tell their experiences—where they had breakfast, where they lunched, whom they sat next to, what those people were like, what they were talking about, and what they ate—in fact, will say just exactly what they have been doing every day. Some of this information will be published in the ***Daily Express*** every day and in ***Pearson's Weekly*** every week, so you will know just how things are going along.

Digitized by Google

Mr. Bowser's Tribulations.

XXIII.—He Tunes His Own Piano and Thereby Saves £5.

It was after dinner, but instead of sitting down to his evening paper and cigar Mr. Bowser was prowling round the lower part of the house. Mrs. Bowser realised that "something was up," but she maintained silence until at length he paused before her and said:

"Last night while you were playing the piano I noticed that it was sadly out of tune. You must have heard some of the keys make a sort of ur-ur-ur as you struck them."

"I heard nothing of the sort!" promptly replied Mrs. Bowser as a dim idea of what he was up to flashed across her mind. "The piano was tuned only a month ago, and there are no ur-ur-urs about it."

"But I insist that there are," continued Mr. Bowser. "I have a keen ear, and I say that no less than seven different keys had the sound of an egg beater at work. It may have been tuned a month ago, but by whom?"

"By a first class tuner."

"That is, he of course claimed to be first class and charged you five shillings, but how do you know that he wasn't a carpenter or blacksmith? There's a piano which cost me £50. It is going to rack and ruin for the need of a little overhauling. To get a competent man up here will cost £5 whereas——"

"Whereas you can do the work in an hour yourself," finished Mrs. Bowser. "Well, now, you let that piano alone! You know no more about the works of a piano than I do about the kitchen of the Tsar of Russia. If there's anything to be done, I'll get a man up here."

"Madam," said Mr. Bowser as he stood before her with his hands clasped underneath his coat-tails, "there is an ur-ur-ur to that piano. It is out of repair; it is going to ruin. I can overhaul it in one hour and save £5. It will be a pleasure for me to do the work, and I also feel it is my duty to save the money which would have to be otherwise paid out. I shall proceed to tune."

"But you'll only destroy it. If you feel that you must tinker away at something, why don't you take the lawn-mower, the gasmeter or that old airgun in the garret."

"I do not ask you to remain in the room during the tuning process. You can put on your hat and go for a walk, or you can go up to your room and read a novel. When I have restored the tone to its original volume and sweetness, I will call you."

"But I beg you to—to——"

Mr. Bowser waved his hand to signify that nothing on the face of the earth could turn him aside, and as Mrs. Bowser went upstairs with tears in her eyes he got out his tool box and peeled off his coat and jacket to begin work. He met with an adventure at the very outset. He wanted room to work on all sides of the piano, and he therefore got behind it to push it out into the middle of the floor. He was heaving away with his shoulder against the case when his foot slipped on the carpet and he went down and rolled over with the weight of an elephant. He fell up against a chair and knocked that over, and he was still lying on his back when Mrs. Bowser came half-way down the stairs to call out:

"I thought the walls were falling in! What are you doing on your back on the floor!"

"I wanted to see the underside of the piano," he replied as he got up. "Should I find myself in need of your assistance I will call you."

As tools for piano tuning Mr. Bowser had a hammer, a hatchet, a tack-puller, a corkscrew, a screwdriver and a monkey-wrench. As he folded back the cover he saw the inside of a piano for the first time in his life. He had taken only one glance when he walked to the foot of the stairs and called to Mrs. Bowser:

"No wonder there was an ur-ur-ur when you hit some of the keys! What d'you 'spose your first class piano-tuner left among the wires?"

"He couldn't have left any of his tools?" she queried.

"No tools, but half-a-dozen strips of red flannel. He even wove them in among the strings. That's probably where my missing flannel shirt went to. He was probably some man from a woollen mill."

"Why, those strips are always put in," protested Mrs. Bowser. "I think the idea is to soften the sound."

"Well, I don't. I think the idea is to attract rats and mice, and out they come."

When Mr. Bowser finished pulling out the "rags," he very quickly discovered the method of tightening up the strings. With one hand he fitted the monkey-wrench to turn the keys, and with the other he started a tum-tum-tum on the keys, as he had once or twice seen a regular tuner do. He couldn't exactly decide

Digitized by Google

whether all the strings had to be tightened or loosened and so he took the middle course and tightened and loosened half. The effect wasn't exactly magical; it was worse. Some of the keys piped and sobbed, and there were others which produced sounds as of a saw trying to eat its way into a crowbar.

"Good gracious! What are you doing now?" called Mrs. Bowser after three or four minutes.

"The girl I left behind me."

"Saving a piano from wreck and ruin," replied Mr. Bowser as two chills tried to gallop up his spine at the same time.

He hadn't quite hit it. He grudgingly admitted the fact to himself and then began anew. In a dim, uncertain way he seemed to remember something about "pitch" in connection with tuning. He couldn't possibly recall whether it was high pitch, low pitch or half-and half pitch, but he wasn't the man to hesitate. He began humming the air of "The Girl I Left Behind Me," and keeping up the tum-tum on the keys.

After a while he found a sound to agree with his hum, and he took that for a rallying point. It was what he called a so-so pitch, and after half an hour of playing up and playing down he got three keys which appeared to agree that some sort of a girl had been left behind somebody. The other strings were obstinate. They wanted to play "Ta-ra-ra," "The Sweet By and By," or "Linger Longer Lucy," and every five minutes Mrs. Bowser kept calling down to know if a strange cat had got into the house or if Mr. Bowser had got an attack of colic. He finally refused to answer her, but with teeth shut hard and a glare in his eyes he started out to bring those strings into harmony or break up the whole thing. He tightened ten, one after another, until they set up a humming, and then he mopped his brow and started to tum-tum the keys.

There were ten sounds to bring out the gooseflesh, but scarcely had the first shudder passed over Mr. Bowser when the wires began to snap. The end of the first one flicked his ear, the second one curled his hair and the third just brushed his chin.

He was moving away when four went at once, and one of them had business with his nose. Mrs. Bowser heard a yell and a sit down, and she came flying down stairs to find Mr. Bowser sitting against the wall with his nose in his hand. It was bleeding like a beer barrel with the bung out, and the skin had been peeled from end to base. His eyes were also weeping large tears, and his bald head had a welt across it.

"Well, you've tuned the piano!" said Mrs. Bowser as she looked down upon him.

"Who—who threw a cat in my face?" he asked as he realised her presence.

"It's a wonder you didn't say I did," she answered, "and then go and threaten a separation and all that. It was one of the wires that struck you, and you'll want court plaster on that nose for a month."

"Wo-man—wo——" he began, but she stopped him with a gesture, and said:

"It will cost several pounds to have that piano righted, but it shall be done to-morrow! You've got to the end of your tune, and now go upstairs and let me see how nearly killed you are!"

Mr. Bowser obeyed without a protest. More than that, he never said a word while she was crisscrossing his nose with six strips of plaster.

It was only after he was in bed that he growled unde his breath:

"It was a put up job to assassinate me, and you bet your life I'll make it cost somebody mighty dear!"

M. Quad.

Next week: He Sets Out to Do a Little Reforming.

Digitized by Google

Promotion by Luck.

DURING a residence of some years in Paris I became acquainted with about a dozen members of the detective force, but only on one occasion did I ever get a story from one of them.

I suppose that was my fault; I am over-modest by nature, and did not like to ask them about their business, but I did summon up a little more courage than usual while talking with a detective outside a prominent café one cool evening in early summer.

"I say," I exclaimed, as though the thought had just struck me, "I have known you for a long time, yet you have never told me a story about any of the cases on which you have been engaged!"

Then I stopped, reddened, and wished I had not spoken. I thought he would regard it as impudence.

To my relief he laughed good-humouredly.

"Oh, I'll tell you one, if you like!" he replied. "I'll tell you about one of my earliest cases; it brought me promotion, but it was promotion by luck and not by merit."

Then he told the story, which I reproduce as nearly as possible in his own words. I have always regarded the affair as characteristically French.

"One afternoon, Dr. Berton heard a carriage stop before the door of his house in the Rue de Turenne, and curiosity prompted him to take a furtive glance from the corner of the window. It was a rather elegant affair; not a private carriage, he surmised, but that did not go for much. The hirer must be a person of wealth, and many exalted people, living in spacious flats, do not trouble to keep their own carriages.

"He saw two persons alight from the carriage and ascend the steps—a man and woman of middle age—while the third occupant, a young woman, remained in the conveyance.

"The doctor was a young man trying to work up a good practice and he felt greatly pleased; this visit would add to his reputation in the neighbourhood, and some recommendations among the upper circles. He wondered how he had contrived to attract attention, and came to the conclusion that it was through an article of his in a medical journal.

"In a few moments the lady was ushered into his presence; he wondered why the gentleman had not come with her, but he soon received an explanation.

"'Dr. Berton,' said the lady after the usual formal greeting, 'I wish to consult you on a matter of some importance and delicacy. I understand that you are a specialist in nervous complaints and mental disorders.'

"The doctor bowed; he was not aware that he had gained any repute in such complaints, but believed that he was as well able to treat them as the majority of medical men in Paris. He was not going to throw away a good chance.

"'I am the Baroness de Sollen,' continued the lady, 'and I wish to consult you about my husband. I have induced him to stay in the waiting-room until I have spoken to you. Oh, I am so distressed, and I hardly like to speak on this subject! I may fully rely on your professional confidence?'

"'Certainly, Madame!'

"The doctor was flattered; he did not know the Baroness, nor had the name occurred to him, but that was not an important detail. There were many titled people in Paris of German descent; their titles were German, although they were now French at heart. Quite close to his house was the Boulevard de Haussmann—that name was German enough!

"'My husband has been living at a high rate during the past year or so,' continued the lady in a low tone. 'I will not enter into particulars, but he has a kind of mania just now for jewellery and—er, actresses. The latest instance is that he wishes to purchase diamonds to the value of £2,000! It cannot possibly go on, we shall be ruined! I wish you to examine him and pronounce an opinion. He is suffering from an attack of some kind just now, and I have taken advantage of this to bring him here under the impression that you will hand him the money to pay for the gems. I am sure I do not really know how I have succeeded in deceiving him to that extent; perhaps he thinks I have

Digitized by Google

brought him to his bankers. But he is here, and you will see him?'

"'Certainly!'

"'Then I will go to him and tell him to come in here,' said the lady, before the medical gentleman had time to say more. 'No,' she continued, anticipating what he was about to say, 'I must not be present at the interview. I will remain in the waiting-room. I will fetch him; your servant could not induce him to move, I am convinced of that. I will see you afterwards.'

"As the Baron entered, the doctor ran his eye swiftly over him; but he did not appear quite on a level with his wife, his bearing was not so suggestive of the aristocrat. Dr. Berton concluded that this was one of the results of his errac ic conduct during the last year or so.

"'Good morning,' said the doctor; he was on the point of addressing his visitor by his title, when he remembered that the patient might fancy he was coming incognito; at any rate, even at the risk of being thought impolite, he suppressed the title.

"'Good morning,' replied the visitor affably.

"The medical gentleman took out his watch and approached the patient.

"'Let me feel your pulse,' he requested. 'Keep quite calm.'

"'What the——'

"'Pray be calm!' urged the doctor. 'I merely wish to take note of your pulse. You might put out your tongue at the same time!'

"'Oh, come! I am not here to be examined,' protested the patient. 'I want the money for those diamonds. You know!'

"'H'm!' murmured Berton. 'I fancy this is rather a serious case; he seems to be suffering from mental derangement.'

"Then he continued aloud:

"'Yes, yes! We will talk of that presently; I wish to make a brief examination. Let me feel your pulse.'

"He caught hold of the other's wrist, but the visitor wrenched himself free and sprang to his feet.

"'What is all this nonsense about?' he shouted, his face reddening with annoyance. 'I came here for £2,000, the price of those diamonds.'

"Dr. Berton stepped back in dismay and placed his hand on the bell. The Baron was getting violent, and he began to fear that he had to deal with a maniac.

"'My dear Baron de Sollen,' said the doctor soothingly, 'I understand your case perfectly, and I beg of you to be calm. In the course of a few days I will relieve you from this attack. Never mind about the money; just take your seat again——'

"'Baron de Sollen!' shouted the visitor excitedly. 'Are you mad? I'm not the Baron! I am a jeweller, and I want the money for the diamonds which the Baroness brought here for your approval! You are robbing me!'

"Berton rang the bell to summon assistance. When the man-servant arrived, Berton and he forced the visitor into a chair.

"Berton had now come to the conclusion that something was wrong, so he asked his patient to explain. The man's story may be summed up in a few lines. His name was Jacques Baudet and he was a jeweller on the Boulevard des Ca ucins. On the previous day the Baroness de Sollen called at his shop in company with a young woman, and stated that she was one of the organisers of a charity lottery. She had been commissioned to select the chief prizes, and the first prize was to be a set of diamonds or something of that kind, in order to attract the wealthy classes and induce them to purchase a large number of tickets. She finally selected a magnificent diamond necklace, and had asked him to reserve it for a day until she had had an opportunity of speaking to Dr. Berton, who was at the head of the committee.

"On this particular day she had called again in her carriage and had asked him to go with her to Dr. Berton's residence, taking the necklace with him, so that Berton might finally decide. He had consented. When in the waiting-room, she had asked him for the necklace so that she might show it to Berton, and by her influence induce him to consent to the purchase. To this he had agreed.

"On returning to the waiting-room, she had said that Berton had the necklace and if he, the jeweller, went into the consulting room, the doctor would buy it and give him the money, but might want to beat down the price a little, to which she advised him not to agree. She would remain in the waiting-room, and leave him and the doctor to settle the matter together.

"'And now,' said the unsuspecting jeweller, 'give me back my diamonds, for it seems that the Baroness has been playing a joke on me for some reason or other.'

"'But I haven't seen the diamonds!' exclaimed the doctor.

"Then the truth burst upon both of them. Berton uttered an exclamation of rage and made a rush for the waiting-room, followed by the jeweller. As they both now anticipated, the Baroness was gone and her carriage had disappeared.

"It would be useless to attempt to describe the feelings of both doctor and jeweller at having allowed themselves to be duped in that way.

"Now comes the personal element, and it shows how strange is the truth and what a man will do to win the girl he loves.

"In the midst of the hubbub, a detective called upon the doctor and requested his attendance and that of the jeweller at the nearest police station. This was a new turn, and both gentlemen looked at the officer in amazement, wondering whether the wily Baroness had further complicated matters by bringing some trumped-up charge against them.

"The detective declined to satisfy their curiosity and requested their immediate compliance; he only knew one side of the affair—precisely that which was unknown to the two men—and he wished to observe how they behaved, as a clue to the truth.

"His attention had been attracted, not far from the station, by an open carriage, driven by a young man, in which were two ladies, both appealing to someone to stop the horses, as the driver was taking them in the wrong direction and would not obey their orders.

"He called to the driver to stop, but his command not being obeyed, he succeeded in climbing to the seat beside the driver at some personal risk. The young fellow insisted that he was driving the two ladies to the police station, as they had committed a robbery and had stolen a valuable diamond necklace. In the end, the detective decided that they had all better go the police-station and sift the matter.

"Of course, there was a great to-do. The ladies indignantly denied that they had committed any robbery and voluntarily agreed that they should be searched; nothing was found on them. The young man made an explanation which seemed too wild for belief.

"He had been an assistant to M. Baudet, but having had the presumption to aspire to become the husband

Digitized by Google

of the jeweller's daughter, he had been dismissed. He had been forced to take up the situation of a coachman in the employ of a jobmaster. He and the girl were in love with each other and still met secretly.

"The girl had told him on the previous evening what her father had said at home about the probable purchase of the diamond necklace. He had not taken much notice of it, but in the morning she had purposely met him to implore his help; she had dreamt that something unfortunate was about to occur to her father through that necklace.

"She asked him to risk his situation by hanging about her father's shop and following the lady or her carriage. He thought it a wild affair, but the somewhat romantic girl pointed out that if he were by good luck to prevent misfortune to her father, that worthy would probably consent to their marriage and reinstate the lover.

"He had done as he was bidden, and had grown suspicious as he followed the course of events. He had beguiled the driver from the box and had offered to mind the carriage while the coachman went for a drink. Fortune favoured the daring lover; the ladies came out of Berton's house without the jeweller, and this confirmed his suspicions.

"Instead of driving them to the desired destination, he had taken them part of the way and then turned off towards the station, hoping that they might not notice where they were going until he got them there.

"It was a bold stroke to charge them with theft, seeing that he had very little evidence; but he had entered upon the undertaking and intended to carry it through at all costs—for lo e of Marie. Things looked bad for him when the necklace was not found in their possession, but he had no alternative — he must brazen it out.

"So he insisted that the doctor and the jeweller should be fetched, and ultimately, in spite of the protests of the ladies, this was agreed to. Naturally, the arrival of these two gentlemen put a different complexion on the matter, but there was still some mystery attaching to it.

"The ladies vowed that they had never seen the necklace; if the jeweller had brought it with him, he had retained possession of it. The jeweller declared that he had handed it to the Baroness, but there was no evidence to support this statement.

"However, there was no doubt that the Baroness had attempted either a robbery or a hoax. And the fact that she was no Baroness at all and could g ve no reason for playing a hoax, was evidence in favour of robbery.

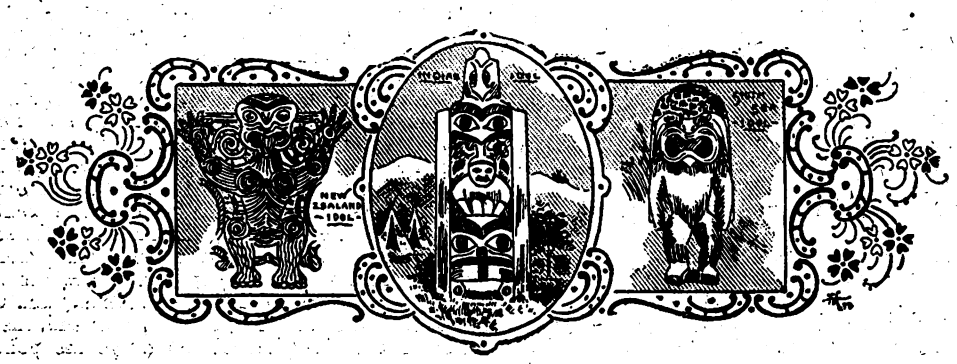
"But where was the necklace? After some cogitation, it was concluded that she had thrown it away, but it occurred to the detective at length—it is his business, to think of everything—that it might still be in the carriage. And in fact it was found neatly hidden at the back of one of the seats.

"The Baroness and her accomplice received their just reward, the younger woman getting off lightly, as she appeared to have done very little. The young assistant is now the son-in-law and partner of M. Baudet.

"When that case was made public, it appeared in the papers in a distorted form, and the detectives got most of the credit. Frenchmen dread ridicule, and the 'personal element' was suppressed as much as possible. I have said that the Baroness received her just reward, but that is hardly correct. The case was not pressed against her as much as it ought to have been, which helped the prosecutor to keep the details about his daughter's dream, and so on, from the public. It would certainly have brought ridicule upon him and he did not relish that.

"That case helped me to win promotion; I have always felt a little ashamed, but I think I have deserved the promotion in other ways since then."

George Day.



Digitized by Google

Allinson's Blunder.

No young fellow of twenty-five ever felt more pleased with himself and with things in general than did Frank Allinson as, one summer morning, he s ttled himsel. in a far corner of a railway carriage and prepared to make himself comfortable for a somewhat lengthy railway journey. In truth, he had reason to be pleased, for he was about to pay a visit to his lady-love, and there was no doubt that the said lady-love was looking forward to his arrival and that the romantic courtship would reach its proper climax during his stay under her father's roof.

The carriage did not fill up before the train started; there were only four passengers, one in each corner, so Allinson had plenty of room for the numerous newspapers and periodicals which he had brought with him to beguile the time; but, to the surprise of the other passengers who cast occasional amused glances at the pile of reading matter, Frank made no attempt to read. He folded his arms, crossed his legs, and gazed fixedly at the roof of the carriage. He was busy with his thoughts, and if we follow his reflections we shall gather sufficient information to enable us to understand the position.

"Romantic, that's just it!" mused Allinson. "It could hardly be more so—in a quiet way, of course. No battle or murder, no breaking of hearts or anything of that sort, you know, but just quiet romance."

And then he smiled complacently.

"This is how it was"—he imagined that he was communicating this information to some invisible friend—"so you can judge for yourself. I had to go up North for the firm on an important piece of business. I arrived early in the morning, did the business and intended to return by the night train, but I met with a slight accident which upset my plan about returning so promptly.

"I had three hours to spare, so I hired a bike and went for a ride in the rural part of the place. Just as I was enjoying the ride in a quiet spot, a dog ran out and got mixed up with the bicycle, and down I came a cropper. When I picked myself up, I found that I had cut my hand rather badly, to say nothing of the bruises in various parts of my anatomy.

"I felt much shaken, and the bike wasn't any the better for the spill. I looked round for that dog to give him something for his pains—and for the pains he had given me—and up came an elderly gentleman and apologised profusely for what his dog had done.

"Well, the upshot of it was that he insisted upon my going to his house and having my hand bound up. As we walked along, I explained that I was supposed to return by the night train. He said he would send a telegram for me, as he felt sure that I shouldn't be able to get back to the town for the train; when I told him the name of the firm, it turned out that he was a great friend of the senior partner! Mr. Haverill said I need not be at all uneasy as he would arrange the thing, and that I had better stay the night.

"I stayed at his house that night and left at noon on the following day. I saw her and the older lady at breakfast, and—I clean lost my heart to that girl! I tried to think that I was not so hard hit as I fancied, and I told myself that in real life a fellow doesn't fall in love with a girl right off in that way; but it was no good. Before I had been home a week I was getting desperate about it, so I decided to try my luck by letter.

"I wrote a letter, telling her respectfully of my admiration for her; that, although I had only seen her once, she had made an ineffaceable impression upon my heart, and all that sort of thing. In the letter I addressed her as 'Dear Miss Haverill,' but on the envelope I had to put 'Miss Janet Haverill,' otherwise it might have fallen into the aunt's hands. Phew!"

For a moment the serene look on Allinson's face vanished at the thought that his little scheme would have been upset and he would never have had a chance of winning Janet.

"Of course, she would have told her brother and there would have been no end of trouble. She was particularly nice to me, I own, but aunts can be awkward under such

Digitized by Google

circumstances. Stroke her the right way and I should say that she is a really nice woman, that aunt. Still, I didn't want my letter to fall into her hands! I believe I only heard their Christian names once. It was lucky I heard them at all, or how on earth could I have addressed that letter to Janet?

"I received an answer which led me to think that I might go on. I believe in taking one's chances, so I went on and boldly addressed her as 'Dear Janet,' and since then the correspondence has continued. She has arranged, in response to a hint from me, for the old gentleman to send me an invitation to spend two or three days up there, and it won't be my fault if I am not engaged to his daughter before I come away!"

And as that is as far as we need follow Allinson's train of thought, we will leave him to his meditations and join him again on his arrival at the end of his railway journey.

Allinson found Mr. Haverill waiting for him in a dog cart.

"Here you are!" said that gentleman cheerily. "I had to come to town myself on an urgent matter, so I thought I'd wait for you and take you home. Jump in, and we'll be off."

Allinson thought this was a piece of good fortune; the old gentleman, as he styled him, was evidently in a good humour, and there would be a chance of working in some hint or observation which might show Mr. Haverill "how the land lay" and might also enable Allinson to discover whether Janet's father was favourable to the proposed engagement or only luke-warm on the subject. After a few minutes' drive, Frank decided to venture an inquiry.

"I trust your daughter is quite well, Mr. Haverill," he remarked.

He intended his manner to be quite easy, but he felt that it was awkward.

"Oh, yes! Bessie's in splendid health, thank you," responded Haverill heartily, as he deftly flicked a fly from the back of the horse.

"H'm! he must have misunderstood me," thought Allinson. "I'll try again."

Then, aloud, he continued:

"How is Miss Janet Haverill?"

He emphasised the Christian name.

"Quite well, thank you. My sister has been in remarkably good spirits lately. Shouldn't wonder if we meet her when we get nearer home; she is very good to the poor people, and this is one of her visiting days."

Allinson felt himself slowly turning pale and cold. What did this mean? He had spoken distinctly enough, and there could be no doubt that Haverill had not spoken heedlessly. A nameless fear began to take possession of Allinson; could it be that he had made a blunder in the Christian names of the two women! Horrible thought! If that were so, he stood practically pledged to the aunt of the girl with whom he had fallen in love.

While he was deliberating upon the best way to ascertain the truth, Haverill put an end to all doubt by remarking:

"Bessie goes with her aunt sometimes, but this afternoon she wanted to do something in her own piece of garden, so we shall find my daughter at home."

The words fell upon Allinson's ears like a death sentence, and a groan escaped his lips, causing his companion to ask, "Eh?" under the impression that the young man had said something.

It was true, he had made a mistake! What an idiot he had been! And how was he to get out of it—could he get out of it?

Miss Janet Haverill was much younger than her brother, but she was probably thirty-three; no doubt she was an agreeable woman—a good woman—but not the woman he would have for choice.

He understood now why her letters had seemed rather temperate; he had noticed this from the first, and it had restrained his own ebullitions.

Only about half-a-dozen letters had passed on either side, and Allinson had promised himself that he would make up for the comparative coolness of the written communications when he saw the girl again and "fixed up" the engagement. He had put it down to maidenly modesty; he was now inclined to call it old-maidenly modesty.

The difference between Allinson's feelings when he began his journey and his feelings as he finished it must be left to the imagination of the reader.

He scarcely spoke a word during the remainder of the drive; he was busily occupied in trying alternately to evolve some scheme for getting out of the difficulty and persuading himself that it would not be so bad if he did have to marry the aunt, as thirty-three is not a great age.

As they drew up at the door, Bessie appeared to welcome them; then Allinson set his teeth and made up his mind to try the plan which had occurred to him. It was risky, but desperate diseases require desperate remedies.

He was shown to his room as soon as the usual formalities were over, but there was no time to be lost. He made his way downstairs again and entered the drawing-room, where, to his delight, he found Bessie.

His joy was increased when she suggested that he might like to look at the garden—there was just time before tea.

He readily assented.

"I'm in luck!" he murmured. "I hope to goodness my luck will continue and get me out of this mess!"

It was a nice little garden, but Allinson paid little heed to it; he saw what appeared to be a quiet corner and directed his steps towards it, Bessie accompanying him as a matter of course.

When he reached the spot he found that it was even more secluded than he had supposed, and with a deep breath he began the attack.

"Miss Haverill—Bessie," he began boldly, taking her hand and looking straight into her eyes, "for three whole months I have longed for this moment! I loved you the very moment I first saw you, and my love has been increasing from that moment to this. Forgive me if I have been abrupt, and let the strength of my love be my excuse."

Taken by surprise, the girl stood motionless; her colour came and went, her breathing seemed almost to cease, but Frank noticed that she did not attempt to withdraw her hand. A fierce joy filled his heart, and he continued with a passionate earnestness that could not be mistaken. His boldness and sincerity were in his favour; there is some attraction in being thus taken by storm.

"Listen to what I have to say, and you will see what I have dared in order to win you," he continued. "And when you have heard, you will help me."

Still holding the girl's hand, still gazing stedfastly into her eyes, he spoke of the impression she had made upon him at their first meeting, and how his love had caused him to risk her displeasure and that of her father

Digitized by Google

by writing to her. He went very fully into that part of the story, and he could see that the recital was pleasing to Bessie. Then, in a straightforward manly way, he briefly told her what had happened.

When he had finished, his heart seemed to stand still as he awaited some word or sign from Bessie; he knew that the position was a ridiculous one—one that might excite the laughter rather than the sympathy of the girl who stood before him. At that moment Allinson would have given a great deal never to have been born.

There was a conflict of sentiment in Bessie's heart; there was an inclination to laugh, yet she could not but recognise that the young fellow must love her deeply to have ventured upon such a step, and that the mistake was the result of his venture. She liked him, she was charmed by his open manner, and every girl is naturally pleased when a man risks something for her sake.

"It is a dreadful mistake that you should have written to Aunt Janet instead of to me, Mr. Allinson," she said demurely, yet there was just the slightest trace of a twinkle of merriment in her eyes. "I will help you, just to spare auntie—and it might make me look ridiculous——"

"You're an angel!" cried Frank ecstatically. "Then you do love me?"

"Oh, I didn't say so!" returned the girl archly. "It is just possible that I might——"

But she didn't have a chance to finish the sentence, for Allinson had her in his arms. And they were both perfectly unconscious that behind the shrubs was a woman with her hands pressed to her heart; Miss Janet Haverill had returned and had entered the garden in search of them, arriving just in time to catch enough of Allinson's story to realise the truth.

While Frank and Bessie were spending a few blissful moments, the mind of Janet Haverill was busy with a plan for cutting the knot. With lightning rapidity the thought flashed through her brain. How foolish she had been to suppose that this young man could fall in love with her while Bessie was there! What should she do? Most people thought her very prim and somewhat eccentric—why not take advantage of this reputation? It would not be acting truthfully, which was against her principles, but—

A noise behind the shrub made the lovers start and stand apart. Miss Janet Haverill stepped forward with a smile, holding out a hand to each.

"I have been guilty of a little plot in the interest of Bessie's happiness," she said with a smile and in a firm voice.

Her hearers did not know what it cost her to speak thus.

"Bessie has no mother, and I have to act in that capacity as well as I can. When I received Mr. Allinson's letter which was intended for Bessie, I resolved to find out, if I could, whether he was worthy of her. Hence my little plot and my request to my brother that he should invite Mr. Allinson here for a day or two. It was rather a peculiar thing to do, but I have a reputation for doing peculiar things now and then. Now I think I had better leave you."

And before the astonished young people could well understand what it all meant, she was gone. It was well for her that she did leave them, for she could not have kept up the part another minute.

"Well—I—never!" exclaimed Allinson.

Then he heaved a tremendous sigh of relief.

"It is very good of her to look after me," said Bessie slowly, "but it was a strange thing to do. She is a little eccentric."

There was a pause for a few seconds.

"But I wish she had let me do my own love-making—I mean my own correspondence."

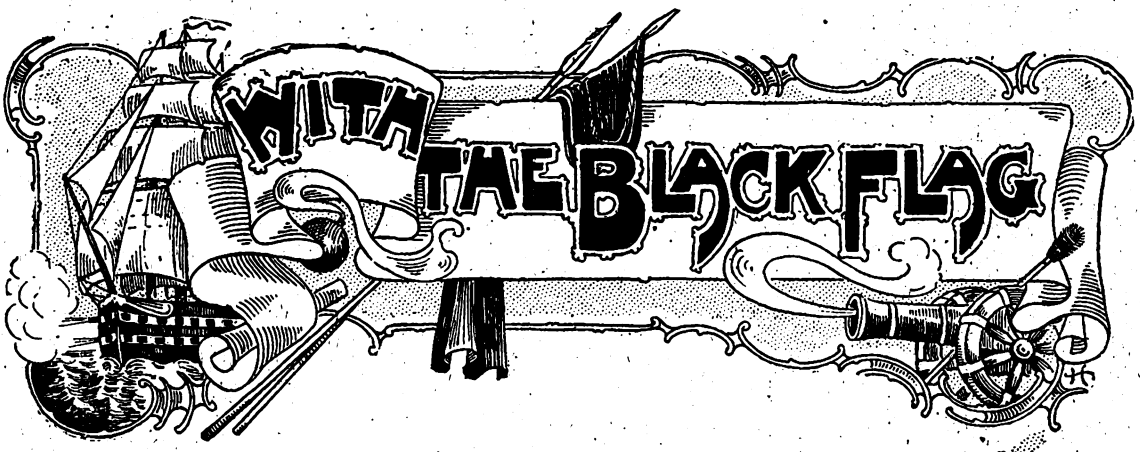
"Yes, you mean correspondence. You can do your own love-making now, and the more you do the better I shall like it!"

"So that's why Janet wanted me to invite the young fellow, eh?" muttered Mr. Haverill, as he retired for the night. "She knew he was sweet on Bessie and wanted to bring them together! She mumbled something about having written to him. Fancy Janet turning match-maker! But you never can get to the bottom of a woman, they're too deep!"

Mr. Haverill would have been even more surprised if he had seen what was on the letters which his sister burnt that night in her room while the tears slowly fell from her half-closed eyes.

Daisy George.

Digitized by Google



A ROMANCE OF LAND AND SEA.

By William Westall.

Author of "With the Red Eagle," "The Phantom City," "Nigel Fortescue," etc., etc.

PRINCIPAL CHARACTERS.

Major Wyvenhoe, commander of an expedition which went out from England to help the Venezuelans in their struggle for liberty. He is intrusted with dispatches for delivery to Bolivar, the supreme chief.

Captain Cautley, who is in charge of the ship which took the expedition out.

John Ready, the servant of Wyvenhoe.

General Arismendez, ex-Governor of Pampatar and Vice-President of the Venezuelan Republic. He received Wyvenhoe and Cautley on their arrival in Venezuela.

Dons Iago Santleo, and Antonio Bonanza, two Venezuelans who accompany Wyvenhoe when he takes the dispatches to Bolivar.

CHAPTER XII.

An Adventure in the Forest.

The side path into which Don Antonio led us was so obstructed by bush and bramble that the Zambo and the Indian had to go in front and broaden it with their machetes, which they did nearly as fast as they could walk, and in a few minutes we came to a place where the trees were wider apart and the undergrowth less dense. Here a halt was called and the lancer lifted from his horse and laid on the ground.

Bearing in mind Bonanza's warning I inquired in a whisper whither he had been and what had happened.

After listening intently and looking anxiously round, he answered, also in an undertone:

"I left you so suddenly because I fancied I saw through the trees the red plume of a dragoon, but thinking I might be mistaken, and knowing that if I gave a false alarm you would laugh at me, I went forward to get a better view and after a sharp run caught sight of a Spanish lancer as he disappeared at a bend in the trail. So the red plume was no illusion. Perhaps I should have returned at once, but at the same instant it occurred to me that it would be well if I could first lay the fellow by the heels and ascertain whence he came and what he was after. To this end I made through the wood, mostly on my hands and knees, and as the track thereabouts turns abruptly to the right got ahead of him, posted myself behind a bush and there awaited his coming.

"As shooting would have alarmed the lancer's comrades, if, as I conjectured, he had comrades, I drew my sword and, as he went by, sprang from my hiding place and gave him a stroke on the head that brought him senseless to the ground, fastened him to the saddle with his stirrup leathers and hurried back. Yet not before I had descried other red plumes moving, as it seemed, hitherward, though owing to the windings of the track and the closeness of the trees I may be mistaken. Anyhow they cannot be far off, and there may be more of them about, for which reason I turned in here and warned you to make no noise."

While Don Antonio was speaking we had been pouring *aguardiente* down the wounded man's throat, who soon so far recovered his senses as to be able to answer questions, albeit he was much weakened by loss of blood and appeared to be almost at the last gasp.

He said he belonged to a regiment stationed at a place called Vargos, whither, early in the morning, a scout had brought word that Bolivar and two British generals were at Marco (where we had spent the night) on which a squadron was dispatched thither to take us, dead or alive; but on finding we were gone they rode on, hoping we might land again, their scouts meanwhile keeping the boats in view from the river bank.

The man said further that he formed part of a sergeant's guard, which had been ordered to scour the wood, that the main body were in the neighbourhood, and scouts everywhere.

"You are surrounded and cannot escape, my death will be avenged," he added faintly, then fell back and spoke no more.

This was alarming intelligence indeed, for though well armed we were only four, and escaping the hundred men, which was probably the strength of the squadron, seemed almost past praying for. If our retreat had not already been cut off it soon would be. Returning by the cattle track was impossible. It was the way our pursuers would take. Equally impossible to stay where we were, we could be tracked by the dead lancer's blood and the hoof prints of his horse.

Our only chance was to take to the forest and make for the river, an undertaking that would involve a path in some places and crawling in others. Moreover, we might encounter vegetation so dense as to be absolutely impassable, while if we did not keep within easy reach of the trail, we should lose ourselves in the mazes of the forest. But we had no choice; successful or unsuccessful, the attempt must be made, and quickly.

Don Antonio tethered the horse to a tree and gave the dead trooper's carbine, pistols and ammunition, to the

Digitized by Google

Zambo, who had only his machete. Then we crept under the bushes, and lest the Indian should desert, or fall into the hands of the soldiers and tell them which way we had gone, we made him go first.

This was, as we thought, a necessary precaution, though it almost proved our ruin, for shortly afterwards we heard voices and the neigh of a horse, and through the network of brambles and branches espied the nodding plumes of half a score helmets, whereupon the Indian, frantic with fear, uttered a loud yell.

Bonanza knocked him down and grasped his throat, but too late, the Spaniards had heard the cry and came on with exultant shouts, we on our part kneeling behind two prostrate trees, which having fallen crosswise, made a serviceable breastwork. When they had got as close as the thickness of the timber and the nature of the ground permitted, our assailants called on us to surrender, and, receiving no reply, opened fire with their pistols and carbines, but being well sheltered, none of us were hit.

On the other hand, to remain where we were and let these fellows stand by till the others came up would be fatal.

"Let each take his man from the right, then retreat to the left. If we shoot straight we may kill three or four of them," whispered Santleo.

Which we did, aiming so true that the discharge emptied four saddles. On this the Spaniards, wild with rage, made a desperate attempt to reach us, but the efforts of the loose horses to break away, and the refusal of the others to face the thorns and leap the logs, threw them into confusion, an opportunity by which we profited to fire a volley with our pistols that emptied two more saddles and wounded a horse.

The Zambo cut the nearest Spaniard down with his machete.

We were now equal, four to four, and seeing that the troopers had dismounted we sprang over the logs and charged; the Zambo, who was as nimble as a cat and as fleet as a deer, leading the way and cutting the nearest Spaniard down with his machete. Whereupon the remainder bolted, and we were beginning to breathe again when, to our dismay, ten more lancers, who had no doubt heard the firing, came down the trail at a gallop and burst into the thicket.

These were joined by the three fugitives, and it soon became evident that the combined force would make another attack, and as they imagined that Bolivar, on whose head a great price had been put, was almost within their grasp, it was likely to be a resolute attack.

And they were thirteen, we four!

Moreover, the Spaniards being mounted and in possession of the trail our way to the boats was barred, and with thirteen men close at our heels we could escape neither by crawling under the bushes nor cutting a way through them.

Nevertheless they seemed to hesitate and Don Antonio, ever fearless and alert, went forward on his hands and knees to make a nearer reconnaisance. Returning in a few minutes later he reported that the Godos were considering whether they should attack us on horseback or on foot.

We hoped it would be on foot, plumed helmets, cavalry boots and spurs being ill adapted for fighting in a tropical jungle.

The troopers appeared to be of the same opinion for they presently rode along the path cleared by ourselves, the three dismounted men clearing it here and there with their swords, but keeping too well in cover to give us a chance of getting a shot at them.

In the meantime we had taken up another and, as we thought, a stronger position. A sort of semi-circle it was, fronted by a tangle of fallen branches, between which we could see what went on without showing ourselves, our flanks and rear being protected by thickets that neither man nor beast could pass. So we had no way of retreat, which in ordinary circumstances would have been a serious drawback, but as with the possible exception of Don Antonio we had almost abandoned hope it made little difference. Retreat being in any event impossible all we could do was to sell our lives as dearly as might be.

A further disadvantage and cause for discouragement was the want of suitable ammunition. Our guns had two barrels, one (rifled) for bullets, the other for pellets, and not expecting to encounter either big game or enemies we had brought with us only one ball for each pull, and these having been expended, we had nothing left save small shot, of the sort used for bird and monkey killing. Neither had we any more pistol cartridges and the few found in the fallen lancer's pouch were too large for our barrels.

So there was nothing for it but to load with shot, putting two charges into each barrel, well rammed down.

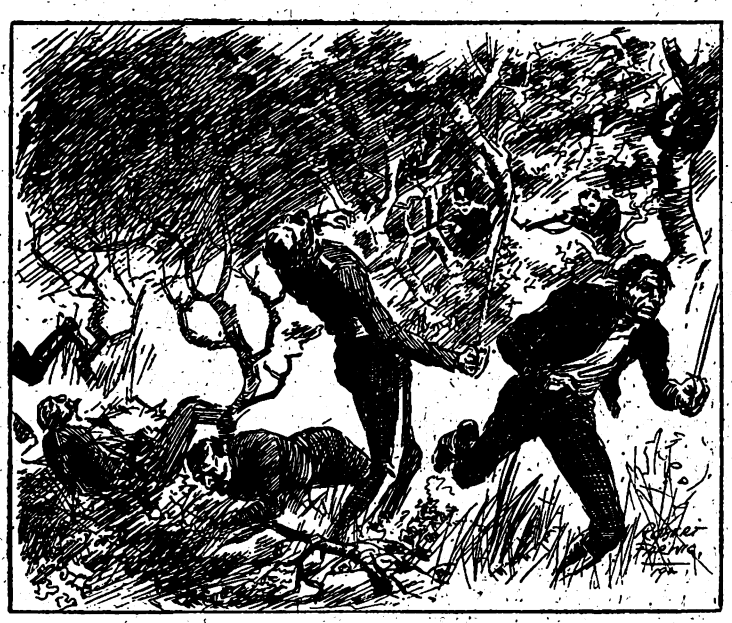
Our plan was to lie perdu until the troopers were within a few yards of us, then let fly at their faces with both barrels, each of us taking two men from the right, and keep them at bay with our pistols and swords so long as we might.

Meanwhile, they continued their quest, but being bewildered by the dim light of the forest, which, to men fresh from the brilliant sunshine was semi-darkness, slowly and with frequent halts, from which we inferred that they had not yet detected our whereabouts, though the trail was plain enough to anybody with eyes.

By this time most of the lancers were on foot, slashing at the lianas and pendant vines with their swords; and closely examining the bushes as though they feared an ambuscade.

"Caramba! I believe the fools are going to miss us, after

Digitized by Google



One man fell to the Zambo's carbine.

all," whispered Don Antonio. "If they go much further in that direction we shall be able to rush out and ride off on their horses."

But this new born hope was speedily quashed. A frightened yell told us that the Spaniards had unearthed the Indian, who, thinking he would be safer alone, had given us the slip and crawled under a bush.

We could hear the poor fellow's pitiful appeal for mercy, which was granted on condition of his showing them where we were hiding, and he presently appeared in front of our lair, between two lancers with drawn swords.

"There they are, behind those boughs," he said.

On this all the troopers, save one who was left to look after the horses, were formed in line and the sergeant, stepping forward, summoned us to surrender. To which, as surrender meant immediate execution, we naturally made no answer.

"A hundred thousand devils! I doubt whether they are there after all. I can neither hear them nor see them," he exclaimed. "If they are not, I'll have you hanged" (to the Indian).

"They are, they are, I saw them go there and they cannot have got away, and I heard them say they had no more cartridges," replied the trembling wretch in an agonised voice.

"We shall soon see. Advance men, and give 'em a volley."

A shower of bullets rattled among the branches, but as we had heard the order and ducked betimes we took no harm.

"Shall we destroy the dispatches?" said Don Iago in a whisper.

"How would you destroy them?" I asked.

"Tear them up and drop them into the hollow of this tree. The ants will do the rest."

"Not yet, I think. But if either of us falls the survivor had better make away with them at once."

"That is agreed, then?"

"It is, and if we both fall Don Antonio will perhaps do what is necessary."

"If that happens, I shall. But it won't," quoth he cheerily. "You are worth a good many dead men yet, señores. We are in a tight fix, I admit, but I have not the least doubt of our getting out of it. Cock your guns, gentlemen, the Godos are coming, only don't let us fire until we can see the whites of their eyes. Hark! The sergeant is giving an order."

"The rebels are either not there, or they have no cartridges," he was saying. "We will take Bolivar alive if we can, but remember that dead or alive he is worth ten thousand reales to us, and we are three to one. Another volley, my lads, then at them with the cold steel."

"Good Heavens! I believe the sergeant is a bit afraid, though they are three to one," whispered Don Antonio, with a smothered laugh.

"To your post! We are too near together," I answered, and he moved away.

The volley was given, hurting us no more than the other had done, for the same reason, and the troopers, responding with a cheer to their commander's "Forward, my lads!" came on, but being hampered by their boots and spurs and impeded by the boughs, some of which were as big as small trees, slowly and clumsily, and with many a slip and tumble, while we, unseen yet seeing everything, awaited the onset silently with our fingers on our triggers.

Notwithstanding their difficulties the men kept well together, the sergeant bringing up the rear and encouraging them very energetically with his voice, but very little by his example.

While this went on we lay low, making no sign which might give the Godos a clue to our precise whereabouts, yet vigilant withal. When they were quite close, so close that we could hear their laboured breathing and muttered curses I gave a low whistle, on which we all sprang to our feet and let fly with our seven barrels at as many heads. One man fell to the Zambo's carbine. The other poor wretches, peppered with our shot, whirled round, howling with anguish, for the pellets having scattered all were hit. Loudest of all screamed the sergeant, who had got one or two in his eye.

Their faces streamed with blood, they tumbled about in all directions, blaspheming and exclaiming, falling among the branches and running madly, they knew not whither. Several were blinded, and of the three who came off scatheless the Zambo cut down one and the others fled.

We might have killed them all, but escape, not slaughter, being our object, we ran to the horses which were tethered in a glade near our first hiding place, and when the lancer who had been left in charge of them saw what had happened he mounted and made off.

"Run! Quick and double quick! There are more coming. I can hear the jingle of their accoutrements and the tramp of their chargers," cried Don Antonio, whose ears were as sharp as his eyes.

We responded with a will, and five minutes afterwards were mounted and away.

None too soon, for on emerging from the wood we perceived a long line of lancers pacing down the trail, happily to our left, else had our retreat been cut off.

The leaders, catching sight of us, gave a loud shout, and we knew that we should have to ride with death behind us, and the off chance of being intercepted, or not finding the boats where we had left them.

I was the last. Accident had given me the place of honour, an honour, however, which I had gladly been spared. But the track being too narrow, except in a few places, for horses to pass each other or for two men to ride abreast, there was no possibility of changing the order of our going and my pride prevented my making the attempt.

Digitized by Google

As we had only a short start, everything depended on the speed and stoutness of our horses, and John Ready being on the alert. At the best, we could not count on having more than three or four minutes to embark and put a few yards of water between our pursuers and ourselves.

The trail, as I have already remarked, was narrow, a mere cattle track, rough, uneven, and slippery, and so tortuous withal that it was seldom we could see more than two or three hundred paces either backward or forward, and there were so many impending branches that it was almost as much as one's life was worth to look backward. On the other hand, and for these very reasons, the leading lancers would find it difficult to use their pistols with effect, so that I had little fear of being shot from behind.

My horse was a good sort, fleet and strong, and well up to my weight. He could have gone faster, only the Zambo's which was immediately in front of me, could not, and I had to regulate my pace by his. The two Dons could also have gone faster, and I asked them to do so, but they refused point-blank, Santleo indignantly, Bonanza with a laugh.

Fortunately for us our pursuers were under a similar disadvantage, which was to our advantage. The main body had to accommodate their speed to that of the first man. If they could have put their fleetest chargers at the head of the cavalcade it had been a poor look out for the Zambo and me. Even as it was I had serious misgivings, which were not long in being realised.

Despite the risk of breaking my head thereby I often looked backwards, but owing to dips in the ground and the windings of the trail it was not easy to make sure whether the enemy were gaining on us or we on them. Now and then I got a glimpse through an opening in the trees of a long chain of dancing plumes, now and then sighted the first man who when he saw me shook his lance fiercely, at the same time gesticulating and shouting to those behind him.

After a while, a very short while, I began to see more of this gentleman than I liked. He was gaining on us, when we presently came to an exceptionally straight bit of road. I perceived that he was considerably ahead of the others, from which I concluded the next man's horse was no better than the Zambo's and that if the first man were disposed of we should stand a better chance of making our point. As might seem, however, he was more likely to dispose of me. I could not always be casting backward glances, and as often as not he was invisible, hidden by intervening trees and bushes. He might overtake me without my knowing it, and have his lance into me before I could turn round.

What should I do? How make head against this new peril from which escape either by stratagem or speed seemed impossible.

To turn round and face my pursuer was simply to insure my capture by his comrades. Taking aim with a rifle from the back of a galloping horse at something behind you is an impossible feat, and my rifle was empty. But my pistols, double charged with shot and primed, were within reach of my hand, and in the circumstances pellets were likely to be more effective than bullets.

But as it was clear that I could not look backward, hold my pistols, guide my horse and dodge the branches at one and the same time. I told the Zambo to look for me, which he did very keenly.

We were in a narrow section of the trail and had just rounded a sharp bend when the Zambo signalled that the enemy was in sight.

I glanced backward. He was close behind, coming on with his lance couched as fast as his horse could gallop, and drawing nearer at every stride. In another minute the point of his lance would be within twenty paces of my back.

I looked before me, dodged a branch, cocked my pistols, counted sixty, then turning as far round in my saddle as I could, fired one barrel at the lancer's face, the other at the charger's head. Both shots went home; the man dropped his reins and his lance, and the horse, after giving a tremendous buck jump which sent the trooper flying over his head, wheeled round and galloped back.

All of which was highly satisfactory. I had got rid of an awkward customer, and the loose horse, maddened with pain would of a certainty throw the leading lancers into confusion and retard their progress. And a respite was needed. The Zambo's horse was showing signs of distress, and all were beginning to flag, so after turning the next bend we drew rein, and being unable to see more than a few yards either to our front or rear, listened.

I could hear only a confused murmur, mingled with a faint metallic din, which seemed a long way off, but no trampling, for the ground was soft and the horses were unshod.

"We are gaining on them," I remarked to Don Antonio, who was next before the Zambo.

"Yes, though they are nearer than you think," he answered. "The trees deaden the sound. But, fortunately, we have not much further to go, the worst is over."

And then, our panting steeds having recovered their wind somewhat, we pushed on again, and coming shortly to a part where the trees were less dense, got another glimpse of the chain of red plumes.

Bonanza was right, they were nearer than I had thought.

A few minutes afterwards we descried the creek, and gladdened by the sight, galloped merrily forward. The stress was over, the goal well nigh won We should have time to embark and get away before our pursuers could spit us with their lances or reach us with their bullets.

"*Mira* (Look)!" cried Don Iago, pointing to the water, and then, as it was no longer necessary for us to keep together, he went ahead, closely followed by Bonanza.

When I came up with them they were at the creek. Bonanza turned to me with a look of dismay.

The flecheras were not there.

"What can have become of your servant?" he asked.

Turning as far round in my saddle as I could I fired one barrel at the lancer's face.

Digitized by Google

"He had strict orders to wait in the creek till we returned. In a few minutes the Godos will be here and without boats, escape is impossible."

"What has become of him I know no more than yourself; but I am sure that if John Ready is alive he is not far off," quoth I.

"Let us ride further, and if we do not find him we shall perhaps find a boat," said Don Iago quietly.

Which we did, following the creek, and coming presently to the river saw the two boats standing off and on about a hundred yards from the bank, to our great relief, as also to our surprise, for we could not tell what on earth it meant.

"What a fool that fellow of yours must be," said Bonanza. "Why does not he come? Sliout to him."

"Come hither and take us on board at once," I sang out.

Ready answered that he could not, and beckoned to us to go to h m.

"*Madre de Dios!* The Godos are on us!" exclaimed Bonanza looking backward. "In another minute twenty lancers——"

"To the river! We must swim for it," cried Santleo, and with that plunged into the water, an example we all followed, for the Spaniards were at our heels.

As soon as the horses were out of their depth we slipped from their backs, holding on to their manes with one hand and guiding them with the other.

By this time Bonanza's twenty lancers, and as many more, were close to the river, and after a moment's hesitation a full half of them took to the water and made after us without dismounting.

The others unslung their carbines and prepared to shoot. So did John Ready and the Zambo, and as we came alongside, gave our pursuers a volley that sent several of them to the bottom and the rest to the right about.

We were no sooner aboard than the Indians paddled away with frantic energy, sail was made and we went up stream faster than we had ever gone before.

"Why did you leave the creek, John?" I asked Ready.

"Could not help it, sir. The Indians who returned from the funeral reported that there were Spaniards about, which so frightened the cowardly beggars that if I had not let them pull into the river they would have deserted, every man jack of 'em; and it was only by threatening to shoot the patrons if they moved further away, that I kept the boats where you found them. But good gracious, sir, you are wounded! Your head is bleeding."

"I daresay. I felt something sting me as we took to the water, but it cannot be anything serious or I should be there yet. Only a scalp wound," I said laying my hand on the place.

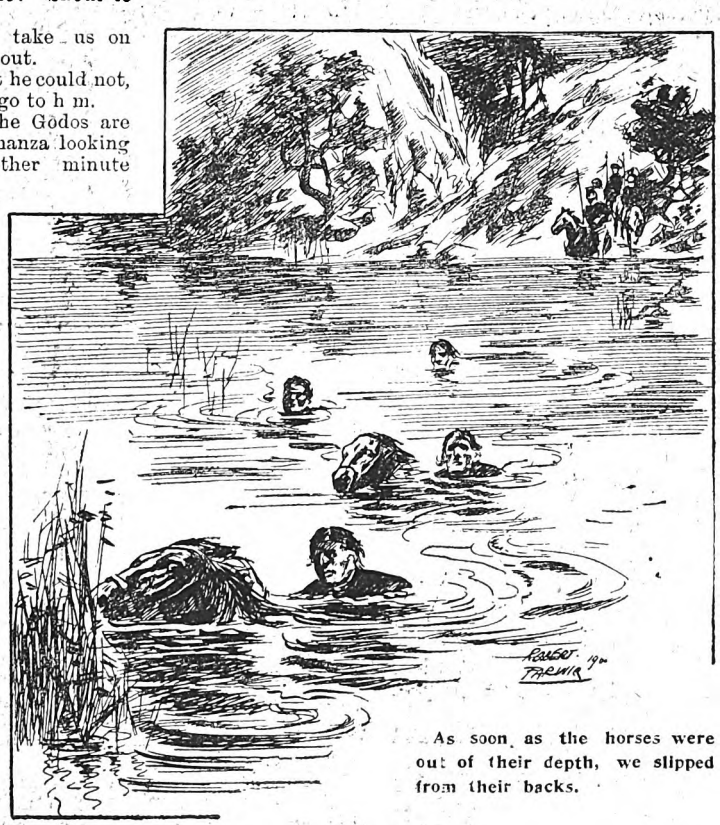
"Don Iago, too. See how he is bleeding!" exclaimed Ready.

I looked at Santleo. His coat sleeve was reddened and drops of blood were oozing from the fingers of his left hand.

"I don't think it is much," he said quietly. "I felt a bullet strike my arm when we were half way to the boat."

"Let me examine you," put in Don Antonio briskly. "As I was destined for the medical career and studied surgery for six months at Caraccas I am a bit of a doctor. Now, Señor major."

"Don Iago first. He is worse hurt than I am," quoth I, on which Bonanza slit open Santleo's sleeve with his knife.



As soon as the horses were out of their depth, we slipped from their backs.

"Ah, the bullet went through the fleshy part of the arm, just above the elbow. No bones broken, thank Heaven. I will bind it up and you must carry it in a sling for a few days."

We had brought with us a few simple surgical appliances, and these being produced, our "bit of a doctor" deftly plastered my head and bandaged Don Iago's arm.

"It might have been a good deal worse," he observed pleasantly. "Had one bullet gone a shade more to the left the bone of Don Iago's arm would have been smashed; had the other gone a shade more to the right, Señor Wyvenhoe's skull would have been smashed."

"All's well that ends well," said Santleo pensively in English.

Don Iago quoting Shakespeare in Shakespeare's own language! I could hardly believe my own ears.

"You know English, then," I exclaimed, as soon as I could speak.

"I saw the words in a book and inquired their meaning; they have dwelt in my memory. Striking phrases are apt to dwell in one's memory, you know."

"But your pronunciation is perfect."

"That is just a chance, or because I happen to have a good ear and a retentive memory; but we had better get out of these wet things, or we shall be having fever and ague."

(To be continued.)

BROWN: "You know I'm quite a near neighbour of yours now, Mrs. Golightly. I've just taken a little house on the river."

Mrs. Golightly: "Oh! Well, I hope you'll drop in one day."

Digitized by Google

SHORT STORIES ABOUT HOLIDAYS.

We devote, every week, two pages of *Short Stories* to pithy, humourous anecdotes similar to those which appear in these columns. A prize of £1 1s. will be sent to the reader who submits the best storyette this week, and a copy of "The Golden Sceptre," by G. H. Thornhill, to each of those whose attempts are used. The anecdotes may be either original or selected; in the latter case the source *must* be stated. The prize of One Guinea offered for the best Storyette in this competition has been won this week by Mr. Arthur A. Last, "Dales," Henley Road, Ipswich. Attempts this week must deal with Stories about ADVENTURES in SEARCH of PEARSON'S £10 NOTES, and must reach the Storyette Editor, *Short Stories* Office, Henrietta Street, Strand, London, W.C., by Monday, September 17th. Post-cards only, please.

One for the Girl.

A FRIEND of mine last month went to an East Coast seaside resort, and, wishing to let me know of his safe arrival, he went into a sub. post-office and inquired if he could send a telegram direct to London, and how long it would take.

The young lady, who was inclined to be snubbish, cut short his inquiries with:

"I am not paid to answer silly questions."

Her face blanched wonderfully, however, when she found herself compelled to wire the following message:

"Arrived safe. Girls here ugly and bad-tempered."

A. A. L.

All Were Welcome.

IN Blackpool, where I was spending a holiday last week, I witnessed a good joke one morning.

At this favourite resort there are a number of auctioneers' shops along the promenade where you can purchase anything from a solid (rolled) gold watch to a pair of bootlaces.

The bidding was going on very slowly, when a fashionably dressed young man walked up to the auctioneer, and, catching him by the arm, inquired if he could bid.

"Certainly," said the knight of the hammer; "just what we want."

"Then I bid you good morning," said the joker, and retreated.

D. R.

Off Their Bearings.

Two Sheffield grinders who had not been at the seaside since they were children made up their minds to have a day at Blackpool.

As they usually frequented the slipper baths when at home they thought it would be a great treat to have a dip in the briny.

Engaging a machine they were soon wading and splashing about. One of them, turning to see how his mate was getting on, saw him fumbling at the bottom as if to find something.

"What's the matter? What are ta feelin' daan in t' watter like that for?"

"What's t' matter?" replied the other. "What's ta thinks t' matter? I'm feeling for t' plug to let t' watter off."

E. H.

Mr. Bowser at the Seaside.

MR. BOWSER had taken Mrs. Bowser to the seaside for a week, and as he sniffed the breezy, briny ozone of Slumpton-by-the-Sea, he said:

"Now, my dear, be sure and take all the sea air you can inhale, for this is the last holiday I can afford."

"All right, Mr. Bowser," she replied, reflecting on his past unselfish nature; "keep your mind easy, there'll be precious little left after you get your share."

W. H.

Caught.

ONCE, while on a fishing tour in Scotland, a gamekeeper whom I knew, took me along the banks of a stream and showed me a place, where, said he, if I waded out to yon muckle stane, I would be sure to catch something.

Drawing on my long waterproof fishing boots, I waded over to the "muckle stane" and promptly slipped into a hole which brought the water up to my neck.

Gurgling and spluttering I turned and began to anathematise the gamekeeper, to which he coolly responded:

"Hoot awa, mon, didn't I tell ye it was a grand place tae catch things, you've just copped a crab the noo and ye'll be catchin' the cauld if ye dinna hurry oot o' that."

L. H.

Scottie Again.

AN English gentleman on holiday in Scotland happened to meet an Elder in the "Auld licht Kirk" who was very severe in his denunciation of what he called "deesecreetion o' the Sawbath day" and more particularly against the crime (?) of fishing on Sunday, to which the Englishman was rather given.

The Englishman resolved to test the Elder's genuineness and, if possible, get even with him at the same time.

One Monday he turned up at the Elder's house with a particularly fine basket of trout and presented a goodly portion of them to the Elder.

After the gift was duly accepted he casually remarked:

"But, Elder, I clean forgot to tell you that these trout were caught yesterday, Sunday."

"Weel, sir," replied the Elder, gazing at the trout, "I dinna see that that was ony fau't o' the troots."

The Englishman departed, his purpose unaccomplished.

A. R. S.

Digitized by Google

Queer Botany at the Hub.

There is a man in our town who is not wondrous wise, although he makes heroic efforts to keep up appearances. He has recently acquired wealth, and has lately added a well-stocked conservatory to his establishment. This he was not long since exhibiting to a party of visiting friends with pride.

"What is that?" asked a lady, pointing to a certain plant.

Mr. P. was nonplussed for a moment, but, quickly recovering, he answered with much gravity:

"That, madam, is an exceedingly rare specimen of the Encyclopædia Britannica." J. C.

A Girl Without Gumption.

A good story was heard in Hull the other day. A well-known resident, whose name, for obvious reasons, is not disclosed, had a daughter taking pianoforte lessons.

She did not progress very fast, so the father went to ask the tutor how it was.

"Well, you see, she doesn't appear to have sufficient gumption."

"Eh, what! Not sufficient gumption. Why didn't you let me know before. Buy her some immediately, and send the account in to me. The idea, letting my daughter go on practising all this time and no gumption. If this occurs again, young man, I'll get her a fresh tutor."

J. W. V. H.

A Different Kind of Bull.

Lady Cyclist (to yokel on horseback): 'Have you seen my husband, my good man? He was wearing a straw hat and riding a bicycle."

"Lor', mum," replied the yokel, "I 'specks he's the gent I seed run into the black bull jest now."

"Oh, dear, dear! Poor John! Did—did it kill him?"

"Lor' bless ye, mum, I don't specks so; but the beer ain't very fust-rate neither."

And then she realised that the "Black Bull" was a public-house. H. E. L.

The Mummy Died.

Several weeks ago an honest countryman, anxious to explore the wonders of the British Museum, obtained a special holiday for that purpose.

Taking with him a couple of lady friends he presented himself at the door for admittance.

"No admission to-day, sir," said the keeper.

"But I must come in; I've a holiday on purpose."

"No matter. This is a close day, and the museum is shut."

"What!" said John, "ain't this public property?"

"Yes, but its like this," whisp-red the keeper. "One of the mummies died a few days ago, and we are going to bury him."

"Oh, in that case we won't intrude," said John.

So he returned M. E. L.

Missing.

I witnessed the following amusing incident at Southport the other day while on my holidays.

A raw countryman, having been just enrolled as a member of the "A" Division of the County Police, was stationed on night duty near the gasworks with instructions to take particular notice of everything on his beat, and, if he found anything to be missing, to report the same to his sergeant.

It appears that during the night one of the large gasometers had been emptied, and sank into its basin.

On the arrival of the sergeant, the new "Robert," who was found in a state of excitement, pointed to the empty framework of the gasometer and said:

"Well, I don't know whether it's all right, sir, but one of them 'ere things has gone." A. Y.

"Up Yer Gits!"

At a popular seaside resort the other afternoon a party of trippers had decided on a donkey ride, but one particularly stout old lady had some little difficulty in securing a mount.

When she essayed to 'clamber into the saddle the long-suffering brute turned his head round—apparently making a mental calculation as to the weight of the fair one—and then deliberately edged away.

"It's no go, missis!" grinned the lad in charge, "e's seen yer. We'll hev to try another moke!"

Approaching the row of donkeys, the urchin selected one, threw his coat over the animal's head, and thus led him forth.

"Quick, missis!" he said to the astounded lady. "Up yer gits! If 'e once gits 'is 'ead loose an' spots yer, yer'll get no ride! 'E wor asleep when I caught 'im, or 'e wouldn't 'ave come out!" A.N.O.N.

"BESIEGED WITH B.P."

A complete record of the Siege of Mafeking.

By J. EMERSON NEILLY.

War Correspondent of the "Pall Mall Gazette" in Mafeking.

Price 1s. net, post free, 1s. 3d.

To be had of all Bookstalls and Booksellers.

YOUR FACE ENLARGED FOR 7/-

If you have a relative who has passed away either at home in peace or abroad in war, send his photograph—which you probably cherish—and we will enlarge it to a beautiful India ink and crayon portrait, 15in. × 12in. mounted on plate sunk mount 24in. × 19in.

Relatives of soldiers at the front may obtain one of these enlargements for 6s.

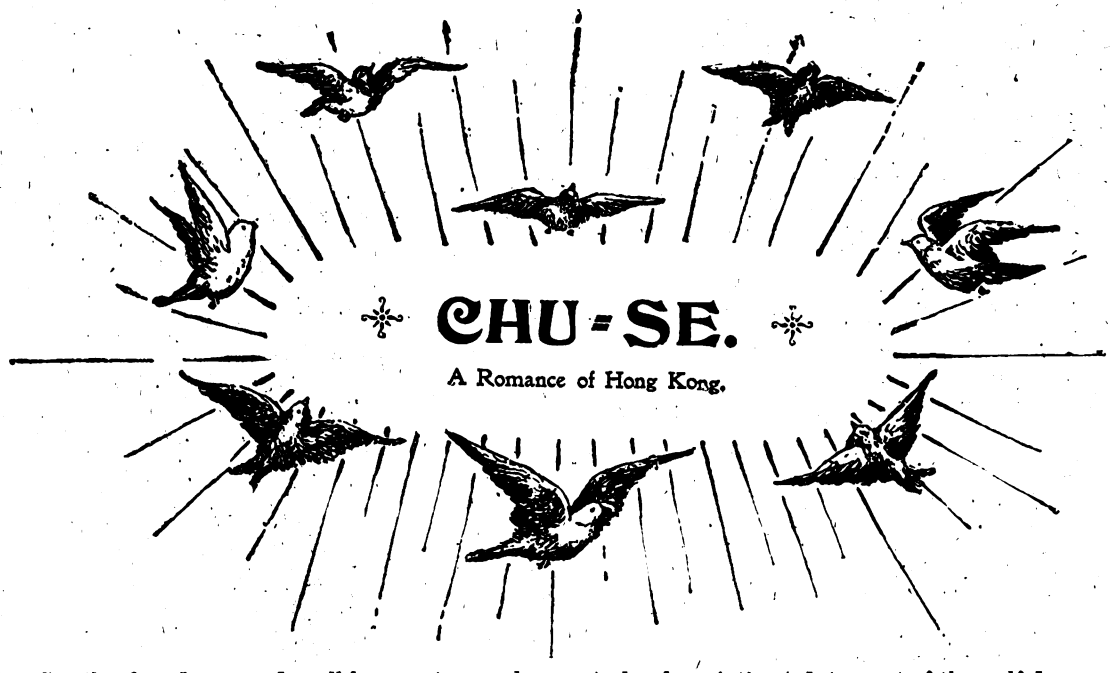
Other photographs will be enlarged for 7s.

Full particulars appeared last week, and will appear again shortly. They also appear in the current issue of

THE CURIOSITY SHOP.

A coupon from that paper must accompany each order.

Digitized by Google



CHU-SE.

A Romance of Hong Kong.

CHU-SE, the laundress, and well-known to nearly every seafaring man, from skipper to deck hand, casting anchor in the harbour of Hong Kong, was a dainty specimen of the almond-eyed Celestial beauty. Piquantly small, daily did she toddle lightly on her little "golden lilies," to and fro between her abode on the frontiers of Tai-Ping-Shan and the Bund, where she found her *sampan*, with Oh-Yet, its presiding genius, ready to waft her on her round of visits to the ships in the bay.

Viewed from a Western standpoint, Chu-Se's history was strangely sensational. She was a lady with a past. This statement must not be taken in any way as invidious, for the little woman was so bright, so smilingly innocent, so lovable, indeed, that, although this same past of hers every now and again cast its shadow on her path, men adored her.

Men, mark you, not women. The Chinese beaux of her own quarter besieged persistently the little widow. Ay! Widow! That, at twenty-two, was her social position.

When but a mere child of a girl, and in obedience to parental command, she had wed the dashing Ah-Fong, with the result that the gentleman, for his piratical sins, suffered the "extreme penalty," in less than three months after his marriage day. Wooed again, and won by an enterprising ship's "comprador."

With a mate of such approved respectability and standing the lady might naturally look for a fairly peaceful marital experience. Alas! Sam-Ching was detected in fraudulent endeavours to over-reach the Revenue; this, together with the fact of the dead body of a native Custom House officer being found, head downwards, in the water-butt in Sam-Ching's back-yard, it is not surprising that that sharp-witted individual went under.

And so it was that Chu-Se, tired of her loneliness and all-undeterred by sad experience, ventured yet again upon the sea of matrimony. To sum up, six husbands did she, at short, very short, intervals take, cherish awhile, and anon incontinently bury.

As has been intimated, two out of the half-dozen met their end by an act of State; the remaining quartette—well, just faded out of life. Perhaps, who knows, Chu-Se was jealous. It is hard to say.

Anyway, they died, and the young and beautiful relict was left to pine for a venturous number seven.

It is at this particular point in the life-story of the fair Chu-Se that the extraordinary incident occurred which a certain officer of the Mercantile Marine will remember while terrestrial existence shall last.

* * * * *

The sun was vertically aggresive that day, reaching down, blazing hot, upon deck and sea.

The melted pitch in the plank seams bubbled and ran like to little black rivulets. Life was a burden, only to be made barely tolerable in the awning's shade, and with an ever-filled beaker of iced liquid at the elbow.

Jimmy Gatacre, second officer of the *Island Queen*, full of business watching the devious ways of John Chinaman as he boarded the vessel in shoals almost before she came to her moorings, at last gave up charge of the deck to the "third," going "below" to a well-earned rest.

Washed, pyjama'd, and comparatively comfortable, Jimmy's thoughts inclined to turning-in.

"Me so muchee glad, lily boy!"

Jimmy turned his head to behold a vision. A smiling mouth, and pair of sparkling black almond eyes, set in a little round face of the pearliest complexion. Small, very small, she held the door half-open, one baby foot upon the sill, and looked in upon the big Englishman with a winning confidence as disconcerting as it was bewitching.

He thought, sim le-hearted giant as he was, that it could be none other than a princess at the very least. The red umbrella she carried coquettishly over her shoulder, and which made a charming background to her head, formed a gorgeous medium for the sunlight which through it cast a roseate glow over her dainty little person.

Digitized by Google

"Beg pardon, I'm sure," said Jimmy, stammeringly. "Can't very well ask you in, you know. Hold on, though. Here, Jack! Carstairs!"

From the cabin on the other and port side of the steward's cuddy came an answering shout:

"Hulloa! What's up?"

"Half a minute, Jack, just come over here for half a minute. I'm in a bit of a hole."

Meanwhile the fair visitor, closing her umbrella, had quietly slipped inside the cabin, and deliberately perched herself upon the nearest chest-top.

"Who's your friend, Jimmy?"

"I don't know who she is, from Adam,—or Eve rather; but it's a bit awkward, you know."

"Me muchee glad, lily boys," she said again. "Me wash you one dolla, alle same ten piecy."

A laundress! Jimmy collapsed. His princess had taken wing with a vengeance, while Carstairs roared again till the tears ran down his weather-stained cheeks.

"Jimmy, you'll be the death of me yet. Why, I remember her now. Of course, this is your first cruise in Chinese waters, so you wouldn't know her."

"Ah! Me sabe!" chirrupped Chu-Se, nodding her head energetically, looking knowingly from one to the other, and still smiling. "Me sabe! Me m'lember you! You m'lember me! Me washee you long time! Alle same, velly good."

But though addressing herself to Carstairs, Chu-Se's eyes were fixed upon Jimmy Gatacre. He seemed to possess some sort of fascination for her.

Jimmy was uneasily conscious of this, and eagerly desired to get rid of his visitor.

"You don't want me any more, do you?" said Carstairs, chuckling audibly.

"Yes, I do; don't go away, man, for Heaven's sake! Can't you see?"

"No; I'll be hanged if I can. If you've got any washing for her, give it her, and she'll go away as happy as a princess."

"That's just what I thought her to be," ruefully replied Jimmy.

"Well, I always thought you to be a bit of a softy, my son; but to take a laundress for a princess, ha! ha! that's a little too, too, isn't it?"

Chu-Se now began to think it better for her to retire.

"Me come soon, alle same uller day. Chu-Se velly glad."

She tripped outside as she had tripped in, put up her umbrella, and with a smile and a nod was gone.

"Pidgin English," said Carstairs, sententiously, "isn't the best of linguistic mediums, is it? She's a rum sort—had six husbands, they say, and she's only now about twenty-two or three. You'd better look out, Jimmy, or she'll be falling in love with you, and then, the last state of Jimmy Gatacre will be worse than the first."

"Don't be an ass, Jack; and now get out, for I want to sleep. I'm as tired as a dog."

Nothing was seen of the little laundress on board the *Island Queen* for several days. One evening, the day's work done, Jimmy was in his room writing a letter. Then he thought he heard two timid raps upon the door.

"Who's there?" he growled—he hated being disturbed when writing letters. "Who is it? What the dickens do you want?"

Getting no reply to his polite inquiry, Jimmy rose and opened the door. What he saw staggered him for the moment. Huddled up in a bunch upon the deck outside his cabin door sat Chu-Se, her face supported by her two hands, and with her eyes wistfully fixed upon Jimmy as he stood in the open doorway.

"What's up, Chu-Se? Anything I can do for you?" asked Jimmy.

And then she told him how that she was sick of living a lonely widow's life, more sick still of the unwelcome attentions of the gilded bachelor youth of Tai-Ping-Shan and its vicinity.

She had "plenty dolla" she said, which she was only too wishful to bestow upon Jimmy himself if he would only marry her and become the virtual head of the most prosperous laundry business in all China.

Only that it was too serious a matter to take in a ridiculous sense, Jimmy would have laughed outright. Then, too, there was this earnest-eyed little Celestial regarding him with almost worshipping wistfulness.

For the life of him he could not be aught but sorry for her. Angry? Certainly not, her very evident sincerity and trustfulness forbade that.

Very gently he explained to her the impossibility of such an arrangement, in that in his own country he had a sweetheart who was watching and waiting for a life with him of love and happiness.

She seemed to acquiesce in this, and at last came to see that her castle in the air had fallen into ruins, and that for her this thing might not, could not be.

Jimmy accompanied her to the gangway, saying to her as she stood at the head of the ladder:

"Cheer up, Chu-Se, you'll get a husband by-and-bye, and then you'll forget all about this silly fancy."

"Chu-Se never forget—never—alle same die."

"Nonsense!" Good-night, you foolish little woman."

Her eyes took a sad look, which touched Jimmy to the quick, for he knew he was the cause. He would not have believed that any woman not of his own race could have loved like this. It upset all his preconceived and life-long ideas with regard to the other and the weaker sex.

Digitized by Google

And now she was descending the ladder, and Jimmy says that the look she gave him, as she paused midway a moment, lifting her face up to his, will haunt him to his dying day.

* * * * *

Jimmy is a grey-headed man now, with a stalwart son of his own; the log will soon tell of the voyage done. But often, in the quiet hours does the pleading face of Chu-Se rise before him, and he hears her again say that she will "never forget—never—alle same die."

Jimmy Gatacre himself never heard anything more of the little laundress, for it was his first and last visit to those seas. Yet her ultimate future is not altogether a mystery; whispers hint at another and, let us hope, a more fortunate and enduring union with one of her own race.

It is satisfactory to know this, and no heart-breaking dying-out-of-life was the fate of the much-married little woman.

* * * * *

The issues of life are great, but they oftentimes hang upon a thread. Beyond a doubt, there was just a chance, other conditions being favourable, that Chu-Se might have been Mrs. Jimmy Gatacre.

RALPH ENDERBY.

VISITOR: "Well, baroness, so you have returned from your Italian tour. Now, you must tell me all you did in Rome."

Baroness: "Rome! Wait a moment." (To her daughter): "Emma, my dear, wasn't it in Rome I bought that beautiful dress improver? Yes, I thought so."

"WHAT can you say of the second law of thought?"

Student: "It cannot both be and not be. For example, the door over there must be either shut or open; it cannot be both shut and open."

Tutor: "Give another illustration."

Student: "Well, take the case of another door."

"I THOUGHT you took instantaneous pictures," said the man in the photographer's gibbet; "but I verily believe I've sat here ten minutes."

"You shouldn't be impatient, sir," replied the camera fiend. "Instant, you know, means the present month, and the month is only half gone."

"YOU'VE got my seat, sir," said a man in a train who had left his seat for a moment.

"There is nothing to show that you have retained this seat."

"Look up there! There is my hat-box on the rack over this seat."

"Well, then, you sit up there on your hat-box if that's where you have retained your seat."

"I'VE lost a patient," said a doctor, sitting down to a boarding-house dinner table, with a frown on his face as dark as a gunpowder poultice.

"I am sorry to hear it. Man or woman?" asked one of the boarders.

"Man."

"When did he die?"

"Die? Hang him, he's not dead. He stopped taking my medicine, got well, and ran away without paying the bill."

NOW ON SALE,

the First Number of

"The Curiosity Shop."

THE CURIOSITY SHOP.

ONE PENNY WEEKLY.

THE CURIOSITY SHOP

Is the most Wonderful Paper in the whole wide world. Nothing like it has ever before been published—nothing. It is a Marvel.

The contents of

THE CURIOSITY SHOP

are not musty or stale, they are not old or worm-eaten.

Everything in

THE CURIOSITY SHOP

is Fresh and Brand New.

Curiosities need not necessarily be old. People always seem to associate a curiosity shop with ancient and well-worn goods. No mistake could be greater.

Curiosities are of two sorts—old and new.

Old curiosities are curiosities largely because they are old, because we do not see the same things in general nowadays.

New curiosities are curiosities largely because they are new, because ***no one has ever seen or heard of them before.***

These, then, are the curiosities that you will find in THE CURIOSITY SHOP.

THE CURIOSITY SHOP

contains—Absolutely new and fresh articles.
Bright and originally-conceived pictures.
Strong and well-seasoned fiction.
Nothing that you can get anywhere else.

Unlike all other curiosity shops, the contents of this one are changed every week, and you can buy every article and picture in the shop for one penny.

REMEMBER: **THE CURIOSITY SHOP** contains nothing old. Everything will be brand new, fresh from the makers, and **you cannot obtain the same goods elsewhere.**

FURTHER—*You can buy* THE CURIOSITY SHOP *itself for One Penny.*

AGAIN—*If you buy* THE CURIOSITY SHOP *every week for a year, at the end of twelve months you will have bought 52 shops and their contents for the small sum of 4s. 4d.*

BUY YOUR FIRST CURIOSITY SHOP NOW.

Digitized by Google

MY EMPTY HOLSTER.

A Prairie Adventure.

"*Buenos noches, amigo,*" cried the station-master of Frayle Muerto, bidding me "good-night," as I mounted my impatient horse, to set out for my lonely "rancho," some leagues distant over the wild prairie-land.

Frayle Muerto, or in English, the Dead Monk, was a small village at that time, and had just been honoured by the erection of a railway-station, containing a substantial refreshment bar; it being the midway stopping-place on the new line of railway, recently completed between the towns of Rosario and Cordova, situated in the Argentine Republic of South America.

My friend, Mr. Thompson, had been appointed station-master there, and feeling very lonely in his comparatively isolated condition—there was only one train daily—he was delighted to receive a visit from a fellow-countryman.

His neighbours, very few in number, were mostly natives of these parts. They are a rough, half-civilised lot, having more Indian than Spanish blood in their veins, and all the vices of both races in their hearts. In their manners and customs they are, to put it very mildly, unrefined, and the language they use is what might be called "vulgar Spanish."

The manager at the solitary railway-station did not, naturally, consider these natives to be very congenial or desirable companions. Mr. Thompson was loath to let me take my departure, although it was high time to do so, as we had sat in his little station-box chatting about old England till nearly midnight.

The moon was shining clear and full as I set off on my homeward journey; but my horse required neither light nor path, as it started at full gallop over the desolate prairie, knowing instinctively the shortest route to my *estancia*, or farm.

As we crossed over the long unbroken line of rails, gleaming in the moonlight as they stretched without curve or incline far away into the distance, we passed under the single line of telegraph, causing me to remember a good laugh Mr. Thompson and I had that evening over the remarks of two natives upon that scientific means of communication.

Neither of these two worthies had ever heard of such a thing as a telegraph, much less had they seen anything of the kind. The nearest approach to any such contrivance within their limited knowledge was a few wire fences some enterprising foreigners had put up round their fields.

Riding close to the railway, the couple of natives gazed in dignified amazement at the wire stretched high on the telegraph poles; then, shaking their wise heads, one of the philosophers addressed his companion, as they rode solemnly underneath the telegraph, saying:

"What incomprehensible idiots these railway-making English must be, to erect a wire fence only on one side of the railway, and at such a height that a man can ride under it on horseback!"

"Why," replied the other Soloman, "their ignorance is only equalled by their courtesy, as we cannot only ride under the fence, but it is raised to such an altitude that we need not even inconvenience ourselves by stooping while passing underneath!"

The natives of these parts, or "paisanos" as they call each other, are not only very ignorant, but they cannot conceive strangers, or rather foreigners, to be any wiser than themselves; and it was a countryman of the two wire-fence individuals who, having just been engaged by my friend the station-master at Frayle Muerto, inaugurated his intelligent services by attempting to stop a loaded truck, that was being slowly shunted on to a siding, by placing one of his feet before the advancing wheel, thereby causing him to retain possession for the future of only one foot, which, it need scarcely be stated, he never used for a similar purpose.

My horse was far too impatient to go round about the several colonies of "biscacho" holes we encountered on our short cut across camp, but bounded over them, taking many a leap that would have gratified the highest vaulting ambition of any horse-fancier. These biscachos are like our home rabbits, only they are a little larger and much more fierce. Their warrens are very similar, however. They are most destructive to vegetation and impudently tame. Hobbling off to the mouth of their holes on the approach of any one, they will turn round and stare him out of countenance, uttering a most tantalising mocking cry, which has such an incongruous sound, that any attempt to spell it on paper would be simply absurd. In fact, I only met with one man who could give anything like a correct imitation of their cry, and when doing so, his jaws were worked into such fearful shapes, that I used to wonder if they ever could assume their normal condition again.

These warrens are generally guarded by little owls, who, ever on the watch, give timely signal by their weird

Digitized by Google

cry to the biscachos should any stranger appear. The owls, although very small, are not deficient in courage, as I found out once when passing one at its usual post of sentry.

Being amused at its supreme gravity, I tried in various ways to cause it to relax its seriousness a little, when to my astonishment, the bird flew after me, and made such vigorous attempts to get at my head, that I was obliged to beat it off with my riding-whip.

This was the only instance I ever met with, however, of an owl losing its centre of gravity, although occasionally I did not resist attempting to provoke their serene composure.

Part of my way home lay along a track used by caravans of bullock waggons on their journeys to and from Rosario: and it was while on this road that I met with an obstacle, or rather two obstacles, which nearly prevented my reaching home that night, or perhaps any other night, for that matter.

My horse, suddenly pricking up his ears, caused me to look ahead; and well in front I perceived two horsemen, proceeding in the same direction as I was, but at a much slower pace.

It did not take my horse long to get close up to them, and I then saw that they were "gauchos," or wild natives, having no home or calling, but moving about from one district to another, robbing what they could, alike careless of life and property, and having a special aversion to foreigners, or "gringos," as they called them, an expression meaning both insult and contempt.

That I was a gringo they would soon discover by my European costume; and that they would not only resent my being such, but make an attempt to deprive me of any valuables the said costume might contain, was pretty certain, even if they did not proceed to further extremities, which was not at all improbable, as they thought no more of murdering any one to obtain what they wanted than a good housewife would think of "squashing" a cockroach to insure a clean pantry. In fact, I have dined with gauchos who openly boasted of having killed from half-a-dozen to twelve men, and were accorded special respect from their less fortunate comrades, who, perhaps, could only boast of two or three little affairs of a like calibre.

I was not going to turn out of my way unless compelled to do so, for both myself and my horse were impatient to get home; so I rode on, and as I passed bade them good-night after the Spanish fashion. They, instead of saluting me, as all good natives would have done, spurred their horses after mine, and demanded to know where I was going. The only reply they got from me was a question (I am a Scotchman).

I asked them where they were going. "*Por alla*," was the response from one of them, which, meaning "over yonder," was somewhat vague. I now got a good view of the fellows, and they certainly were not beauties. They were, without doubt, very tall and well built; but the ill-looking and vicious expression of their countenances would have made the fortune of any villain in modern melodrama.

The sombreros, though broad-brimmed, did not hide the coarse matted hair that hung down over their temples; while the shaggy eyebrows, thick whiskers, and heavy beards did their best to conceal the ingrained dirt on their swarthy faces, which, I suppose were never washed unless, it might be, by some passing showers. The costumes they wore were in keeping with their appearance. Over the large Spanish hats were gaudily-coloured handkerchiefs, which, being tied under the chin in fanciful loop-knots, formed the triple purpose of sunshade, ribbons, and necktie.

Ponchos, or cloaks, hung loosely over their broad shoulders, and immense top-boots, reaching above the knee, impressed on the bright leather with strange, green-coloured devices, carried on the heels conspicuous spurs, with rowels of great size and cruel shape. Besides the well-known "lasso" each gaucho had the "bolas" ready to hand.

This latter weapon consists of three pieces of strong, untanned hide fastened together, each about a yard in length, and having attached to them large wooden or leaden balls, which prove very effective if used skilfully.

The natives, when chasing wild horses and cattle, use these bolas by swinging them round and round, then letting them go straight for the legs of the animal they are after. The balls, by their weight, twist the thongs round the legs of the galloping beast, causing it to come to the ground, generally head over heels.

These balls are also frequently used by the gauchos to trip up the horse of any rider they may wish to catch, sometimes throwing them at the horseman himself, whom, if they hit, they are sure to stun, and sometimes kill outright, should the heavy balls come in contact with any vulnerable part.

I saw both gauchos were getting their bolas ready for action; but still they appeared to be unwilling to proceed to extremes, perhaps hoping that I would quietly surrender, which, however, I had no intention of doing.

My horse, whether aware of any danger or not, was certainly becoming almost unmanageable, in its impatience at the restraint I was putting on the pace, as I was not willing the men should imagined I intended bolting from them.

The clear moonlight shone brightly on the polished steel handles of their large knives, which the gauchos had in short sheaths attached to the broad belts they wore round their waists.

In lieu of buttons, coins of various descriptions are utilised as fastenings for these belts; the coins being of all dates, and sometimes of considerable worth, their owners taking considerably greater interest in the relative value of the buttons than they have in any other portion of their apparel, unless it be their spurs and bridle-bits, of which articles they are inordinately fond.

The two gauchos were, by this time, riding only a few yards behind me and asking me several questions, the exact text of which I cannot now remember; but the purport was as to why I should go about at night alone and unarmed, and—as they would surmise—with articles of value about me.

No wiser were they by such replies as I chose to give them, and they soon ceased questioning me, commencing to speak in undertones together, apparently consulting as to what they should do.

My great object then was, while taking care to keep a few yards of distance between us, still not to let the gauchos think I suspected them of having any designs of attack upon me.

After proceeding for some time in this uncomfortable mode of progression, I came to the spot where my quickest way home was by a small sheep-track, which here led over the camp at right-angles to the road on which we were travelling.

Not sorry to leave my two companions, I now bade them farewell, remarking at the same time that this was *my* road; and giving the horse full rein, it galloped along the sheep-track. The gauchos, however, heedless of the good old adage that "two's company, but three's

Digitized by Google

none," insisted upon keeping up the "triple alliance" by hurrying after me, shouting out that their road, fortunately (?), lay that way as well. I knew this statement was untrue, as the track led "nowhere," losing itself in the prairie not far from my *estancia*.

However, it would have been useless to get up an argument with them about the matter at that time and place, while it would be equally futile to try and convince them of the culpability of saying a thing which "was not." But I remember well crying out to them that I could travel alone nicely.

The two horsemen, however, came after me at full gallop; but it so happened that my horse was at "fuller gallop," if the term may be used; for the animal had taken the bit between his teeth, and consequently would suit the pace to his own mind, and he did so with a vengeance; the speed was terrific.

Although sorry to think of how the gauchos would conclude they had frightened me into running away, I did not put myself much about while in the open camp, being quite confident my horse's speed would equal, if not exceed, that of my pursuers; but what soon began to give me great uneasiness was the fact of our having to pass right through a wood, which now was not far off.

To be carried through a small forest on the back of a horse whose sole ambition, for the time being, was to exceed the speed of lightning, and not leave different parts of my body on various outstretching branches, seemed to be an utter impossibility. Of course the gauchos would then, besides my personal effects, have my body to share between them; "a leg to you and an arm to me, and so on;" but I never had the least ambition to undergo the process known as amputation, more especially in such a wholesale fashion.

All sorts of plans I tried to pull up my horse. Standing, for instance, in the stirrups, and getting one end of the bridle round me, I lay back as far as possible, thus making a lever of my body, and drawing the horse's head against my knee. This mode of procedure on my part made little difference in the mode of procedure on the horse's part, only causing it to deviate slightly from the straight course, while it gave the gauchos considerable gain on me.

There was no help for it; into the wood we must go. I made myself as small as I could, wondering how much less I should be when we got out on the other side. Although by this time I had made my horse make a considerable detour. I could not compel him to avoid the trees; and as my steed dived in amongst them, I took the strain off the bridle, giving him a fair chance of steering clear of the branches.

I think my horse had been rendered giddy by running so far with his head looking behind him, as his course was for a while very unsteady, thus making it much worse for his hapless rider, who never knew on which side of a tree he would be hurled past.

Yes, the position was very exciting, but intensely uncomfortable, and the marvellous twists I was obliged to give my body in trying to avoid hosts of protruding branches from different directions at the same moment, and still retain my mounted position, would have astonished any boneless acrobat. One instant a low-lying branch would cause me to flatten myself on the horse's back, and the next my body would be stretched at extreme right-angles from the saddle to avoid an immense limb of a tree on my left.

The speed was so great, and the turns so sharp and unexpected, that I knew it would only confuse my steed

ASTHMA

WHY is it generally thought that there is no cure for

Asthma, CHRONIC BRONCHITIS, Shortness of Breath,

CHEST DISEASES, BLOOD SPITTING, &c.?

BECAUSE the usual treatments only confine themselves to combating single symptoms instead of attacking the root of the disease.

BE SURE THERE IS ONE

ABSOLUTE LASTING CURE.

Sufferers will receive post free

FREE OF CHARGE

particulars of the famous WEIDHAAS HOME TREATMENT, when applying to the Paul Weidhaas Hygienic Institute, 16 T.A. Buckingham Road, Brighton. I have tried the treatment on myself, after having been given up as incurable and cured myself, and have since practised it for over 19 years in many thousands of special cases. Many having suffered for over 40 years have been cured by my treatment (in some instances even at the age of 70 or 80 years) after having been

GIVEN UP AS INCURABLE.

No interference with daily occupation.

Send description of complaint, and mention if you suffer from COLD FEET.

Read the following: One out of scores received.

BRONCHIAL ASTHMA (Two Years' Standing) CURED.

Before I underwent your treatment my health was far from being good—chills often, also the feeling between my shoulders of cold, which really no thick covering could give the desired warm feeling which I now possess. My chest got so weak that I had begun to stoop when walking. I have lost entirely that feeling, and I feel strong. When in bed I could not have my head but so high that it was no comfort to lie down, having a feeling of being suffocated. I can now lie right down into the pillows with perfect comfort. Life was hitherto a burden, now a pleasure. Can enjoy my food, do my work with ease; scarcely troubled with those cold perspirations which, being before my having your cure, were my daily company. No cold weather tries me now. Going up hill was a trial. My breathing would be quite loud during summer. I have with the children taken delight in running up hill. No furs now; health better than they. I feel indeed quite another creature. If anyone tried with Asthma won't try this real cure I am indeed sorry for them.

Mrs. H. Masson.
(From a Photograph).

Auldearn. (Mrs.) H. MASSON.

(*Full address on application.*)

The Director is prepared to pay

£1,000

to any Charitable Institution if the above is not a genuine extract from patient's own letter. The original may be seen at the Paul Weidhaas Hygenic Institute by any *bona-fide* Inquirers

CURABLE

Digitized by Google

were I to attempt to guide it, and I let the bridle hang loose over its neck.

So on we flew in a manner jerky enough to have suggested to any observant navigator the impression that I and my horse were attempting to arrive at every point of the compass at one and the same time.

I soon got so giddy and confused that I found myself obliged eventually to crouch down in the sadddle, trusting to luck and branches obligingly growing high enough to allow of a free passage underneath. As we passed out of the wood at last into the open camp again, I commenced cautiously instituting a search as to how much of myself was wanting; and I was greatly relieved to find that, while several rather necessary parts of my garments had been left behind, my body was still intact.

Evidently a little depressed by the innumerable forms of the letter S he had made during his short but painfully circuitous route through the wood, my horse quieted down considerably; and allowing me to get the bit properly adjusted, set off at a respectable canter.

I could not see any signs of my late pursuers, and was greatly annoyed thereby, being naturally anxious to explain that it was my horse, and not myself, who had run away from from them. Surely, I thought, they would never be so mean as to have remained behind in the wood, disputing over such insignificant parts of clothing as had marked the course of my wild career? One piece of coat-tail and a few miscellaneous shreds from various portions of my wearing apparel would be comparatively useless to them. And then there was the time they were losing.

My conjectures were soon arrested by the sudden appearance of the two gauchos, who came riding round some outlying trees not a hundred yards off.

They had taken a straight run through the wood, while my horse had been serpentining about it, thus overtaking me easily. I could see the gauchos now meant mischief.

Although they did not evidently wish to come to close quarters, they had the bolas unstrapped. These weapons are more effective when thrown from a little distance, as they thus gain a good impetus.

I would have taken out my revolver now and fired, giving my two enemies a few chambers each if necessary; but, unfortunately, I had left that useful little instrument of warfare at home, and my only weapon of defence was a small penknife.

There was yet time to gallop off away over the wide camp-land. I had occasion once or twice before to put this same horse which I now rode to the test of speed and endurance, and the faithful animal had proved himself well worthy of my confidence. I was determined, however, that running away should be my last resource; so, facing the gauchos, I cried aloud in their own language to them to get out of my path and let me pass by. Their only reply was a demand that I would immediately dismount and let my horse loose.

They appeared to be so confident of my compliance with this modest request that they reined their steeds closer to me, thus showing they already surmised my want of firearms, of which, by the way, they have a great dread. I wonder now I felt so cool at the moment when the gauchos, enraged at my paying no heed to their orders, advanced nearer, swinging the bolas, which the next instant they might let fly at me.

It was hopeless attempting to escape now, their lassos and bolas would soon have put an end to my flight. While doing all I could to nerve myself against a strong despair that was crushing down upon me in this great emergency, I suddenly hit upon a likely means of rescue, which I at once put in execution.

Although I had forgotten to bring my revolver, its holster was, as usual, suspended to my waist-belt. Being well aware of the horror and fear gauchos have of any firearms, I now stood up in my stirrups, and raising my coat with one hand, placed the other to my empty holster, and cried to the advancing highwaymen:

"Another whirl of your bolas or another inch nearer, and I shall fire!"

The moon's rays fell clear upon my revolver's sheath; the gauchos stopped suddenly, looked at each other, and then without a word turned round and fled from me, lying over their horses' necks as they did so, doubtless expecting a few bullets to be sent after them.

My horse and I jogged quietly home; and as I was retiring to rest I could not help smiling when I looked at my revolver, snugly lying under my bed-pillow, where I had unthinkingly left it that morning.

James Hogg.

Digitized by Google

ALL FAT PEOPLE

can safely **Reduce Weight and cure Corpulency permanently** by taking **TRILENE TABLETS** (Regd.) for a few weeks. They are small, agreeable, harmless, and never fail to **IMPROVE** both **HEALTH** and **FIGURE** without Change of Diet. An English Countess writes: "*Your Trilene Tablets act admirably.*"

Send 2s. 6d. to **THE TRILENE CO.**, Sole Proprietors, **66 Finsbury Pavement, London.**

SAMPLES OF TESTIMONIALS.

Princess Liechtenstein writes from Landsberg, Austria: "Pray send your excellent tablets directly." Mr. Canham, 87 Alexandra Road, Norwich: "Tablets cured my wife of extreme stoutness; it has never returned." Mrs. H. Cox, 28 Warmall Road, Hucknall Torkard, writes: "The Tablets reduced me 1½ stone." Mrs. S. Alexander, 102 Dixon Street, New Swindon, says: "They reduced me 2lb., and I am cured." Mrs. Darnley-Smith, of Landscove Vicarage, Ashburton, says: "Tablets have reduced me very much." Mrs. Crossley, of Rose Hill, Torver, Coniston, says: "I weigh much less and can breathe so much easier; I am delighted."

Neuralgia Positively Cured!

Free Test Offered.

The annexed cut presents in the prominent white lines the nerves most liable to attacks of Neuralgia. Sufferers will know only too well the pain tracks, and will be glad to know of a Simple and Sure Remedy. The proprietors will send Free two sample Zox Powders to any reader of *Short Stories* sending stamped envelope to ZOX CO., 11 HATTON GARDEN, LONDON E.C.

HAIR DESTROYED

Permanently by using my Depilatory, the only effectual remedy known. It has no mess to the skin and painless in operation. Those ladies who have been disappointed with worthless preparations should give it a trial. Easy to apply and guaranteed to—with one application—remove every Hair, and in a short time absolutely Destroy the Roots. Hundreds of Testimonials. Full particulars sent free on receipt of stamped envelope.—Address, MRS. J. E. TERRY, 46 Sternhold Avenue, Streathham Hill.

DON'T FORGET

that this week's

"HOME NOTES"

contains a **SUPPLEMENT**

GIVEN AWAY.

DRUNKENNESS

CURED.—On receipt of stamped envelope a lady will gladly send free particulars of a simple remedy, which cured her husband (without his knowledge) of the craving for alcohol, to which he had been for many years a victim. Address, in confidence, MRS. TERRY, 46 Sternhold Avenue, Streathham Hill.

VARICOCELE.

Every man suffering from Varicocele and the allied troubles, should send for treatise, describing their Causes, Symptoms, Results, and Successful and Painless Treatment without surgical operation or the use of cumbersome trusses and electrical appliances. Will be sent sealed, post free, three stamps.

S. S. MURRAY,

7 Southampton Row, London, W.C.

TOO STOUT.

I was for years; by chance I came across a simple home remedy that reduced me from 17st. to 10st. 12lbs., and I will willingly send particulars **free** to any sufferer enclosing stamp. Mrs. L. E. FELL, 195 Oxford Street, London, W.

SEND FOR

DR. EVANS'S (U.S.A.)

Pamphlet on Nervous Diseases of All Kinds. THIS PAMPHLET describes all the symptoms which arise from Diseases of the NERVOUS SYSTEM. It is up-to-date, having been compiled after years of labour and experience in the Treatment of these Maladies. It is complete, practical, and can be readily understood and acted upon. It gives pure and simple advice to Sufferers. Send stamped addressed envelope to GEORGE WRIGHT, ESQ., Colne House, REMBRANDT ROAD, LEE, LONDON, S.E. (*Name this Paper.*)

HOLLOWAY'S PILLS & OINTMENT.

PRE-EMINENT FOR 60 YEARS.

KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR

KAPUTINE

SAFE REMEDY CURES

HEADACHE and NEURALGIA

IMMEDIATELY,

And is sold by all leading Chemists in Packets of 18 Doses, 1s.

To ANYONE HAVING THE LEAST DIFFICULTY, it will be sent post free for 12 Stamps by "KAPUTINE Ltd.," Huddersfield; or, on receipt of a stamped addressed envelope, A. M. Kaputine, Huddersfield, you will receive a free sample.

The fact that "KAPUTINE" is recommended by many leading Medical Men, and is used in National Hospitals and Infirmaries proves that it is THE, THE recognised SAFE REMEDY FOR HEADACHES.

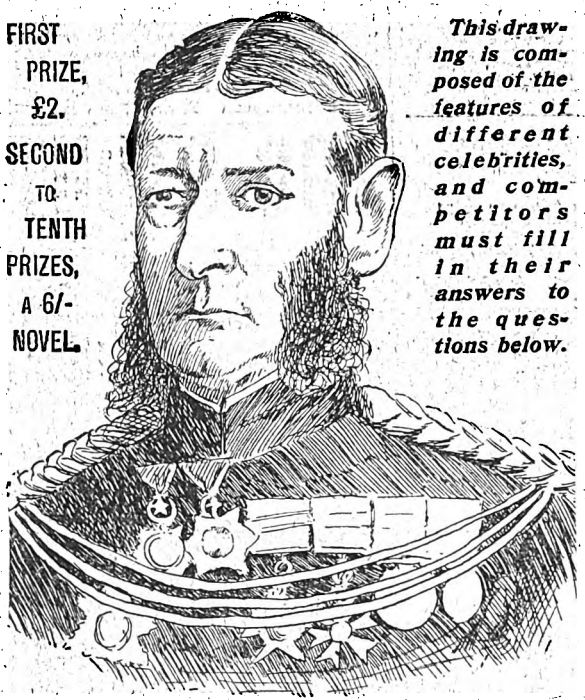
Refuse Substitutes and demand "KAPUTINE," the Safe Remedy. There is no substitute "LIKE IT"; nothing "AS GOOD"; nothing "SIMILAR."

KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR

Digitized by Google

COMPOSITE FACES COMPETITION.

FIRST PRIZE, £2. SECOND TO TENTH PRIZES, A 6/- NOVEL.



This drawing is composed of the features of different celebrities, and competitors must fill in their answers to the questions below.

1. The forehead is that of .....
2. The right eye is that of .....
3. The left eye is that of .....
4. The nose is that of .....
5. The mouth is that of .....
6. The whiskers are those of .....
7. The ear is that of .....

Name.....

Address.....

.....

The first prize will go to the reader from whom we receive the correct solution. In the event of a tie the prize will be awarded to the sender of the first correct solution dealt with.

If no correct solutions are sent in the prize will be awarded to the competitor whose attempt is first dealt with showing the fewest mistakes. The Editor's decision is final, and all competitors must enter on that understanding.

All attempts to reach this office by Monday, September 24th, in envelopes marked "Composite."

Readers are invited to submit puzzles, acrostics, conundrums, word-squares, etc., for publication on this page. A gold-plated pencil-case will be given to each reader whose attempts are used. All attempts must be vouched for as original, and, of course, it is distinctly understood that the sender of a puzzle must neither compete in the competition nor divulge to anyone the solution. Any reader found infringing this rule will be severely dealt with.

RESULT OF BRAIN GYMNASIUM.

Nos. 193 to 198.

THE first prize of £2 has been awarded this week to Mr. B. M. Burrell, of Cardigan House, Conway Road, Plumstead, whose solution was the first correct one dealt with.

A copy of "Her Royal Highness's Love Affair," by J. Maclaren Cobban, has been awarded to each of the following:

Spencer F. Harrall, Plumstead.
J. H. Cockerill, Kingsland Road, N.
E. Wilson, Ashford, Middlesex.
Mrs. Emily West, Putney.
William Martin, Leith, N.B.
James Matthews, Chiswick, W.
W. Gyde, Warley, Essex.
I. E. Priestley, Tewkesbury.
J. H. Priestley, Tewkesbury.
Miss M. Connell, Hertford.

SOLUTIONS OF BRAIN GYMNASIUM COMPETITION.

Nos. 199 to 204.

No. 199.	"All is not gold that glitters."
No. 200.	Soft, loud, quick, short.
No. 201.	Pin, tin, gin, gig, pig.
No. 202.	48.
No. 203.	Crestfallen.
No. 204.	13, 5, 19, 75.

THE MISTAKES WE MAKE.

COMPILED BY

C. E. CLARK.

F'cap. 8vo, cloth, with Index; Price, post free, 1s. 9d.

SOME OF THE CHAPTERS ARE:

CHAP. I.—Things that we Call by their Wrong Names.
CHAP. II.—Mistakes we Make About Places and their Names.
CHAP. VI.—Common Errors in Speech and Writing.
CHAP. X.—Historical Mistakes.

C. ARTHUR PEARSON LIMITED,
Henrietta Street W.C.

SHORT STORIES ADVERTISEMENT RATES.

Single column, per inch, per insertion	£0 10 0
Double " " "	1 0 0
Full page inside, facing page of matter, either white paper or 2nd or 3rd page of cover, or back page, per insertion	10 0 0
Half-page " " "	5 0 0
Quarter-page " "	2 10 0
Eighth-page " "	1 5 0
Front page, whole " "	12 10 0
" half " "	6 5 0

All spaces above one-eighth of a page are charged at per page rate. Series discount: 5 per cent. for 13, 10 per cent. for 26, 15 per cent. for 52 insertions.

Black blocks are charged 25 per cent. extra. All advertisements are subject to approval. All copy must be sent in by Noon on Tuesday, Sept. 18th, if intended for the issue on sale Oct. 2nd, and dated October 6th. The Proprietors reserve the right to hold over or suspend the insertion of any advertisement without prejudice to other insertions on order. All communications should be addressed to the Advertisement Manager, "Pearson's Weekly" Offices, Henrietta Street, London, W.C.

Printed and Published by C. ARTHUR PEARSON LTD., at Pearson's Weekly Buildings, Henrietta Street, London, W.C.

Digitized by Google

SEE SPECIAL 10 DAYS' OFFER AT FOOT OF PAGE.

KOKO

FOR THE HAIR

UNDER ROYAL PATRONAGE.

Eradicates Scurf and Dandriff.

Prevents Hair Falling and Turning Grey.

Promotes Growth.

Contains no Dye.

Is delightfully Cooling, Refreshing, and Invigorating.

Keeps the Hair Soft and Pliant, and Imparts to it the Lustre and Freshness of Youth.

Invaluable for Use after Sea Bathing.

Allays Irritation and Keeps the Scalp Clean.

Recommended and Used by
H.M. THE QUEEN (OF GREECE), PRINCESS VICTORIA (OF SCHAUMBURG-LIPPE), PRINCESS HOHENLOHE, PRINCESS MARIE (OF GREECE), PRINCESS HENRY REUS, Rear-Admiral TINKLAR, &c., &c.

SPECIAL OFFER to those who have not yet tried **KOKO.**

A 4/6 TRIAL BOTTLE for 2/-.

Any person forwarding this Coupon and P.O. for Two Shillings, and four Stamps to pay postage, packing, &c., will receive immediately for trial, by Parcel Post, under cover, prepaid, **One Regular 12 oz. Bottle of Koko for the Hair**, the price of which is 4/6, provided it is ordered within **ten days from the date of this offer.** In no case will more than one bottle be sent for the use of the same person on this coupon, as we make the offer solely for trial, knowing it creates a demand when once used; and this large bottle gives a fair trial. We find it better to thus practically **give away** one bottle to make a customer than to spend large amounts in advertising. **Any person into whose hands this offer comes may avail themselves of it.** Address all Orders with Coupons to—

THE KOKO-MARICOPAS CO., LTD., 16 BEVIS MARKS, LONDON.

Orders may be sent with this Coupon after the expiration of date, provided we are then issuing these trial bottle Coupons, and if we are not, the money will be returned. This Coupon will be received at 16 BEVIS MARKS, E.C., or 113 R. GENT STREET, LONDON, W., and 2/- only will be required when presented personally.

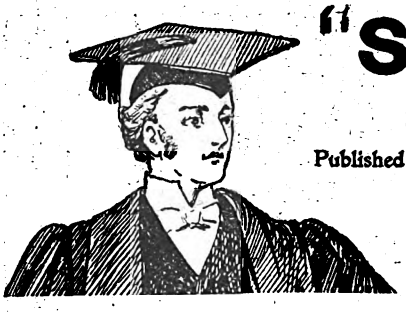
KOKO is sold by all Chemists, &c., at 2/6 and 4/6 per bottle. For the sake of greater profit you may be asked to buy some other hair preparation instead. In justice to us kindly insist on having Koko.

KOKO FOR THE HAIR

Digitized by Google

A BOOK WORTH MANY POUNDS!

Professor Boyd Laynard's Great Work:



"SECRETS of BEAUTY, HEALTH, and LONG LIFE."

Published by HAMMOND, HAMMOND, and CO., 19, 21, and 23 Ludgate Hill, London.

The publishers have much pleasure in announcing the issue of the popular edition of Professor BOYD LAYNARD'S great work, "SECRETS OF BEAUTY, HEALTH, AND LONG LIFE."

This remarkable handbook to the three subjects embraced in the title has been a long period in preparation by the author—being, in fact, the labour of many years of diligent research and earnest investigation. The work is arranged in TWO BOOKS, FIFTEEN PARTS, and 127 CHAPTERS, the whole of which (in the popular edition now offered to the public) is bound in ONE VOLUME.

The book, although published at Two Shillings, will, if ordered direct from the publishers, be forwarded, carriage paid, to all readers of this paper at the low discount price of

ONE SHILLING AND SIXPENCE

This is to secure for it a place in every home, by bringing it within the reach of all.

Amongst the numerous subjects dealt with in Professor Boyd Laynard's Work, the following are but a few (a complete syllabus, showing the contents of the whole of the 127 chapters, enumerating upwards of 500 subjects and divisions of subjects, can be had free on application to the publishers) :—

Analysis of beauty—Beauty a possible attainment—The way we make our own faces—Secrets of face transformation—Changeableness of beauty and its causes—Metaphysical secrets of keeping young and preserving a youthful appearance—Wonders of the skin—Relation of the skin to beauty—Effects of mental emotions upon the skin—Bad complexions and their causes—Diet that spoils and diet that improves the complexion—General care of the complexion—Construction, growth, and wonders of the hair—Why hair falls out, and its remedy—Premature greyness: its causes and prevention—General care of the hair—Superficial hairs—Wrinkles, and how to treat them—Freckles, tan, and blackheads—Oily skin, dry skin, and loose skin—Undesirable noses and their transformation—Protruding ears and their treatment—Offensive breath—Anatomy of the teeth—Why teeth decay—General care of the teeth—Tallness, and how to attain it—Round shoulders, and how to cure them—How to acquire a full chest—Perfect form and figure: their proper proportions—Thinness, and its treatment—Excessive stoutness—Care of the hands—Care of the feet—Physiognomy; or, the art of reading character from the face—Mental influence upon health—Power of the mind over the body—Influence of the mind in curing diseases—How the mind can induce disease—How violent passions injure health—Laughter as a medicine—Wonders of digestion—Relative value to our bodies of the principal articles of food—Fruits and vegetables as medicine: their various influences upon the physical system—Health-preserving diet, and its consistency—Diet favourable to mental exertion and intellectual culture—Influence of various foods upon our passions and propensities—Some perilous articles of food—Light, and its influence upon health—Exercise and its relations to health—Baths and bathing: their influence upon health—The way we breathe, and how it affects our health—The marriage state, and its influence upon health—100 professions, trades and occupations: their respective influences upon health and long life—Sleep, and its relation to health—Conditions for healthy sleep—Insomnia—The eyes, and how to preserve them—The ears and hearing: how to prevent deafness—The voice: its cultivation and preservation—Memory, and how to improve it—Stammering, and how to cure it—Prevention of disease—Colds: their nature, prevention and treatment—Indigestion—Constipation—Neuralgia, Rheumatism—Nervousness—headaches—That rebellious organ, the liver—Blushing: its physiology and treatment—Rules of life for attaining longevity—Things that shorten life—Things that prolong life—How to live to a hundred—Premature old age and its causes—Short biographies of 80 modern centenarians, whose ages range from 115 to 185 years—Attainment of long life under physical disabilities.

WHAT THE PAPERS ARE SAYING.

The *Christian Globe* (August 9th) says: "Professor Laynard writes well on a subject he has evidently studied deeply. As a guide to good looks, health, and longevity this book differs entirely from ordinary works on the same subjects. It is more thorough and at the same time more practical. It is safe to say that anyone who ordered his or her life on the rules laid down in this book would certainly profit both physically and materially."

The *London Journal* (August 4th) says: "Throughout the whole 127 chapters it is practical and sensible. It contains an immense amount of valuable advice, and, moreover, it is written in such a bright style that it is as interesting as a novel. Apart from the general usefulness of the work as a complete handbook to beauty, health, and longevity, it possesses an additional value to those requiring reliable advice upon specific subjects. For example, the chapters treating upon the skin, the complexion, the hair, the teeth, the eyesight, the voice, deafness, sleeplessness, nervousness, memory, stammering, diet, indigestion, and other important matters too numerous to mention, are each worth a physician's fee to particular readers, as they are based upon the pathologies of the highest medical and scientific authorities."

ORDER FORM.

To be cut out.

TO HAMMOND, HAMMOND & CO., 19, 21, and 23 LUDGATE HILL, LONDON.

Please forward me Professor Boyd Laynard's complete work, "SECRETS OF BEAUTY, HEALTH, AND LONG LIFE" (carriage paid), for which I enclose the sum of One Shilling and Sixpence.

*Name*_____

*Address*_____

Digitized by Google

HAVE YOU GOT THAT TEN POUND NOTE?
See this week's "Pearson's Weekly."

SHORT STORIES

A WEEKLY MAGAZINE FOR HOME AND TRAIN

No. 612. FOR WEEK ENDING SEPTEMBER 22ND, 1900. [ONE PENNY.

"Absolutely Pure therefore Best."

CADBURY'S

COCOA

"A PERFECT FOOD."

The Editor of THE LANCET, June 16, 1900, says:—

"We are glad to find that Messrs. Cadbury draw attention to the fact that there are strong grounds for objection to the addition to cocoa of certain foreign substances. This resource is quite unnecessary, and, indeed, pernicious, especially having regard to the fact that cocoa alone is an excellent food as well as a stimulant, having a salutary action upon the nerve centres."

CADBURY'S IS THE PURE COCOA.

Entirely Free from Drugs, Kola, Malt or Hops.

Digitized by Google

Advertisements should be sent to "Short Stories" Advertisement Department, Henrietta Street, London, W.C.

JOHN NOBLE COSTUMES

Promptly Sent by Parcel Post, and Guaranteed to give Satisfaction.

Supplied Direct from the Factories of the Largest Firm of Costume Manufacturers in the World.

MODEL 313. A NEW MODEL IN A NEW FABRIC.—Tailor Coat and full Skirt in latest design made to measure in Albion Check Suiting. Colours: Brown, Grey, Fawn, and Blue-Grey. The Coat is thoroughly well-made and well-cidde-in the latest mode. **18/9** Tailor-finished. The Skirt is Price 1/- the complete Costume, only 18/9. Carriage and box, 1/- extra. Patterns and self-measurement forms sent free. If an old bodice is sent together with the length of skirt—a good fit is ensured.

MODEL 20. A NEW HALF-GUINEA COSTUME. Well-made, in as plain a design as possible, to enable ladies to trim according to their own taste. **10/6** Full front Bodice, tight-fitting back. Full Skirt in Costume Coating or in Cheviot. Price, complete Costume, 10/6. Carriage, 6d. Or the Skirt alone for 5/6. Carriage, 5d.

PATTERNS POST FREE.

A FULL DRESS LENGTH of Costume Coating or Cheviot Serge (6 yards 52 inches wide) for **7/6.** Carriage, 8d.

Colours: Black, Navy, Brown, Myrtle, Fawn, Khaki, Grey, and Royal Blue.

Sizes in Stock of Ladies' Costumes are: 34, 36 and 38 inches round bust (under arms); Waists, 24, 26 and 28 inches; Skirts being 38, 40 and 42 inches long in front. Any other size made to measure, 1/6 extra.

MOURNING ORDERS executed and sent off at one day's notice.

SPECIAL VALUES in Children's Costumes, Mantles, Jackets, Waterproofs, Corsets, and Underclothing.

PHOTO LISTS SENT FREE to any *Short Stories* reader.

JOHN NOBLE Ltd.
ARE THE ORIGINATORS OF THE
WORLD-RENOWNED HALF-GUINEA COSTUMES.
They have always given and still give better value than is to be obtained elsewhere.

JOHN NOBLE LTD., Brook St. Mills, MANCHESTER.

THE JOHN NOBLE KNOCKABOUT FROCKS FOR GIRLS

Thoroughly well-made in good strong Serge, with saddle top, long full sleeves and pocket.

Lengths and Prices:

21	24	27	30	33 in.
1/6	2/-	2/6	3/-	3/6 ea.
36	39	42	45 in.	
4/-	4/6	5/-	5/6 ea.	

Carriage, 4d. extra.

Cap, as sketch, 1/- Postage, 2d.

Kindly mention *Short Stories* when writing.

TO THE QUEEN
PURVEYORS

CROSSE & BLACKWELL'S

GREEN PEA. GRAVY. JULIENNE. MULLIGATAWNY. TOMATO. HOUSEHOLD. CRESSY. &c.

SOUP TABLETS

OF ALL GROCERS ETC. THROUGHOUT THE WORLD

DRUNKENNESS

CURED. This can be done with or without patient's knowledge. Send me a stamp and I will tell you how. (Send no money.) Address, in confidence, Mrs. C. H. (Room 8), 195 Oxford Street London, W.

SULPHOLINE LOTION,

For clearing the skin from Spots, Blemishes, Redness, Roughness, giving a Beautiful Complexion and pleasing appearance.

SHILLING BOTTLES.

A SUM of from 12s. to 25s. per week can be earned in spare hours or evenings by either sex everywhere.—Send addressed envelope for particulars to Box 24, Eclipse Works, 89 Aldersgate Street, E.C.

WHY BE FAT?

When a lady, who has discovered a simple means of Self-Cure will be happy to send particulars of same to any sufferer from this distressing complaint. Free on receipt of stamped addressed envelope. ADDRESS:

Mrs. TREVOR WELLS,
63 *HIGH HOLBORN, LONDON, W.C.*

HAIR DESTROYED.

Send me an envelope (stamped and addressed) and I will tell you how to remove all superfluous hair **free of charge.** (Send no money.) Address, in confidence, Miss E. V. (Room 3) 195 Oxford Street, London, W.

ESTABLISHED 1851.

BIRKBECK BANK

Southampton Buildings, Chancery Lane, London.

2% on CURRENT ACCOUNTS, on the minimum monthly balances when not drawn below £100.

The BIRKBECK ALMANACK, with full particulars, post free. FRANCIS RAVENSCROFT, *Manager.*

Advertisements should be sent to "Short Stories" Advertisement Department, Henrietta Street, London, W.C.

Digitized by Google

No. 612. ONE PENNY

For the Week Ending Sept. 22nd, 1900.

A MODERN GALATEA.

My condition, at last, became alarming, and I was afraid of myself. The cause of it—ah, that was something. Had it been a matter which an honourable man might discuss with a friend, I could have had the healing consolation of sympathy; but at the very core of my affliction lay the obligation of silence. Let us suppose a case.

Once there was a very beautiful woman, married happily, and a mother. Her husband had a friend—a man of the world. This man discovered in his friend's wife an accumulation of all womanly graces; he saw in her the ideal woman in all the world, the only one he could have loved and courted, fought for and died for.

Yet she was wholly inaccessible, even in dreams. She was as good as she was beautiful, as true as she was winsome. Even had she not been so his hands were tied by loyalty to his friend. Some of you will laugh at that. Well, if a man's honour fails him in one direction, I will not trust it in another; for a man is a whole remainder after subtracting all his evil from all his good. But "the flesh is weak." That is the villain's only plea for mercy.

The friend could not conceal it from the wife. Could not? I must be careful in my choice of words. Is there anything in the line of right that a man cannot do in such a case? The world is wide—he could have gone away—but she was so beautiful and winsome. Nor, as he had not declared himself, could she presume to send him away?

He thought he saw in her eyes something of pity, something of warning, something of everything. The suffering wore him out.

But I must return to the beginning and resume my story.

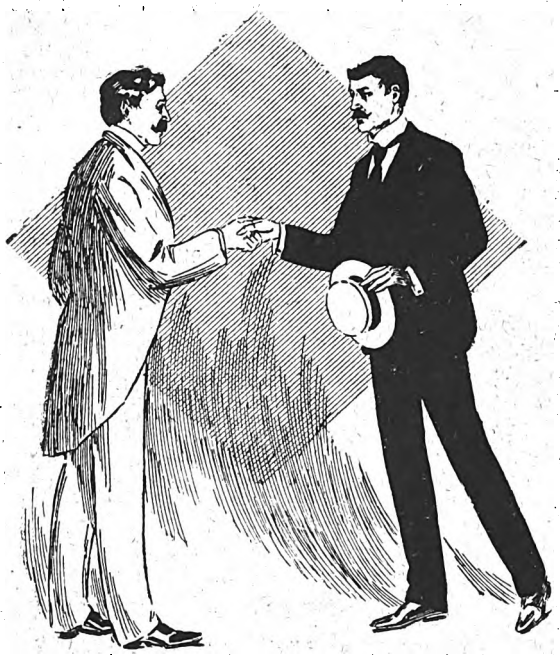
I was much prostrated in mind and flesh, and the services of a skilful physician were imminently needed.

All rights reserved.]

Digitized by Google

With that idea I went to see a famous man, Dr. Brownell, a specialist in matters of the nerves.

It may be thought a little peculiar that I went to consult this particular man; but it must be considered that besides being a very skilful physician, he was my



"Why, I am glad to see you," he said, taking my hand.

friend. There might have been certain reasons why I should not consult him, but we need not discuss them now. His wife was a beautiful woman, and I knew her well; but what in the world has this to do with my visit to her husband?

Brownell was a peculiar man. Though he was the best friend I ever had, there was not a very close intimacy between us, and yet I was nearer to him than was any other of his friends. He was much older than his wife.

A kind heart, given force and direction by great wealth, had been exercised by him on my behalf with so intelligent a purpose that I was become a man of a little importance in the community.

The physician lived in a fine old house of great size. Not all of it was occupied. He was a tireless collector of curiosities, and had expended a fortune in that pursuit. Few of these were ever shown to his friends, and he never spoke of them, but kept them in out-of-the-way places in the great establishment.

He was a reticent man, and many feared him; but I saw in him nothing but goodness, and a marvellous skill. So it was upon Doctor Brownell that I called formally as a patient.

His consulting rooms were on the first floor, and consisted of two rooms—a handsomely-fitted reception-room, and back of it one in which his patients were generally treated. Both were very large.

Al hough I had called and visited very often at his house, I had never been in these rooms before.

When I entered he was just ready to go out, but he welcomed me with his old-time cordiality.

"Why, I am glad to see you," he said, taking my hand. "Come in and rest awhile. You surely haven't come to see me professionally?"

He looked closely at me as he asked the question.

"Yes," I replied; "I fear I am in rather a bad way."

His face showed much concern.

"You do look a little shaken," said he, removing one of his gloves.

Then he began in a deliberate fashion to make a scientific inquiry into my case.

While he was occupied thus, a messenger, all out of breath, arrived to call him to a case of great urgency.

Dr. Brownell, seeing the need to hurry, asked me if I could come as well on the following day. Of course I released him.

He hurried away, saying:

"I am very sorry to leave you, but it can't be helped. Step into the house and see Mrs. Brownell. I am sure she will be glad to see you. Go through that door—it is the nearest way. You will find the hall a little dark; but go straight ahead and you will be all right."

Then he hurried away, and in a moment was gone.

I went to the door which I understood him to have pointed out. I discovered that there were two doors close together. I selected the left-hand one. I turned the knob, and pulled the door open. The hall beyond appeared to be quite dark, but I remembered what he had said about that, and I felt safe.

I stepped into the hall; and instantly the door, which was a heavy affair made of oak, closed upon me, pushing me out of its way into the hall.

Then I discovered that I was in absolute darkness, although there was a bright day without. Nevertheless, recalling Brownell's instruction, I went ahead with much confidence.

Suddenly, to my infinite amazement, the ground seemed to open, and I plunged headlong downward into a suffocating darkness, at every instant striking cruelly upon hidden obstacles along the way.

At last, after having taken what seemed to be a great flight, I came heavily to a stone floor, where the darkness was as dense as ever before I fell. Fright was my first sensation, and indignation my next; for was it not likely that Brownell had played some ugly trick upon me; I sat perfectly still for a little while, doing much wondering.

There was nowhere the smallest glimmer of light; the darkness was ponderable and terrifying. With it was a silence so vast that the ordinary roaring in my ears became an obtrusive presence.

A little reason at last found exercise in my disordered faculties. I reflected that the abyss into which I had fallen was an unguarded flight of stairs, into which I had walked in the darkness. A cautious hand-survey verified the belief, for there I lay at the bottom of the stairs.

A moment later I remembered that I had seen two doors, one beside the other. It was very clear that I had made a mistake by choosing a door leading to the cellar.

It then was no serious matter at all, and I laughed at myself for my terror. All that was necessary was to ascend the flight, open the door, and emerge by the other.

Without any waste of time I went about putting this plan into use; but when I had clambered up the stairs and found the door, I discovered that I was securely locked within this dismal place! There was no nob on the inside at all. My first intention was to get relief by knocking on the door, but there quickly arose two

Digitized by Google

reasons why I should not—no one was within; and besides, even if I should summon attention, how could I explain my ridiculous plight?

My clothing had been torn by my fall, and I knew by the token of a warm, sticky sensation about my face and neck that I had been hurt and was bleeding freely, I was satisfied there must be some way of escape from the cellar without alarming the household, and, though my prison was darker than night, I determined to exhaust this resource before trying the other.

Accordingly, I descended the stairs, and, by keeping my hand on one of the walls, began to creep forward, with the careful guard upon the possibility of another flight of stairs. Presently, I found a turn in the passage and followed it on. Then I came to a transverse passage, and was in doubt which way to turn.

Meanwhile the darkness did not relax in the smallest degree, and absolute silence surrounded me. I turned to the right; and in that direction, not far away, I saw an exceedingly thin line of light, which I surmised issued from the bottom of a door.

I went towards this, and was about to put my hand upon the door, when it occurred to me that caution sometimes was a valuable exercise. Thereupon I knelt and examined the line of light more closely; and it was somewhat disheartening to discover that the light, instead of being white, was yellow. In other words, it was gaslight, and not daylight, that shone beyond the door.

While thus I knelt, I thought I heard a certain scurrying within. It was a sound not very unlike that which I had heard in the dark passage, and which I had mistaken for automatic aberrations of my hearing sense. Now, the same sound gave me a certain depressing feeling of insecurity, as though a malign mystery, suited to this uncanny place, was preparing a grotesque, and, perhaps, dangerous reception for me. Should I abandon this enterprise and seek another door? There was danger that I might not find this one again. Indeed, was there anything to fear? Surely my conscience—

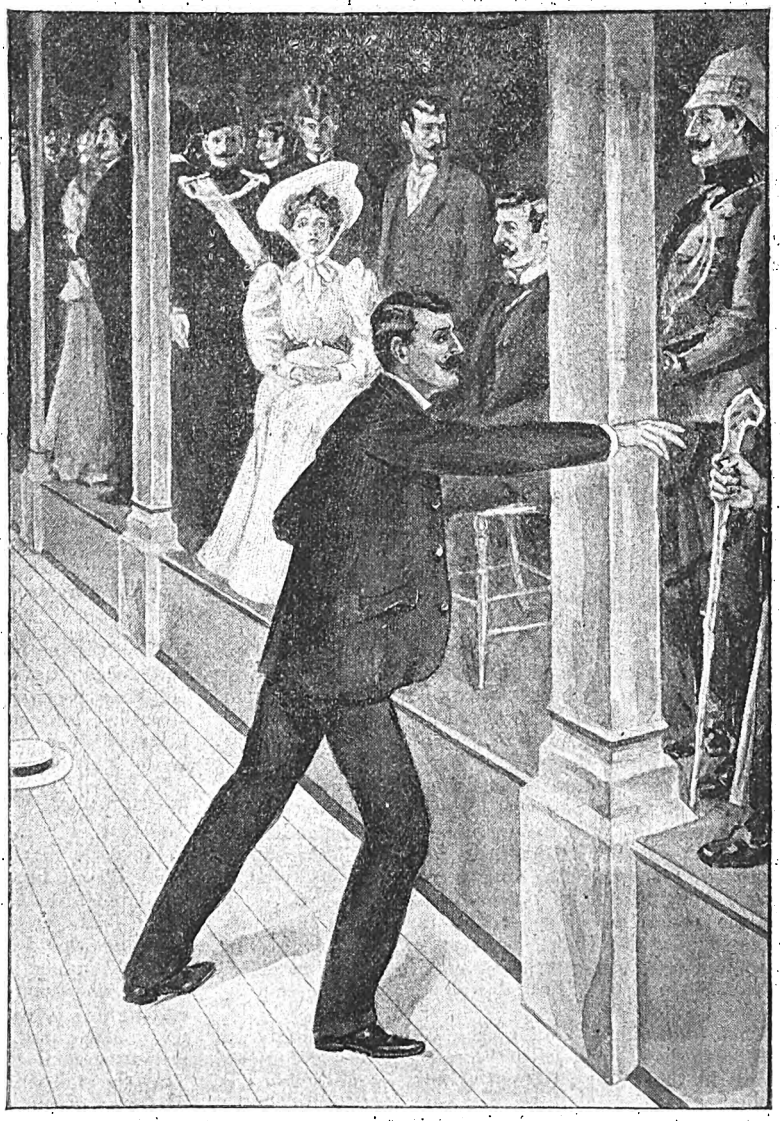
I gently pushed upon the door. It did not open. I found a keyhole and peered through it. A curious, large hall seemed to be beyond, lighted faintly, and I thought I saw the shadowy form of a woman float across the field of vision.

Just above the keyhole I found a knob. I turned it, and instantly the door flew open, pulling me violently with it; and before the instinctive movement to seize upon a support and hold it securely permitted me to take my grasp from the knob, I found myself wholly at the mercy of unresisted gravitation, flying undoubtedly downward, if reason is to be accepted, but in all other directions as well, if my feelings had been the ground of judgment.

But this time, instead of falling upon a cold, stone floor, I alighted on a deliciously soft carpet, of the thickest and finest rugs; and, for that matter, the distance which I had fallen was in reality quite small.

Upon looking about I found myself in the strangest place it was ever my fortune to see; but before I describe it I must say something in explanation of my unaccountable flight through the air.

The floor of this hall was sunk a few feet below the level of the passage by which I had approached, and down from the door led a flight of stone steps, which the pulling of the door had made me clear as I fell. I had thought that someone was concealed behind the door.



I seized the stick and tried to wrench it from his grasp.

Digitized by Google

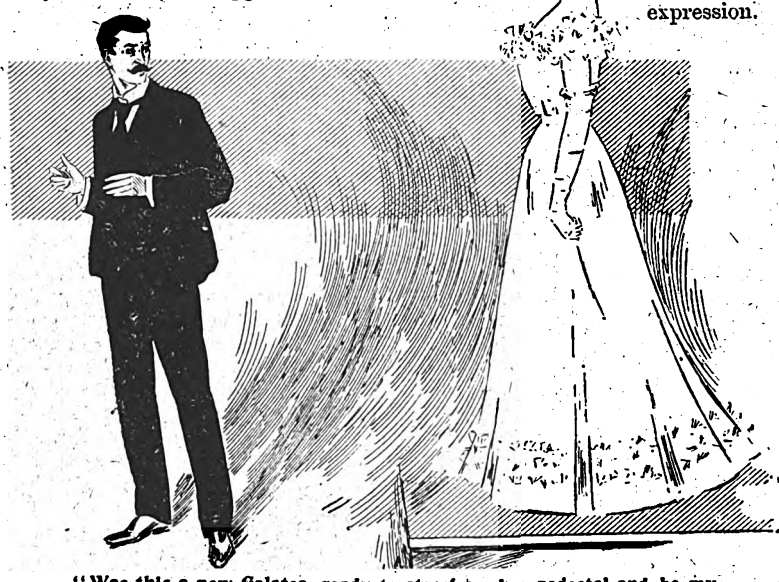
and pulled it open quickly when I turned the knob; but, upon looking, I saw no one, and I must believe that, for some reason which I shall not attempt to explore, the conduct of the door was guided by a powerful spring.

There was no time for any intelligent kind of thinking, for, besides being in a large hall of extraordinary appearance, I found myself in company with the most astonishing people. The walls were covered with curious things from every corner of the world.

The roof was perforated with openings, representing stars, animals, angels, demons and other things. These openings were covered with coloured glass of every shade, and above all was the light which shone through the grotesque openings and filled the room with a soft yellow radiance.

The light was too faint for a fine definition of features and so I could not then have said that I knew any of the persons present. They were all on the opposite side of the room, and everyone of them was looking at me. Some were sitting, others standing, and all were upon an elevated platform which ran round the room. The platform was raised not more than eight inches above the floor.

I scrambled to my feet and looked round upon them, of course expecting that I should be spoken to. But not a word was said and not a movement was made. The whole circumstance was so extraordinary, and the silence and immobility of the assembled people so impressive, that a strange tingling feeling, which all who have been frightened know the nature of, crept up my face and into my hair, and my heart beat with what seemed to be so strong a torsional force that it twisted a sharp pain out of its function.



"Was this a new Galatea, ready to step from her pedestal and be my devoted slave?"

I made an essay of speech.

"This," I said (indignation arising with the emergency of courage), "may be a very amusing pastime for you, but I have it that you are putting a very gross indignity upon me. If Dr. Brownell is in this distinguished company, I should like him to hear me say that I resent being made the victim of this boyish prank for for the edification of spectators invited to enjoy my discomfiture, and that I propose, without any loss of time, to give to my resentment such form and character as will cause it to have a disagreeable permanency in his recollection."

This wide-winged and rather silly threat might as well have been spoken to the red dragons and green angels in the ceiling, for not a word or movement did it elicit.

I found it easy to speak, but my voice sounded as though it had come from someone else to me alone, and made me uncertain that I had spoken at all. But a quickening anger was straining its leash within me, and I made no effort to control it.

A sense or outrage, shame and indignation swept over me; there were things I would not bear.

At this moment, Brownell's individuality emerged from the dim shadows of the company, and I walked straight up to him. He looked at me steadily as I approached, the old, good-natured, half-quizzical expression that I knew so well sitting upon his face.

I had approached him very near, when an indefinable violent sensation seized upon me and held me from further advance. Likely it was as much dread as terror; but whatever it was, there I stood grown to the floor, staring in dismay at this silent and motionless man with the quizzical expression.

Quite near me was an old man sitting on a chair, his hand resting on a heavy stick. I seized the stick and tried to wrench it from his grasp, intending to brain Brownell with it; but think what must have been my horror to see the old man's arm come away from his body with the stick, the hand still retaining its hold! I threw the stick away with a shudder and went up closer to Brownell. I caught him by the shoulders, and shook him with such violence that his head rolled on the floor at my feet.

Then the truth burst through the envelope of my vast and inconceivable stupidity—not all stupidity, for another affliction beset me—these were all wax-figures! I had stumbled into one of those queer nooks in Brownell's house where some of his treasures were stored, and where, in these uncanny ways, he enjoyed himself alone.

The reaction from this discovery was peculiar. At first I laughed; but my laughter became so loud and furious that I saw it was hysteria, and then I had trouble to check it. My head was splitting, and my throat was cracked and burning. Pains of various kinds found employment in torturing me, and they were pains to which I was in nowise accustomed. Therefore, it was necessary that I make haste to escape from this almost unearthly place.

The silence and apparent intelligent immobility of the wax-figures were more than depressing. I began to fear, indeed, that, after all, they would take on life and present some new form of suffering for my torture.

At the end of the hall was a wide door draped with a *portière*. From where I stood I could see the white satin of a woman's skirt just behind the *portière* on one side. Evidently no light entered that room, except the

Digitized by Google

weak, diffused light of the demons and angels in the room where I was standing and hence it was much darker beyond the *portières*; but after looking around, I saw that if there were any escape, except by the way I had come, it must be through the room in which stood the woman in satin. Yet I feared to enter that room.

The dim light, the woman behind the *portière*—it all looked mysterious and dread-lurking. It was evident that the woman stood, as did the others, on a platform; but was that sufficient upon which to construct a belief that she, too, was wax? And would it not be all the better if she were flesh and blood? Assuredly, for that meant deliverance.

I went, without further thinking, to the *portière*, and passed within the room, having an unaccountable care that I did not pass too near the woman in satin.

I went into the room and looked around for a door. None could I find. My gaze fell upon the woman whose skirt I had seen, and then came upon me the very heaviest blow of all in that day of miseries; for there before me, beautiful and radiant, embodiment of all the finest graces of womankind, unspeakably winsome, and in all possible ways the loveliest woman under the sun, stood the physician's wife. If only it had been she, indeed, instead of an artful wax counterfeit!

I stood and admired her to my heart's content, and then I looked another way and continued my search for the door.

In what ever way I turned, I felt that the soft blue eyes of this enchanting figure were upon me. This gave me a certain fear, the meaning of which, beyond a consciousness of extreme nervous irritation, I was not able to understand. My disorder began to take on an exhilaration much like that which comes from hasheesh, imparting a quickening power to my senses and a keen edge to my imagination.

A feeling of happy confidence and lively enthusiasm struck off the angles of the fear which formerly had depressed me, and I became bold, valiant and adventurous. What an inspiring effect even the wax-image of a beautiful woman may have on a man!

I again looked at the figure in satin. Could I have been in error? Was it possible that a wax figure could be caught stealing a quick glance at me and suppressing a delicious smile? Was this a new Galatea, ready to step from her pedestal and be my devoted slave?

A great hope, so wild that I dared not give it too generous entertainment, leapt up from my heart. Fool or madman—which was I? Though the whole world might be consumed with love of her, she would remain steadfast in the way of a wife for ever. It was wholly impossible that she should choose this astounding way of letting me know that the one secret of my life had slipped away from me and had been welcomed into her own life.

I gazed upon her, filled with awe. Her head slowly turned, her glorious eyes rested full upon my face, and the sweetest smile that I had ever seen on her beautiful face saturated all my sensibilities with inconceivable delights. There was a meaning in that look and smile that I had never seen before, and the light that shone through it was a welcome to me!

I went closer to her, my feet winged with joy. The smile beckoned, the glance was a reassurance.

"Alice!" I cried.

"I have waited for you long," she answered; and there can be no music on earth so sweet as those words.

I caught her in my arms and drew her to my breast, nearly crushing her. I looked up into her face and she looked down into mine. I drew her from the pedestal.

All at once a look of horror came into her face.

"You are covered with blood!" she cried.

"It is nothing," I protested.

The look of horror became one of terror.

"Oh," she said, "there is blood on your face and villainy in your heart! So this is how you would betray your best friend and wreck my life. I will save him and you."

With that I saw something bright and keen glitter a moment in her hand, and in an instant a thing cold and sharp slipped between the ribs of my breast. I choked; a blindness assailed me, and I felt myself going all at large to the floor.

* * * * *

Dr. Brownell was sitting beside me in a room of his house, and I was lying in bed with a feeling of great weakness. He saw that I was watching him. He arose and stood over me, and his face showed much relief.

"You are all right now, aren't you, old fellow?"

How kind his voice was!

"Yes."

I felt no pain in my breast, but feebly I put up my hand.

"Is the wound dangerous?" I asked.

"What wound?"

I made no reply.

"The only wound you had was a slight abrasion of the scalp, and that has been cured a week."

I dared not ask any more questions.

"Alice came in to see you this morning and left these flowers for you. I told her I thought you would be all right to-day, and she will come to see you as soon as I send her word. By the way, old man, that was a curious mistake you made in getting among my wax-figures. We found you unconscious there. In your delirium you must have developed a strong dislike for the figures of Alice and me, as you completely demolished them."

W. C. M.

"BESIEGED WITH B.P."

A Complete Record of the Siege of Mafeking.

By J. EMERSON NEILLY.

(*Special War Correspondent of the "Pall Mall Gazette."*)

"BESIEGED WITH B.P."

Crown 8vo. Price 1s. net. Post free, 1s. 2d.

To be had of all Bookstalls and Booksellers.

Now Ready. Sixpenny Edition of a Splendid Novel,

The INVISIBLE MAN

By H. G. WELLS.

Author of "The Time Machine," "The War of the Worlds," etc.

Crown 8vo. ***Price 6d.*** By post 2d. extra.

"I have not been so fascinated by a new book for many a long day."—Mr. CLEMENT K SHORTER in the *Bookman*.

"Will greatly enhance the reputation of a very ingenious story-teller."—*Illustrated London News*.

"The humour is excellent, keen, and invigorating. . . . Mr. Wells' talent is unique of its kind."—*Daily Mail*.

At all Bookstalls and Booksellers or of

C. ARTHUR PEARSON, Ltd., Henrietta Street, W.C.

Digitized by Google

MY RUN FOR LIFE.

A SOUTH AMERICAN ADVENTURE.

I WAS young and careless at the time, but my "run for life" sobered me—at least, for a few days. Youth is generally endowed with a superabundance of animal spirits, together with a natural buoyancy; agencies which soon overcome the temporary effects of any serious occurence that may intrude itself into the normal condition of life in its "teens."

I had just been newly imported from Scotland into the South American town of Rosario on the banks of the Rio Parana, a bright little port increasing in importance every year, and a central shipping depôt for wool, grain, and hides brought from the many villages dotted over the surrounding prairies.

From Rosario I had a long journey before me, having to make my way, as best I could, to a hamlet rejoicing in the euphonious title of Frayle Muerto, or, in English, "The Dead Monk," and situated in the province of Cordova, which adjoins that of Santa Fé, whose capital is Rosario.

Looking about me for some mode of conveyance into the interior, I was fortunate enough to fall in with a Mr. Wilson, an Englishman, who had been for a long time in the country, and was starting next day with a "tropa," or troupe of mule-waggons for Cordova, the route to which place passed within a few miles of my destination.

I gladly arranged to accompany him; and the following morning saw me seated in a covered cart drawn by mules, make my entry first on to the great flat pampas that, relieved by occasional patches of forest, stretch for hundreds of miles away to the foot of the mighty Cordilleras.

A first view of the prairies of South America can never be forgotten; it is more impressive than the feeling when in mid-ocean. Naught is seen but the great expanse of heaving billows lapping the horizon on every side.

The tall prairie-grass bending before the breeze resembles the motion of the restless sea. The verdure is varied and beautiful, dotted here and there with immense ant-hills, from and to which industrious armies of ants march, some laden with leaves and broad blades of grass, which, presenting a surface sufficient for the wind to catch, considerably increase the burden of the staggering insect, sometimes toppling it entirely over, and reminding one of our advertising sandwich-men at home.

We had made an early start, so when mid-day came our little caravan was glad of a rest. The mules were unyoked from their light waggons and allowed to stray round about, picking up what best suited their tastes from the great variety of grasses by the wayside.

A fire was soon kindled, and the great native roast called asado got ready. The asado is simply a cut of beef, through which an iron rod is run, this rod being stuck in the ground and slanted over the fire in a manner that allows the beef to be quickly cooked.

No meal is complete without the native tea, and both the tea itself and the manner of taking it are very different from the cup-and-saucer European custom. A small gourd about the size of an ordinary teacup is used, a hole being cut at one end, into which are put two or three spoonfuls of a herb called yerba—a plant indigenous to some parts of the country. The remaining space in this gourd is then filled up with hot water and occasionally a little sugar; and this maté or tea is enjoyed with the agency of a tube, through which it is sucked, American cocktail fashion, by the happy possessor for the time being, who, when he has drawn through the last drop of this South American nectar, hands the maté-cup to the servant, who, filling it up again with water, and, if necessary, adding a little more yerba and sugar, passes it on to guest number two; and so on, each one having several turns at the suction business, until all are satisfied. This mode of tea-drinking naturally enough takes a long time, and we were quite ready for a siesta, which lasted until the great heat of the noonday sun had decreased in power.

Then all was hurry getting the mules caught and yoked; and this work required no little skill and patience, for mules are as stubborn in one country as in another, and not only have a will of their own, but take a great many opportunities of giving ocular demonstration that such is the case, in a manner highly suggestive of there being a right and a wrong way of going about anything, but especially a wrong way. However, we eventually moved on, and did not again halt till sunset.

Next morning we were off again by daybreak, and for the first time I saw the "mirage," which at early morn frequently forms itself on the prairie horizon and is a most impressive spectacle. The imagination which has often pictured to itself castles in the air has them now full in sight, and to all appearance real and tangible; and villages and farms, which are many leagues too far off to be seen by the ordinary light of day, stand forth, on a seeming foundation of shimmering air, clear and with every prominent object distinctly defined. Late in the afternoon of that day we arrived at a dilapidated-looking hut, at which point, being the nearest to Frayle Muerto, I was to part company with my companion and his mule caravan.

While Mr. Wilson was arranging with the owner of the hut to supply me with a horse and a mounted guide,

Digitized by Google

so that I might get over to my destination that same evening, I had time to look about me, and was greatly impressed with the forlorn-looking condition of my surroundings.

The rancho, or native hut, was a wretched structure, with mud walls and a clumsily thatched roof, and consisted of two rooms, one of the apartments evidently being used as a kitchen and bedroom, while the other appeared to be of a nondescript character, There was no attempt at cultivation, the prairie-grass growing up to the very walls of the house, excepting in the front, where constant use had stamped out the grass and left the bare earth, on parts of which was a small yard of posts or corral, in which were confined some horses.

Lounging about the gate of this yard were some half-dozen natives, or rather gauchos, as, judging from their appearance, they were more like partly-civilised Indians.

The costume of each consisted of a red shirt, a pair of white drawers, partly covered by a species of petticoat called a chiripa, and the native cloak or poncho; a broad belt was worn round the waist, and a gaudily-coloured handkerchief tied over the head took the place of the Spanish sombrero.

The garments, such as they were, had stood many a rough storm, but seemed incapable of standing many more, the material being of the poorest and thinnest, while the original colours had long since faded away. These men were mostly barefooted, and their coarse, matted hair and swarthy faces told of few interviews with the toilet-table.

Before parting with Mr. Wilson, I took occasion to refund him some expenses he had incurred for me during our journey together, and when paying him I thoughtlessly exposed my purse, which was well-lined with bright gold sovereigns. and I noticed that the eyes of some of the nat ves had been attracted towards us while we were settling accounts.

Whether Mr. Wilson saw this or not I cannot say, but he did not leave the place until, after a hearty farewell between us, he saw me mounted and along with my guide fairly started for Frayle Muerto.

Although I had a little experience of riding in Scotland; this was my first "mount" in America, and nei her the horse nor myself got on well together. The native recado is very different from our home saddle, and sometimes, as in the present case, has only one little wooden stirrup, just large enough to admit of your big toe resting in while you mount.

This want of stirrups and my pulling the bridle English fashion, instead of, as is the native mode, merely allowing the reins to gently touch the neck of the horse on the contrary side towards which he is to turn, had the effect of making both of us very uncomfortable. There was nothing but open prairie to be seen, excepting to the westward, where I could see a long line of trees, and in their direction we were going.

I had just taken my last look at Mr. Wilson's caravan, as, wending its way into a cañada or slight depression in the prairie. it disappeared from my sight, when I was startled by loud shouts, and on looking back I saw some of the gauchos, whom I had left at the native hut, now mouuted and galloping towards me.

On arriving at close quarters. they did all they could to frighten my horse by swinging their lassoes over their heads and cantering round me in a gradually lessening circle, my guide basely deserting me and joining in the attack, This novel proceeding had the effect of making my horse plunge violently, and as I only knew very few words of the native language, I could hardly convince them by persuasive argument to desist.

In my attempts to keep my seat in the saddle, I foolishly tried to place my foot and my confidence in the wretched stirrup which suddenly giving way over I went, falling with my head downwards. The shock stunned me for a short time, but I still held firm to the bridle, and so detained the horse from escaping.

In a few minutes I managed to remount, and had no sooner done so, when, closing in on all sides, the gauchos actually "hounded" my horse back to the hut which I had so recently left. The fall had stupefied me to such an extent that I did not properly realise my position until after the natives had pulled me off the horse's back and examined if I had any firearms on my person.

I was the happy owner of a fine new revolver, but unfortunately it was useless to me then, being, along with the most of my baggage, safely stored in Rosario. Satisfying themselves that I was unarmed, the gauchos pushed me into the room which I had previously noticed as answering to no particular description, and, shutting the door, left me "alone in my glory."

After collecting my bewildered faculties as well as I could, I naturally began to think over the matter; but not deriving any satisfaction from its consideration, I took from my pocket a small edition of a book entitled "Easy Conversations in Spanish and English," which I had carried carefully with me since my arrival in the country, and diligently hunted up a few words which I thought applicable to my present situation. The most *apropos* "conversation" I could find, however, was one supposed to be on entering an hotel, which was hardly encouraging in the present state of affairs.

I had observed that the patron, or owner of the hut, with whom Mr. Wilson had settled preliminaries, had taken no active part in my imprisonment; so going to the door, which, having no lock, was easily opened, I shouted, in my easily commanding tone:

"Patron, Patron!"

Presently Mr. Patron came, and I, book in hand for ready reference, commenced a violent protest against his unlooked-for hospitality, and I wound up by insisting to be sent on with a guide immediately. As my oration was mostly English, and the remainder very questionable Spanish, it had the effect of irritating Mr. Patron sufficiently to cause him to shrug his shoulders significantly, and then hurry off, slamming the door behind him.

This proceeding disconcerted me most effectually; and when I began to think of the cunning way in which the gauchos had waited until Mr. Wilson and his caravan were out of sight and hearing before coming after me, my want of firearms, and their knowledge of my possessing gold, also my being an unknown stranger in these parts, and their own restless and irresponsible lives having no particular homes or livelihood, I felt then that my first adventure in this new country might also be my last. I recalled stories I had read and heard of these wild gauchos, their admiration of those of their number who had committed the most murders, their lawlessness and general indifference to bloodshed; and as I caused my blood to run cold with such recollections, I began to feel how helpless I was, and blamed myself severely for not having taken the precautions adopted in these parts of going about well armed.

Looking out of the door, I observed the gauchos, who

Digitized by Google

were standing a few yards off, talking earnestly to each other and constantly glancing towards me.

The sun had now set, and it was quickly growing dark, the twilight being of very short duration in this country. Taking out my case of cigarrettes, I lit one, and began to walk quietly up and down in front of the hut, puffing away as unconcernedly as I possibly could; but each turn I took was a little longer than its predecessor, and the length was always increased towards the side on which lay the wood we had previously started for.

While pretending to be thinking of nothing in particular, but simply enjoying my evening smoke unconscious of danger, I lit my second cigarette, continuing my one-sided promenade, until my "tether" was being stretched to such an extent that I saw the gauchos were beginning to suspect me; so taking an extra long turn, and watching my opportunity, I simply turned tail and fled. Running as fast as I possibly could straight for the distant forest, towards which we had originally set out. I never felt in such a hurry in all my life as I did on that occasion. I knew I had a good start, but, then, the fleet horses of the gauchos! As I anticipated, in the hurry and confusion which my unlooked-for retreat produced, it was a little time before I saw myself pursued, and every moment was precious to me then.

During my schooldays racing had always been my favourite sport, and I made good use of my practice now, especially when, on glancing over my shoulder, I saw some of the gauchos hurrying after me on horseback.

While straining every effort to increase my speed, I could not help constantly giving hasty looks behind; and I noticed that the gauchos were urging on their steeds with whip and spur while lying well forward, their ponchos flying behind with the wind, caused by their swift motion through the air.

I had by this time got very near to the wood, else I could not have seen it, as all daylight had already faded away. I knew that once amongst the trees I could elude my pursuers where the scrub grew thickest, as they would not be able to follow me quickly on horseback; and if they dismounted I was fully equal to them, as, notwithstanding my long run, I still felt in good fettle. Another spurt and I might gain the welcome shelter of the trees in time.

I could now hear the snorting of the horses as they tore after me, as well as the excited cries of their wild masters.

Another few yards and they would have run me down, when, with one great bound, I leapt over an old pile of dead branches, and dashed into a part of the wood where the undergrowth was heavy and the trees grew closely together.

I was now obliged to slacken my pace and thread my way with care through the luxuriant vegetation, trying to keep on in the same direction I had at first taken. I could not now hear the shouts of the baffled gauchos, who had evidently given up the chase, or else were following me silently on foot; but this I thought very unlikely, as they rarely walk far, living, as they do, almost entirely on horseback.

With an easier mind, but trembling excessively, owing to the inevitable reaction which sets in after any great excitement, I now sauntered leisurely along, and was soon surprised and delighted to see some large fires in the wood, round which I trusted to find some rancheros or farmers camping out for the night. I was advancing with a light heart, when, on a nearer inspection, I saw by the glare of the fires large groups seated in circles, seemingly enjoying a feast.

Two or three dogs, having scented a stranger, began to bark furiously, causing some of their masters to rise from their recumbent positions and gaze in my direction. I knew they could not see me, as I stood in a dark recess of the wood; but observing now that the number of men was very great, I suddenly remembered that large bands of Indians made frequent incursions to these parts, stealing cattle and often carrying off the wives and children belonging to the native farmers.

Knowing that the Indians had a deep-rooted hatred to foreigners, rarely allowing them to escape with their lives when captured, I even in my extremity thought of the old adage, "Out of the frying-pan into the fire," and almost wished myself back in the old rancho again.

Fortunately, however, I had evidently not been discovered; so off I set again, although fearing that perhaps while hurrying from the Indians I might rush into the clutches of the gauchos.

After some time, hearing no signs of pursuit, I slackened my pace, feeling unwilling to go very far, not knowing what I might next encounter.

I had not eaten anything all day, and I began to feel very hungry; I felt chilled as well, for it was midwinter, and, although the sun is strong during the day, the nights are often bitterly cold. Being my first experience of a South American forest, and not knowing what class of ravenous beasts inhabited such parts, I felt a sort of unconquerable dread creeping over me when any animal gave vent to its midnight howl, as I could not tell from what kind of brute the cry might emanate.

I laugh when I think of it now, but, in good truth, the situation was decidedly unpleasant, especially to a mere boy, and in a country till then principally known to me through the agency of the school atlas.

Tired out at last with excitment and fatigue, I felt a drowsiness stealing over me too strong to be overcome, and, frightened to trust myself on the ground with all sorts of unknown animals prowling about in search of supper, I scrambled up a tall tree, and, settling myself away high up on two stout forked branches, fell asleep before I had time to properly close my eyes.

I did not slumber long, the cold was too intense, and I woke up frozen so stiff that it was some time before I could move a limb. I saw the danger of being "up a tree" on such a night; so, painfully descending, I eventually got back some heat by hurrying onwards—where I could not tell.

Eventually I found myself on the banks of a river, and, as it seemed shallow, I determined to ford it. As I waded across the cold stream, the stars appeared to twinkle more brightly, and, as I landed, I felt that I was on the right side this time.

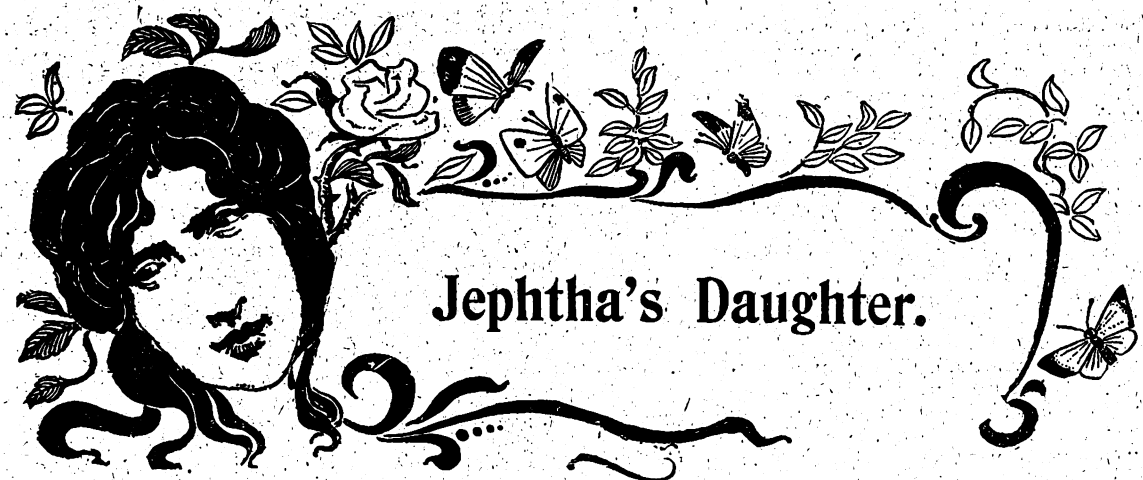
Climbing up the bank, I found myself on a road which quickly led me to some houses, in one of which I saw a light gleaming. I soon was at the door, which I found open, and entering I saw some natives indulging in a game of billiards, notwithstanding the lateness of the hour.

The place was a billiard saloon, and the proprietor coming forward, I showed him a card on which was written the address of the resident in Frayle Muerto, whom I wished to meet. He informed me, to my delight, that I was not only now safe in the village of the Dead Monk, but close to my friend's house.

Before leaving the saloon, however, I explained how hungry I was, and the kind saloon-keeper placed before me all he had in his store, from which I made one of the heartiest meals I ever enjoyed, though it consisted of—raisins and brandy!

J. J. HORSHAM.

Digitized by Google



Jephtha's Daughter.

"WHAT'S up, Jack?" said one policeman to another at the corner of Upper Brook Street, W., on a melting hot afternoon in August.

"Dunno! it's at 45, whatever it is. D'you know who lives there, Charlie?"

"Oh! it's that Yankee spiritual woman, medium they call her; guess its some sort of a meeting she's got on, guinea a time, you know—about our week's wages."

The street was filled with carriages driving up and setting down at No. 45. Fashionable ladies and a few idle men-about-town were the majority of the "outside" visitors, among whom might have been seen a certain Lord Ruthven, who was attracted more by the personal beauty and charm of the mistress of the house than by any belief in or respect for the spiritualistic propaganda.

Inside were assembled clairvoyants, mediums, palmists, telepathists, crystal-gazers, and the flower of the spiritualistic world generally, including Little Strangeways, the middle-aged spinster genius of Spook Rooms, W., and Rapper, the renowned recipient of weekly spirit correspondence, from the celebrated "Rosy." But the star of the occasion was Claudia S. Sennet, of Boston, Mass., U.S.A.

She had burst upon London during the season with the suddenness and brilliancy of a comet.

She was a woman of the typical New England sort, but with the addition of a stately, almost aristocratic manner, which made her wonderfully attractive.

Tall, with dark hair and eyes, and a mouth which seemed to possess a dual character, now expressing sweet womanliness and gentleness of soul, now compressed with a determined snap which boded ill for those in opposition to her. When driving in the "Row" she was the lovely cynosure of all eyes.

Whenever her smart little brougham slowed up by the railings, Lord Ruthven was never very far off, and might almost be counted upon to approach and enter into animated conversation with her.

Legends with regard to her antecedents were rife, but none of them could be relied upon.

She brought Society a new sensation, and with Society's usual disregard of such matters, it ignored rumour for reasons best known to itself. Her house in Upper Brook Street was magnificently furnished, and her means apparently abundant.

The crowd was enormous.

Spiritualistic *séances*, when the medium is beautiful and the surroundings in harmony, are always popular among the "smart" set.

Lord Ruthven seeks the mistress of the house everywhere. At last he discovers her seated behind a wealth of palms in the small conservatory at the head of the staircase.

"Do you know why I have sought you out, Claudia?"

"How can I tell?" she answers him, a little nervously for her.

"Surely you, who can read the thoughts and souls of men, can read my heart. I want your answer to-day. I want to go away from here, knowing that nothing will ever part you from me, that, as my wife, you will be safe and happy for evermore."

"But you know nothing of me, my disposition, my temper," looking up at him with her glorious eyes that seemed to gather in them that beautiful humidity which so touches the hearts of good men and true. "My blood is not of that 'blue' tint which passes current in your social sphere. I am nothing but a daughter of the Republic, a descendant of the old honest Puritan stock."

"I care not what you are! who you are!" replied her lover, "I love you, and to marry you is the dearest wish of my heart. Claudia, say that you love me."

"I do love you, but wait—wait till this *séance* is over, then if you still are of the same mind come to me again."

"The *séance* will—can make no difference to my love. Why wait until then—give me your answer now!"

"Do not press me," she somewhat sadly said, while a shiver appeared to pass over her frame.

With a sudden passionate movement she plucked a white rose from the bosom of her dress, and offered it to him.

"Take it," she said almost mournfully, "and if at the afternoon's end you are prepared to take me, place the rose in your coat; if your mind should change, well throw it away. I shall know."

She rose from her seat, and just saying "The time has arrived," she moved slowly down the stairs towards the dining-room, where her advent was eagerly looked for. She turns her head for a second only at the door, and then he sees her no more.

On her arrival a movement is made by the initiated. Claudia leads the way up the stairs, and the whole assemblage troop after her. At the door of the drawing-

Digitized by Google

room she pauses a moment, and then enters the room which has been artificially darkened.

Everyone suits themselves with regard to seats, and then an expectant silence settles down upon all.

The proceedings commenced with the usual legerdemainic illusions. Bells tinkled, banjos responded to invisible fingers; the audience felt touches from presumably spirit hands, and the handwriting of deceased relatives and friends was seen on the wall.

Little Strangeways said, audibly, that someone had kissed her. Rapper, quite as audibly, said it was not possible, even in the spirit world. When the raps and inquiries of the lesser lights were ended Claudia spoke.

Her clear, musical voice thrilled through the room.

"Is the spirit of Jephtha S. Sennett present?"

Dead silence followed the question.

There was a sound as of a man awakened from a deep sleep.

"I am here," came in sepulchral tones, but with a pronounced American accent.

"In what relation do you stand to me?" said Claudia passionlessly.

"I am your father," was the reply.

"Give me your opinion from the spirit world of these present proceedings," continued Claudia.

The spirit of Jephtha heaved a deep sigh.

"They are a fraud from beginning to end," said the spirit. "For years you and I have been living upon the credulity of the public. This place with all its mechanical paraphernalia has been specially prepared for hoodwinking paying visitors. Fools patronise us, fools are befooled by us, and our sole aim has been to pander to their folly."

As if his last words were a signal, the lights flashed up, and the room became flooded with light.

It revealed, first the spell-bound audience, then the deadly-pale face of Claudia. It showed also the towering form of a grey-haired man, who stood grasping with both hands the edge of a large table. He had the appearance of one awakening from a cataleptic trance. Suddenly he seemed to divine the situation. He glared savagely at his daughter.

"You she-devil!" he cried hoarsely. "You have mesmerised me! You have caused me to betray our secret; you have sold us both!"

She did not answer. She looked searchingly towards where Lord Ruthven stood by the door.

The rose was not in his coat!

Claudia continued to gaze in his direction with an almost despairing look in her eyes, as if she half hoped that he would uplift the sign. But he did not even look at her.

With a quick, impulsive gesture he left the room, his voice immediately afterwards being heard at the house door calling for a hansom.

"Oh, Heavens!" she moaned piteously, "he might have saved me!—but he has deserted me—and I loved him!"

* * * * *

The next day the legend "To Let" might have been read on a board outside the house, No. 45 Upper Brook Street.

During the winter Society, enjoying its *dolce far niente* on the Riviera, occasionally heard of a certain Jephtha S. Sennett, who kept a select and luxurious private gambling-house in the neighbourhood of Nice.

His beautiful decoy was a woman of peculiar magnetic power, known to the *habitués* as Claudia.

RALPH ENDERBY.

"Have You Got That Ten-Pound Note?"

SIX TEN-POUND NOTES CLAIMED.

BELOW we give short accounts of the six men who, up to the present, have been lucky enough to secure the *Pearson's Weekly* £10 notes.

Mr. John Lotan, 22 St. Anne's Chambers, Ludgate Hill, London, E.C.—winner of £10 No. 33—is a lavatory attendant at Ludgate Hill Station. One morning, while he was reading a copy of *Pearson's Weekly*, a gentleman walked in, and whi e washing was asked by Mr. Lotan: "Have you got that £10 note?" and to his astonishment a sealed envelope, No. 33, was produced and handed to him.

Inspector Charles Lee, 1 Agnes Terrace, St. Mary's Avenue, Southend—winner of £10 No. 27—is Cliffs-Inspector and Superintendent of Gardens to the Southend Corporation. One night he was walking near the Admiralty Flagstaff, when, after asking several men the well-known question, he happened to meet with the right one, the natural consequence being that he received the envelope containing the equivalent to £10.

Mr. Harry Edward Baker, 4 Beaconsfield Road, Magdalen Road, Norwich—winner of £10 No. 1—is an elementary school teacher at Norwich. Having seen in a local paper that a Ten-Pound man was expected at Norwich, he kept on the look-out for the mysterious stranger. One afternoon he was in the Market place, and noticed there a middle-aged man whom he thought was a likely sort of person to be intrusted with the precious missive. He followed the stranger up, and at first opportunity entered into conversation with him, later on showing him the front page of *Pearson's Weekly*, and asking if he had the £10, whereupon a Sealed Envelope was put into his hand.

Mr. Robert Gautier, 132 Clarence Road, Wimbledon—winner of £10 No. 36—is in the employ of a photographic material dealer in the West-end of London. He was calling on the manager of a large firm one day, and the matter of the £10 Scheme happened to be brought up. During the conversation Mr. Gautier (who has been a regular reader of *Pearson's Weekly* for some years) took a copy of the paper from his pocket, and, showing the front page to the man to whom he was talking, said, "Have *you* got that £10 note?" and, to his surprise, the gentleman produced one of the Sealed Envelopes.

Mr. W. W. Tonkin, 5 Grove Road, Brixton—winner of £10 No. 30—was at a friend's house spending the evening, when the conversation turned on *Pearson's Weekly* £10 Scheme. Mr. Tonkin, who was very enthusiastic over the scheme and made the most of his opportunities, showed the front page of *Pearson's Weekly* to each person present, and was astonished when, after he had nearly gone the round of the company assembled, he found himself the possessor of one of the coveted envelopes.

Mr. Charles Wright, 30 Oxford Gardens, North Kensington—winner of £10 No. 12—was in the smoking-room of the Crown Hotel, Southampton, and jokingly asked a stranger for the £10 as mentioned in *Pearson's Weekly*, which he handed the stranger to read of the scheme. His astonishment was great when the £10 letter was handed to him. The landlord was close on Mr. Wright's track, and only missed the coveted envelope by a short lead. Mr. Wright is a member of the choir at the Chapel Royal, Savoy.

There are now forty other Ten-Pounders walking about the country, and all you have to do is to show the right person a copy of the current number of *Pearson's Weekly* and the £10 is yours.

Digitized by Google

Mr. Bowser's Tribulations.

XXIV.—He Sets Out to Do a Little Reforming.

WHEN Mr. Bowser got up the other morning, there was an uncertain look in his eyes—that is, Mrs. Bowser was not certain whether he was going up street to blow up the butcher or down street to blow up the tailor. He was moody and silent during breakfast, and as he made no move to leave the house after the meal Mrs. Bowser kindly inquired if he wasn't feeling well.

"I'm feeling well enough," he replied, "but I shall remain at home this morning. There are several little things I want to look into and put right, and one of them is at the door now."

"Do you mean that costermonger?"

"That's exactly what I do mean. I am going to find out whether a man with an old donkey and a wobbly cart has any legal right to stop in front of my house and shout and yell and shriek and howl and bawl and roar like that. Just listen to him! By the living jingo, but it's no wonder that we've had five deaths in this street within the last two weeks!"

"But you—you won't go and say anything to him!"

"Won't I!" exclaimed Mr. Bowser as he clapped on his hat and opened the door and bustled down the steps, while the family cat and Mrs. Bowser looked after him.

"Plums! Cucumbers! Bananas!" yelled the man at the top of his voice and with a wave of his hand and a nod of his head toward every house in the terrace.

"Look here, you howling idiot," began Mr. Bowser as he walked up to him, "I want to know who gave you the legal right to murder folks with your voice?"

"D'ye mean my shoutin'?" asked the man in considerable astonishment.

"Of course I do! I want to know if the law gives you the right to whoop and yell and bellow and shriek and groan in order to call attention to the pig's food in your cart. If it does, I'll see that it's changed. If it doesn't, I want you to go."

"I say, old man," replied the costermonger with a leer, "you must have fallen out of bed this mornin'. I've been sellin' wegetables for five years, and you are the first person I've met who wasn't charmed with my woice. Better tie a wet towel round your head and go to bed ag'in!"

"Don't give me any impudence!" shouted Mr. Bowser. "You may be licensed to cart vegetables and fruits round, but are you licensed to set a thousand people's nerves on edge by your beastly howling?"

"I'm licensed to do anything I want to, old kicker," replied the man, "and if you want to make a fuss about it come on. You look one of the sort who'd take the bread out of a poor man's mouth, but if you try it on me I'll make you sorry!"

A crowd of children and pedestrians began to gather, and, realising that he would have the worst of it, Mr. Bowser walked into the house. The costermonger yelled "Cucumbers!" after him, and the children applauded, and Mrs. Bowser said:

"Don't you see you can't do anything with such men as that? They come along here from daylight to dark, and everyone yells just like this man."

"But it's against the law, and I know it is!" shouted Mr. Bowser as he struck the wall with his fist.

"I want to know who gave you the legal right to murder folks with your voice?"

Digitized by Google

"Well, there's lots of things against the law, but you can't change 'em. If the police permit these costermongers to yell and scream, they won't stop their noise for anything you say."

"Then I'll break some one's neck!"

Mr. Bowser went out and sat down on the front steps. The costermonger grinned at him and moved on, but it was scarcely a minute before an old clothes man turned the corner and set up his yell.

He had yelled about sixteen times before he reached the Bowsers' gate, and there he stopped and looked at the man on the steps and screamed out in agonized tones:

"Old clo'! Old clo'! Any old clo' to sell!"

"Move on, you scoundrel!" shouted Mr. Bowser as he rose up.

"Old clo'! Old clo'! I buy old clo' for cash!"

"By the beard of Plato, but I'll have your life if you don't move on!" exclaimed Bowser as he clattered down the steps, with a tragedy in either eye.

The old clothes man ran across the street, but no farther, and from his new position he shrieked and shouted and yelled until he had collected a crowd of half a hundred people and Mr. Bowser had been forced into the house.

"You can see you can't do anything," said Mrs. Bowser.

"But I will do something!" he hotly replied. "Are all the ordinances of this city made for the benefit of such howling demons as that? Has a tax-payer and and property owner no rights? If there are no laws to protect me, then I'll protect myself!"

Out he went again, and he was just in time to encounter a man, who had turned in from a side street, yelling:

He was seized and banged against the fence.

"Knives to grind-o! Knives to grind-o! Bring out your knives to grind-o!"

Mr. Bowser walked down to the gate. He looked like a dangerous man, but the knife-grinder was willing to take chances if he could make a few coppers. He halted his grinder on wheels and uttered his yell of "Grind-o!" as if Mr. Bowser were forty yards away.

He was still hanging on the "o" when he was seized and banged against the fence, and a voice rang in his ears:

"You infernal nuisance, shut up, or I'll break your neck!"

The grinder shut up. He looked into Mr. Bowser's eyes and became afraid. However, as he was released after a minute and told to move on his courage returned and he hadn't got more than ten feet away before he turned and said:

"You knock me and bang me, and I take the law on you!"

Mrs. Bowser opened the door and tried to argue the matter with Mr. Bowser, but he declared he'd wet his hands in the lifeblood of the next nuisance who came along.

He didn't have over ten minutes to wait. A hokey-pokey vendor, an umbrella mender, and a tinker suddenly appeared in company, and all were yelling to drown the notes of the band at the corner.

Mr. Bowser rose up like a bull about to make his last charge, and he was at the gate as they halted.

"Umbrellas t' mend! Mend your pans! Hokey-pokey!" shouted the three at him as they waved their arms about.

Mrs. Bowser threw up the window to call out, but she was too late. Mr. Bowser had started. He upset hokey-pokey cart and hokey-pokey dealer, he filled the air with old umbrellas and tinker tools, and it was Spion Kop over again, with Mr. Bowser in place of the Boers.

He met the enemy, and they were his, and in five minutes they were in possession of the field of battle. He was cheered by the crowd which gathered, and a dozen over-enthusiastic taxpayers insisted on a speech. A man had arisen who had taken up the cudgel for reform, and they wanted to know his policy towards fireworks, footballs, and spinning tops.

Mr. Bowser backed up against the gate and might have given them an outline, but before he could collect his oratory a fat policeman burst through the crowd and seized him and said:

"You old ruffian! But you want to get up a riot and disturb half the town, do you? Come along with me!"

Mr. Bowser was walked to the police-court and left in the cell till the magistrate was ready to hear his case and say:

"You may be a citizen and a taxpayer and a reformist, but you have no right to break loose and take the law into your own hands. I fine you five pounds, sir, and if you are brought here before me again on the same charge I shall feel it my duty to put you where you can do no more harm for the next six months!"

"Didn't I tell you how it would end?" asked Mrs Bowser when he got home.

But he said no word in reply. He realised that if he even opened his mouth he would drop dead.

M. QUAD.

Next Week: **He Turns to Root Beer as a Family Tonic.**

Digitized by Google

A Written Proposal.

Mrs. Bland had been looking for a letter from her daughter, but now that it had come she was not pleased at its contents.

Amy had accepted the invitation of a former schoolmate to spend the summer holidays at her home in Sussex, and she had been there nearly five weeks.

Mrs. Bland had urged her daughter to accept the invit tion, as it would give Amy a splendid chance of picking up strength for the winter at comparatively little cost; and as they were none too well off, and the girl could not have afforded more than a fortnight's stay in the country on her own account, the offer was not to be lightly refused.

Amy had protested that her happiness would be incomplete as her mother was not with her; they usually spent the vacations together, and found great happiness in these between-term rests even although they went no farther from their home than the nearest parks.

But Mrs. Bland had over-ruled the objection. Amy was a teacher in a private school and was studying hard that she might be able to take up a lucrative appointment; she needed a complete change and must not neglect this oppportunity of obtaining it.

The Blands had never been well off, but things had gone happily and smoothly until Mr. Bland died. He left his widow a small income, barely enough to keep her and her daughter, and Amy had determined to make use of the beginnings of a good education in order to earn a little and continue her studies. The post of teacher enabled her to do this.

There had always been the fullest confidence between mother and daughter. Mrs. Bland, now forty-one, retained much of her freshness and general youthfulness; she believed in being a rea companion to her daughter, able to take part in her amusements and pleasures, and even assist her to some extent in her studies.

The letter from her daughter, which she now held in her hand, was disquieting inasmuch as it told the mother that for the first time she was not entirely in the confidence of her daughter.

"I suppose it must be so," sighed Mrs. Bland. "Amy is twenty, and I must expect her to be falling in love, and naturally she will not tell me all about it. A mother must always be prepared to have someone else occupy the most promment place in her daughter's heart. Still, it is not entirely that which worries me."

She read the letter again and the serious look on her countenance became more intense.

"It may seem foolish—selfish, perhaps—of me, but I feel that I want to watch over her choice. I do not wish to see her suffer from the heartache, as I did. Girls sometimes bestow their affections on one who is unworthy; and sometimes they fall in love with a man who is only playing with them. Girls are not the only ones who flirt and jilt. True, my experience did not come under either of those heads; it was a foolish lover's quarrel. I was fortunate indeed in my second venture."

Mrs Bland's thoughts had drifted from her daughter to herself. She pulled herself up and glanced at the letter again.

"She hints at a love affair, but she is evidently distressed in a way which cannot be attributed to the state of being in love. There is something else which I cannot fathom, and that makes me fear for her peace of mind. Oh, dear, I wish I had not allowed her to go, after all! If I could only go to her and watch for myself!"

As Mrs. Bland laid the letter on the table her eyes fell on some words written on the top corner of the first page, close to the address, which she had not noticed; they were to the effect that the hostess had at that moment told Amy that that she intended to invite Mrs. Bland to spend the last fortnight of the holiday with them.

Then Mrs. Bland remembered that another letter had arrrived at the same time; it proved to be the invitation mentioned by Amy.

"This is indeed a providential piece of good fortune!" was the thankful exclamation of Mrs. Bland. "Now I may be able to save my dear girl from a possible heartache, or prevent it from becoming too serious."

On that same morning a conversation was taking place between Amy and her friend Blanche Winford in the old Manor House, which was the home of the latter.

"It is exceedingly kind and thoughtful of Mrs. Winford and you to extend an invitation to my mother," said Amy gratefully. "I admit now that it was the one drawback to the full enjoyment to my stay here that mamma was alone at home."

"My dear Amy," said Blanche in her airy manner, "I shall be very pleased to see your mother here, if only to prevent you from monopolising the attentions of the gentlemen."

"Oh, Blanche!" protested Amy, her cheeks flushing and a worried look appearing in her eyes.

Blanche laughed merrily.

"Well," she said with an attempt at seriousness, "it is a fact that Mr. Barton and Mr. Sutherst are both showing you marked attention, and there is only another gentleman in our small party. I confidently anticipate that you will have two prop sals before the end of your stay, if your mother's presence does not alter the condition of things."

Amy flushed a deeper red, and then, to her friend's amazement, covered her face with her hands and began to cry. Blanche's arms were round her friend in an instant, and the light-hearted girl was urging the other to dry her tears and confide her troubles to a sympathetic friend.

"I am in great trouble, Blanche," explained Amy. "I believe—I think—that Mr. Barton is in love—that is, I mean——"

"I know," returned the matter-of-fact Blanche. "The plain truth is that he is in love with you and you are in love with him. Oh, well,"—Amy made a feeble protest

Digitized by Google

against the last statement—"you could soon fall in love with him; let us leave it at that. And the same remark applies to Mr. Sutherst, although he is in the neighbourhood of forty. And you don't know what to do?"

Amy opened her lips to reply, but said nothing.

"Now, my dear, I tell you plainly that Mr. Barton is a young man with very poor prospects, and if you marry him you will have a struggle all through life, about as hard as you have at present. I am talking sense, and you will credit me with no desire to hurt your feelings. I may be worldly, but common sense and so called worldliness generally go together. Now, if you marry Sutherst, you will have as good and kind and noble a man as you could wish to have for a husband, you will have money and be able to give your mother an easier time, and you will make the man and yourself happy, for I am convinced that Mr. Sutherst is one of the few men who love with all their heart and only love once. What does the difference in age matter?"

Amy had no time to reply, for Mrs. Winford entered; and while Blanche was talking with her mother, she ran upstairs to bathe her eyes.

Blanche's words had struck home. When Amy, a girl of fifteen, was sitting by the bed-side of her dying father, he had called his "little girl" and had asked her to do her best when she grew up for the dear mother whom they both loved so well; and Amy, with enthusiasm born of love and grief had promised. And now it devolved upon her to act in accordance with that promise; she had never forseen such a contingency, and she was sorely perplexed.

If she followed the dictates of her own heart, she would throw in her lot with the younger man; he was a manly young fellow, and she believed that they could together carve out a fortune for themselves. She did not share her friend's worldly views. On the other hand, she fully indorsed all that Blanche had said about Sutherst; she felt that she might learn to love a man such as he. And her mother's future would be assured.

The difference in the manner of the two men towards her was marked. Barton was more of the lover, while Sutherst always spoke to her and treated her in a way that was almost fatherly. The manner of the younger man was more calculated to attract the girl, yet she was bound to admit that she felt herself drawn towards the older. She longed for her mother to come, vaguely hoping that her presence would assist her in cutting the knot.

But by the time, two days later, that Mrs. Bland arrived, the girl had made up her mind to accept Sutherst if he should, as Blanche hinted, make a proposal. The sight of her mother tended to strengthen her determination; her promise to her father, and the lowly circumstances in which they lived, occurred to her mind with greater force and settled the problem that had worried her two days before.

Amy introduced her mother to young Barton, but she found that Mr. Sutherst and Mrs. Bland had met in the drawing-room and had "introduced themselves."

"Dear mamma," murmured Amy to hers lf, "I have never had a secret from her, and I will tell her about Mr. Sutherst—but I will not mention Mr. Barton, or my perplexity. After all, I am sure that I can love Mr. Sutherst!"

It was an illogical assertion to say that she had never had a secret from her mother, and in the same breath, to declare that she would not tell about Mr. Barton, and her short monologue ended with a sigh.

But the confession did not come till the evening of the following day, and then Amy made it in the privacy of her mother's bed-room before she retired. When she had concluded, the contrast between the faces of the two women was very striking; that of the daughter was red hot, whereas that of the mother was deathly pale and cold.

"My dear child," said the mother gravely, after a pause, "are you sure that you are not making a mistake? It may be that Mr. Sutherst is merely showing the interest of an older man in a young woman. He has probably heard something of your history and admires you for your determination to make the most of your ability; and—though perhaps I ought not to say it—you are a young woman who would command the respect and admiration of Mr. Sutherst's age and character."

Human nature is a strange thing; although Amy felt that there might be a great deal of truth in her mother's remark, and although that remark coincided with her own wishes, yet she rebelled against the assertion and defended her opinion as stoutly as if she hoped and believed with all her soul that it was the right one.

"No, mamma, dear!" she replied in a very decided tone. "I am convinced that Mr. Sutherst is in love with me. If he makes a proposal I shall accept him."

"And if not?" asked her mother, making a great effort to conceal the trouble that was agitating her.

Amy did not know how to reply; there was a conflict of emotions now raging in her heart, a conflict called into existence by these words. Sutherst or Barton?

Her very soul seemed to be rent by the opposite feelings; she turned pale and then red, and finally buried her face in her mother's lap as she had done many times before in the old days. Her mother, not understanding the cause of her silence, looked down upon the brown hair with quivering lips and eyes suspiciously moist.

"I do not wish to make you unhappy, Amy," she said tenderly, stroking the head that lay in her lap, "but I wish to spare you a heartache. Do not allow yourself to be mistaken; do not be carried away by girlish emotions. I have watched Mr. Sutherst and—and I do not share your opinion."

Amy did not reply. If Mr. Sutherst was not in love with her, all her visions of being able to release her mother from poverty would vanish. By a strange perversity of nature, her feelings seemed to undergo a change, her whole being cried out for the love of Mr. Sutherst and she could scarcely endure the thought that she had been mistaken.

No more was said that evening. Both lay awake until early morning; the mother could imagine the feelings of the daughter, but the daughter could not by any chance have divined the thoughts that were passing through the brain of the mother—and Amy would have been intensely surprised had she been able to do so.

On the following morning Mrs. Bland took occasion to remind her daughter of the warning given over night; it was a brief, motherly sentence, for Mrs. Bland showed no desire to talk again on the subject at any length. After that the matter dropped.

Mr. Sutherst's attentions did not relax with the appearance of Mrs. Bland at the Manor House; he showed the same interest in Amy, and the only difference was that he included Mrs. Bland in any proposition for an excursion or a walk.

Amy regarded this as a distinctly honourable course of action and, contrary to what might have been expected, was glad that her mother was with them. She will now see exactly how matters stand, was the thought that crossed the girl's mind.

Digitized by Google

Amy rather dreaded Blanche's teasing, but that light-hearted young lady remained mute on the all-important subject. Amy caught her friend looking at the trio with a peculiar glance on more than one occasion, but she did not mind the look so long as Blanche's tongue did not come into action.

Ten days passed away very pleasantly; scarcely one of them went by without Mr. Sutherst accompanying Mrs. Bland and her daughter for an hour or two, and on three of those days young Barton was also invited to become one of the little group.

All the other guests had departed; both gentlemen had eagerly accepted an invitation to extend their stay. That invitation proved that Mrs. Winford saw more than many people do.

Blanche did not seem to mind being left out of the party; when asked to go with them, she made an excuse that she had to help her mother, and now and then she carried off young Barton so that the other three might be alone—rather to that young gentleman's disgust, it must be admitted.

It was the day before that on which the four guests were to depart, and no proposal had come from Mr. Sutherst. Amy's good spirits began to flag. She asked herself whether she really cared, and a something within her replied very boldly, "No!" But she crowded down that feeling and tried to believe that she did care very much.

"Here is a letter for you from Mr. Sutherst, Amy," said Blanche, entering her friend's room that evening. "I congratulate you, my dear! I'm sure it is a proposal. The poor man did not care to speak, I suppose, so he begged me to deliver this personally and keep the matter a profound secret."

And imprinting a kiss on Amy's cheek, she vanished.

"Oh, mamma, he has written me a letter of proposal!" cried Amy, entering her mother's room. "Mr. Sutherst, I mean."

"Impossible!"

"I will let you read the letter, mother dear," replied Amy, feeling a little hurt at her mother's tone. "That will convince you. It's—it's—not exactly what I should have thought. It is—well, I don't understand all the references. He speaks as if he had known me for years—as if he had loved me for years. Still, there is no doubt that he is really and truly in love."

Mrs. Bland's hands trembled so violently that she could scarcely take the letter, and with her left hand she had to hold the back of a chair for support. She sat down and read the letter without a word, read it eagerly, greedily. Then she drew her daughter to her in the old manner and kissed her.

"Amy, was this letter really addressed to you?"

"It was 'Amy Bland' on the envelope, and Blanche brought it to me. You see, he begins 'My dear Amy.'"

There was a pause; the mother seemed to be making an effort to say something, but all she said in the end was:

"Let us find the envelope."

They found it in Amy's room. Mrs. Bland looked at it, then handed it to her daughter and pointed to the word "Mrs." before the name "Amy Bland."

The girl stared at it, then at her mother; her eyes wandered from one to the other in amazement.

"What does it mean?" she gasped.

"It means that the letter is addressed to me," replied Mrs. Bland tenderly. "That explains the references which you do not understand. Mr. Sutherst and I were sweethearts many years ago; we quarrelled. I married, and was happy in my choice; he never married, but has loved me ever since. We recognised each other as soon as we met, although so many years have passed. But I did not anticipate this proposal. I warned you, because I felt that Mr. Sutherst's attention was fatherly, not loverly. My poor Amy!"

But Mrs. Bland's sympathy was not required. It took Amy some minutes to understand the position, but when she realised that her mother would have a protector and wealth in her old age without any sacrifice on her (Amy's) part, a great load seemed to fall from her heart and scale to drop from her eyes.

And then she told her mother just how she had felt, and that she had made up her mind to marry Sutherst in order to help her mother.

"If he asked me," she concluded, "but he didn't! So that makes it much better for Mr. Barton—if he likes to take the chance!"

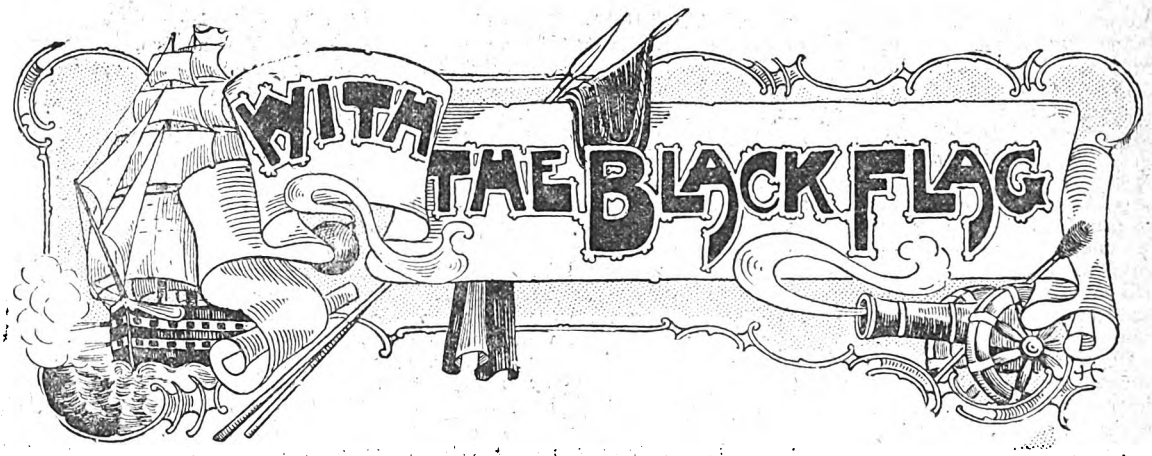
Barton did not see the chance just then, but he became aware of it later and took it.

Blanche never ventures to tease her friend about any of the circumstances of the holiday at the Manor House. She began to do so soon after Amy's engagement to Barton, but Amy silenced her by holding up a blank envelope, and asking: "Miss or Mrs.?"

"What a dolt I was to make the mistake!" admitted Blanche.

GEORGE KNIGHT.

Digitized by Google



A ROMANCE OF LAND AND SEA.

By William Westall.

Author of "With the Red Eagle," "The Phantom City," "Nigel Fortescue," etc., etc.

PRINCIPAL CHARACTERS.

Major Wyvenhoe, commander of an expedition which went out from England to help the Venezuelans in their struggle for liberty. He is intrusted with dispatches for delivery to Bolivar, the Supreme Chief.

Captain Cautley, who is in charge of the ship which took the expedition out.

John Ready, the servant of Wyvenhoe.

General Arismendez, ex-Governor of Pampatar and Vice-President of the Venezuelan Republic. He received Wyvenhoe and Cautley on their arrival in Venezuela.

Don Iago Santleo, and Antonio Bonanza, two Venezuelans who accompany Wyvenhoe when he takes the dispatches to Bolivar.

CHAPTER XIII.

Bonanza's Story.

Don Iago's explanation made rather for darkness than light. While whetting my curiosity as to his antecedents it deepened the mystery in which he had shrouded himself from the beginning of our acquaintance.

He had seen the saying "all's well that ends well" in a book, presumably a Spanish book, and been told its meaning. Therefore he must know, or have known, somebody who knew English and had taught him to pronounce this phrase faultlessly, a phrase presenting peculiar difficulties to one conversant only with Spanish, which is spoken as it is spelt and possesses neither a "w" or the sound of "th."

For that he should have picked it up casually and hit upon the right pronunciation by chance was of course out of the question. He could only have acquired the proficiency which so much surprised me by considerable practice and hearing the words frequently repeated.

In short, Santleo must have been acquainted with an English speaking person, yet he protested that I was the only Englishman he had ever known, and it was almost inconceivable that there should be any aborigine or Spanish Creole on the western llanos or among the remoter mountains of Venezuela able to speak the language of Shakespeare with an irreproachable accent.

On the other hand, if he knew English why should he deny it, and if he did not want me to suspect that he knew it why had he said "All's well that ends well"? True, it might be an inadvertence. I inferred from his manner that it was—a supposition, however, that made the matter all the more bewildering, for no one quotes inadvertently in a language with which he is not tolerably familiar.

Moreover, though I had not known Don Iago long, we had been thrown much together and talked about many things, yet albeit I had spoken freely of myself and my past life, he had told me hardly aught of himself and nothing of his people or his home, which seemed all the more strange as he was of a frank and joyous nature, brave and true, and unless I was greatly mistaken had conceived as warm a regard for me as I had conceived for him. Not at all the sort of man to practise reserve out of suspicion or mistrust, or in pursuance of some deep laid design, I could only conclude that it was imposed on him from without, that he acted in obedience to some other will than his own, or possibly from a sense of duty.

Be that as it might Santleo had undoubtedly an imperative motive for his reticence, yet despite my ever growing curiosity on the subject I had no intention either of trying to surprise his secret or soliciting a confidence which he did not think fit to impart spontaneously. I should have to remain in the dark until time or circumstances unsealed his lips or otherwise unveiled the mystery.

These were my thoughts as I acted on my compadre's advice by changing my wet clothes for dry ones.

In our haste to escape from our pursuers we had boarded the nearest flechera, which happened to be the largest, and Bonanza's kit was in the other. But he was quite equal to the occasion. Doffing all his things he laid them in the bows to dry, covering himself meanwhile with a cobija, otherwise poncho capote, a large double blanket or rug, with a slit in the middle for the head, an indispensable necessity of South American travel.

Then he lighted a cigar, and looking at us with a highly amused expression broke into a laugh which lasted some time.

"Good, was not it? The best thing I've known for a long while," he exclaims at length, then laughs again.

"Since you say so I suppose it was," quoth I, "though 'pon my word I don't see where the fun came in. We were several times within an ace of being killed, and only escaped by the skin of our teeth. If you call that the best thing you have known for a long while I should like to know what is the worst."

"I was not thinking of our fight with the Godos, though it was so pleasantly exciting. I was thinking of that old traitor of an Alcalde taking me for Don Simon. That he should take you two, with your blue eyes, fair skins, and

Digitized by Google

light hair, for Englishmen was natural. Nobody would take you for aught else, though Don Iago is a Creole. But to imagine I was the Supreme Chief! Ah! ah!"

"You feel flattered, I suppose?"

"Flattered? Did you ever see Bolivar?"

"No, that is a pleasure to come."

"Wait till you see him and then say whether you would feel flattered if you were taken for him. Look at me." Bonanza, who was a tall fellow and as vain as a peacock stretched himself to his full height. "Regard my legs" (tucking up his cobija). "Well, the Supreme Chief is quite little; his legs are like carrots, and when he has his boots on look for all the world like two candles in big sticks, while as for his face and mine—but wait till you see him. All the same"—here Bonanza became serious—"I would willingly exchange my physical advantages for his brains and tongue. There is not his equal in Venezuela for swaying a popular assembly, cajoling a man, or, though I say it myself, winning his way to the heart of a pretty woman."

"And is that a sort of thing to which Don Simon is given?"

"Well, they say that if he were as successful in war as he is in love he would never lose a battle, and he loses more than he wins."

"You had better not say that to anybody else, though, for if it came to his ears you would lose his favour, and I have heard that Bolivar never forgives," observed Don Iago.

"I have lost his favour already, else had I been a colonel by this time."

"How was that?"

"In this way. I was going down the Orinoco in a flechera with Don Simon and Colonel Hartado, a great favourite of his and an arrant boaster. He was always talking about himself and his exploits, protested that he cared neither for alligators nor Godos, and that he would swim through a river full of them without either hesitation or fear. Shortly afterwards the Chief wanted to land at a village and was put ashore in a canoe rowed by two Indians.

"Presently Hartado wanted to go also, and thinking it was a fine chance of putting his courage to the test, I had an understanding with the Indians, to whom I gave a little present, with the result that the canoe was accidentally capsized in a place where the river swarmed with caymanas (alligators).

"*Madre de Dios!* How Hartado yelled and swam. I never saw a man go through the water so fast in my life, and he was so frightened that when he landed he ran over so far on his hands and knees before he dared to get up and look behind him. As ill luck would have it, however, Bolivar saw it all and questioned the Indians, who let the cat out of the bag. He was angry and I got a good rating. What is worse, he has never forgiven me, and I shall never be promoted—by him."

"I am not surprised at Bolivar being angry. It was a very dangerous joke and might have cost both the colonel and the Indians their lives."

"Not at all. They righted the canoe in an instant, only Hartado was too scared to tarry. The danger was in his swimming ashore."

"What did he say?"

"Only that he yelled to frighten the caymanas, not out of fear. He was too mad to talk much."

"He was rightly served. But do you think you were wise in making an enemy of a man who has the Chief's ear?"

"I am not wise nor ever shall be. But I think I am rather clever in getting out of scrapes. Some of my friends are good enough to say that I have as many lives as a cat."

"And you would need to have considering the recklessness of your character and the nature of your country," I said laughing. "The rivers teem with alligators, caribe fish, and tembladores, the woods with snakes, tigers, scorpions, ticks, jiggers, and other insect abominations that suck your blood and spoil your rest. Then you have pirates, robbers, and a devastating war with enemies who give no quarter."

"So altogether you think Venezuela a good country to live out of," observed Santleo.

"I was speaking more in jest than in earnest. But if you put it in that way I should say that people who value their lives and study their comfort might, just now at least, find countries more to their taste."

"May I venture to ask you a question?"

"By all means. Ask away."

"Why, considering its present condition and other disadvantages, which I fully admit, did you come to Venezuela?"

"For several reasons. I am of a restless disposition and had nothing to do at home. I delight in adventure, sport, and active service, all of which I hoped to find here and have found; also I wanted to lend a hand in freeing South America from the yoke of Spain. For the rest, I don't set any great store by my life, and though I like comfort I can cheerfully dispense with it when needs must. Are you answered?"

"Perfectly, and I thank you for answering so frankly a question which I had no right to ask."

"Where no offence is meant none ought to be taken, and I hope you will not take it amiss if, having answered your question, I inquire why you left your native mountains, where, I suppose, peace reigns, to participate in this cruel war?"

"Yes, there is peace up there, and it is not likely to be disturbed. I quitted my native mountains in order to see something of the world and fight the Spaniards, though, as you say, it is a cruel war, and conducted in a way and a spirit which I little expected."

"If seeing the world be your object you should go further afield than Venezuela. If I keep my head on my shoulders and my throat from being cut for a twelvemonth I shall return to England after I have seen something of Central and North America and had a run through the United States. Why not come with me?"

Don Iago's eyes glistened and his manly face beamed with delight.

Bonanza lighted up a cigar, and broke into a laugh.

Digitized by Google

"Yonder are the lights of San Fernando," he said pointing westward.

"If I could, if I would," he exclaimed. "To see England is the wish nearest my heart, and I would give—but no, it is impossible. I should have—I mean that I cannot, without good cause, leave Venezuela until the Spaniards are out of it."

"But the good cause arising you would accept my invitation?"

"Not even then, Señor Wyvenhoe, unless—but let us say no more about it. There is not greater folly than indulging in hopes that can never be realised. Rather let us talk about your ancestor who voyaged in these parts so long ago. Guyana, you say, he called them. I wonder what he thought of it and whether he was ever hereabouts."

Nothing I had told Santleo, not even my account of London and Paris, so interested him as the story of Gilbert Wyvenhoe's adventures to which he often recurred.

"I doubt whether he got so high as this, but the names in his narratives are so queerly spelt that I cannot be sure," I answered. "How he liked the country he does not in so many words (of which he was sparing) say. But he was uncommonly glad to get home again."

"It was strange he heard nothing more of his companions."

"Considering the time and the circumstances it would have been strange if he had heard."

"Where did they part?"

"At an Indian village in a great forest."

"That does not tell us much. The others may have gone on and found Manoah."

"Which, seeing there is no such place, would be stranger still."

"How know you there is no such place, Señor Wyvenhoe? Have your travels in this continent been so extensive that you know every corner of it?"

"I bow to your correction, my dear compadre. I ought to have said that I don't believe in the existence of El Dorado. A mighty city built of silver and gold and inhabited by a race of civilised aborigines belongs to the region of phantasy, not of fact."

"I daresay. All the same they might have lighted on some happy valley, a place where they could rest and be thankful and end their days in peace."

"Possibly, but I don't think so. I have always felt persuaded that these poor wanderers perished miserably, and now that I have seen the country for myself I feel sure of it."

Here Bonanza, who was a poor listener and could never hold his tongue for five consecutive minutes, broke in:

"You have the advantage over me in the matter of travel outside of South America, Señor Wyvenhoe, but I have travelled more in Venezuela than you have, and it is a better country than you think, though just now under a cloud. As yet you have seen the merest fringe of it. I have been told that there is no land either in the new world or the old which is posses-ed of a greater variety of climate, scenery, and sport.

"Wait till you have chased wild bulls and hunted tigers on the llanos; wait till you have ridden a charge with General Paez and his wild cavalry of the plains, seen the Andes, and tasted the delights of Caraccas, and you will admit that there are few finer countries than this, and no climate so delightful as that of our tierra templada. But discussion is not my *forte* and serious talk bores me. Let us have something to eat, fighting Godos and running away is appetising work."

Wherever else he might have been Bonanza was excellent company. Always in high spirits his incessant chatter, though occasionally tiresome, served to beguile the tedium of the way, and his jokes gave us many a hearty laugh.

Our recent experience had made us very cautious and very vigilant. Our weapons were always ready, we kept in the middle of the river, though there the current was strongest, landed always on the right bank, choosing our camping places with great circumspection, setting always a watch, which was relieved every two hours, and strictly forbidding the Indians to stroll into the forest. Fortunately the Spaniards had no armed boats on the river, and though we met and passed several piratical looking craft, we showed so bold a front that none of them ventured to attack us.

Ten days after leaving Angostura we entered the Apure, one of the most important affluents of the Orinoco, yet vastly smaller than the main stream. Yet the profusion of animal life was greater than aught I had yet beheld or thought possible.

Caymanas eighteen and twenty feet long basked in groups among the sedges on the banks, and the water was so thick with the loathsome creatures that the Indians were continually striking them with their paddles. Now and then we caught sight of tigers and leopards gliding between the trees or sunning themselves on the sands.

Birds of gorgeous plumage flitted from bough to bough, others flew over our heads in flocks so prodigious as to hide the sun, and the shores were peopled with a vast variety of aquatic birds, from the long-legged pelican and stately flamingo to the smallest crane.

The sight was superb, but owing to the meanderings of the stream and the want of wind our progress was painfully slow, and the insect pests, which are never so numerous and malignant as in the neighbourhood of water, made life a torment. They were, if possible, even worse in the smaller branches by which we had to pass in order to keep clear of the Spaniards and reach the village of Caujaral, on the Apure, where our water journey ended.

Hard by is the town of San Juan de Pallara, where we requisitioned horses for ourselves and mules for our baggage,

Digitized by Google

and an hour before next day's dawn we set out for San Fernando, to which place, as we had heard, Bolivar was laying siege. We were also assured that, the enemy being on the other side of the river, the road was safe, but by way of providing for possibilities we took with us six Zambos, and Don Antonio, who knew the country, acted as guide.

For a few miles the road, which was not much broader than a cattle track, led through dense scrub, but soon the forest became more open, the trees wider apart, forming here and there grassy glades, in one of which we made our first halt.

"Does this please you better, Señor Wyvenhoe?" inquired Bonanza as we dismounted.

"Decidedly," said I. "Anything is better than those interminable rivers and impenetrable forests, and the back of a horse is far before the stern sheets of a flechera."

"You feel freer, eh? Don't need to sit with your legs doubled underneath you. *Caramba!* I have not got the stiffness out of my joints even yet. And there is no place where a man on a good horse feels so free as on the llanos, where we shall be before long. We are already on the edge of the great plain of Varinas, and before many days are past you will see some beautiful fighting. Paez is with the army, and there is not his equal in all Columbia for beating up the enemy's quarters."

Our halt was of the shortest, and we halted only twice more, being anxious to get to the camp before nightfall. In this, however, we were disappointed. The pack mules began to lag behind, and their speed had to be ours, so that we were in the dark two hours short of our destination.

Nevertheless we pushed on, Bonanza protesting that he could find the way by night as easily as by day. He rode first, we others following him in single file and close order, the darkness being so thick under the trees that we were unable to see each other, and could indeed hardly see our horses' heads.

I was next to him. After me came Don Iago, and John Ready and the Zambos brought up the rear. Our unshod horses stepped noiselessly. None of us spoke except when necessity required, and only in a whisper, lest we should be heard by some enemy coming in the opposite direction or lurking in the bushes.

We had been going in this fashion something more than an hour when Bonanza suddenly pulled up and passed the word to halt.

"Yonder are the lights of San Fernando," he said, pointing westward. "In a few minutes we shall see the patriot camp fires on both sides of the river, if they have crossed it, as no doubt they have."

This was good hearing, and deeming caution no longer imperative we began to talk again. The Zambos would have sung if they had not been stopped. But presently Don Antonio pulled up a second time.

"Halt, and for Heaven's sake silence!" he said in a hoarse whisper. He had been talking more loudly than any of us. "I see no sign of a camp, and if our people have retreated, and they would only retreat after losing a battle, we are marching slap into the lion's mouth. We can go little or no further either one way or the other. The mules are dead beat, the horses tired, and crossing the river before daylight is out of the question. What's to be done?"

"Dismount and stand by the horses till the moon rises," suggested Don Iago.

"The very thing," said I. "When the moon shows up we shall be able to see what we are about, and the horses, relieved of our weight, will get a little rest."

So all dismounted. The Zambos threw themselves on the ground, but I bade John keep on the alert, and we three leant against our saddles ready to mount at the first alarm.

In half-an-hour the moon rose grandly in a clear sky, giving so fair a light that we could make out San Fernando distinctly, a little walled town on a spit of land which projected into the river, with a background of thick forest; but the intervening country was comparatively open, and a few hundred paces ahead of us was a grove of palm trees.

"What next?" asked Bonanza. "If we go further we are pretty sure to fall in with one of the enemy's patrols, and I suppose you would not like to go back until we have ascertained what has become of the Chief and his army."

"Our business is to find the Chief and deliver our dispatches, and we must go where he is," I rejoined. "We will bivouac in that palm grove and question the first passer by. Failing that, surprise a picket, if we can light on one."

On which we advanced, leading our horses, and were within a short distance of the grove when a dozen or more dark forms came out of it, two on horseback, the others on foot.

Thinking boldness the best policy I gave the order to mount and prepare to charge.

"Who goes there?" demanded one of the strangers.

"*Amigos*," returned Don Antonio, riding fearlessly forward.

"Friends! That is all very well, but what are you—patriots or Godos?"

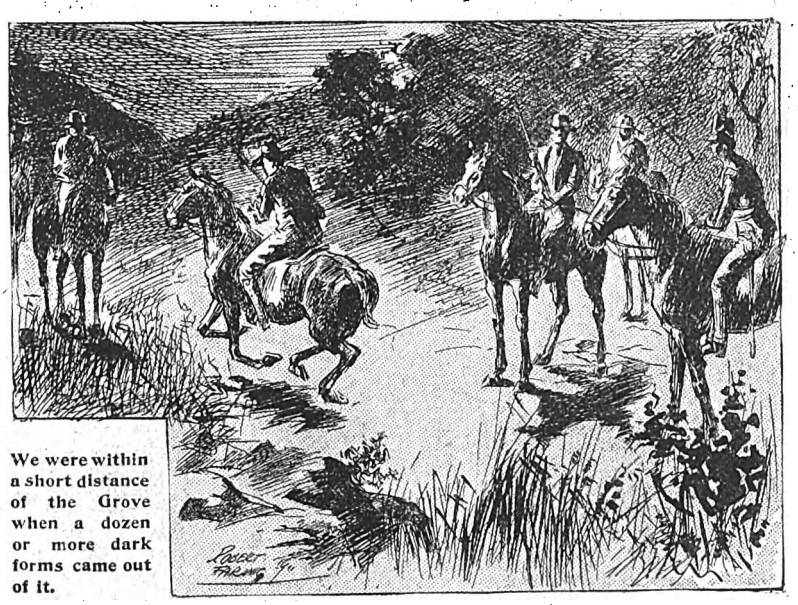
"It's all right," whispered Santleo. "Spaniards would neither call us patriots nor themselves Godos."

"Patriots, of course, and what are you?" replied and asked Bonanza.

"Also patriots—guerilleros."

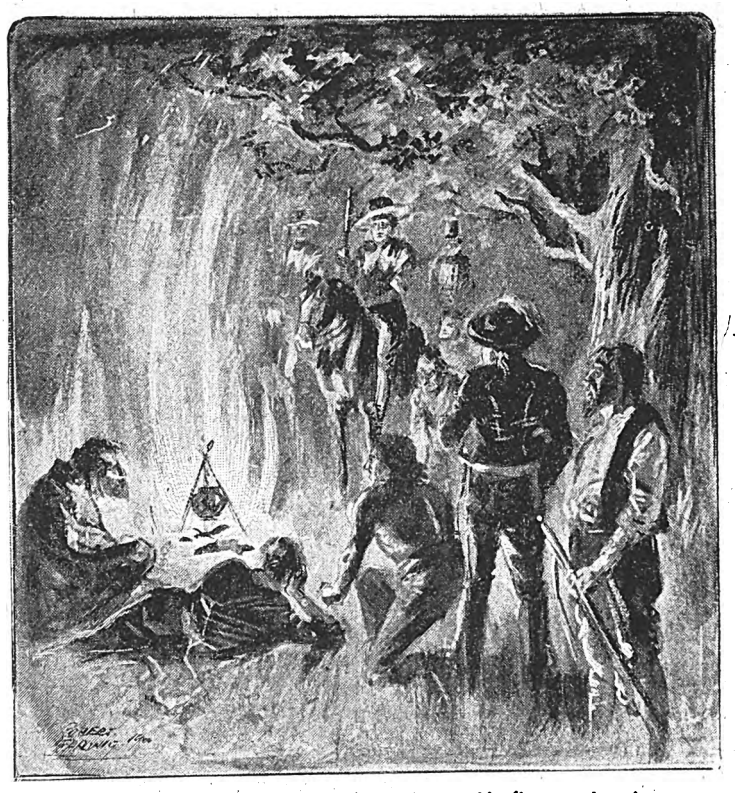
"In that case you can perhaps tells us what has become of the patriot army? We were told that Don Simon was laying siege to San Fernando."

"So he meant to do and crossed the river with that intent, but hearing that Morillo was on the llanos he has gone to look for him. But they marched only a little while



We were within a short distance of the Grove when a dozen or more dark forms came out of it.

Digitized by Google



The speaker led the way to a glade where a big fire was burning.

before sunset, and if you start early in the morning on the Caliboza trail you can easily overtake them. Will you do us the favour to join our encampment?"

"What do you say?" asked Bonanza turning to me. "Guerillero generally means brigand. Most of them take whatever they can lay their hands on and regard murder as a pleasant form of excitement."

"Nevertheless, I think we shall have to trust these fellows. To refuse their hospitality would make enemies of them at once, and we must guard against treachery by keeping together and not sleeping all at a time. They don't seem much, if any, stronger than ourselves."

"But there may be more than we have seen. However, there seems to be no choice. The Señor Major accepts your kind offer with pleasure, Señor Caballero——"

"My name is Gonsalvo."

"Señor Don Gonsalvo, and we shall be happy to join your bivouac."

"*Gracias!* Have you aught to eat?"

"Some tasajo and cassava bread."

"To the devil with your tasajo. We have a fat buck, and shall be happy to share it with you. Some of my fellows are making a fire. Let us go."

Whereupon the speaker led the way to a glade where a big fire was blazing, by the light of which we were able to take stock of our entertainers, of whom there were twice as many as ourselves.

Don Gonsalvo, the chief, was a black of herculanean proportions. His followers were about the most villainous-looking collection of cut-throats I ever beheld—and I had seen a few in Spain and elsewhere—negroes, quadroons, mulattoes, Zambos, and Indians, each more ill-favoured than the other, and only one white face amongst them. All were armed to the teeth. As for clothing, some wore Spanish uniforms, others the ordinary shirt and trousers, several a shirt only, and a few wore next to nothing.

That they would murder us if they could take us unawares I had no doubt whatever; but as we were as well armed as themselves and on our guard I did not think they were likely to make the attempt, and said so to Don Iago.

"You are quite right. Guerilleros only go in for hard fighting when they are cornered. I have no fear of their falling on us during the night unless we fall asleep. That is not the danger."

"What is, then?"

"Betrayal. I think Gonsalvo means honestly, otherwise he would have waited until we entered the grove and there attacked us. But in a band like this there is sure to be at least one Judas. San Fernando is less than an hour's walk away, and nothing would be easier than to sell us to the Spaniards."

"That is true, but as we cannot make a move before morning we must just take the risk and trust to Providence."

"Also keep a sharp look out. In my opinion the most likely of them to play the traitor is that white fellow in uniform. He looks like a soldier, and is probably a Spanish deserter. By betraying us he could both obtain immunity for his offence and a handsome reward. I'll speak to Diego."

Diego was the best of our Zambos, a wonderful tracker, as keen as a sleuthhound and as strong as a bull-fighter.

"What have you told Diego?" I asked.

"To keep an eye on that white-faced chap, and if he slips away to follow him."

(To be continued.)

BIBLIOTECA·BODLEIANA

Digitized by Google

SHORT STORIES ABOUT POLICEMEN.

We devote, every week, two pages of *Short Stories* to pithy, humourous anecdotes similar to those which appear in these columns. A prize of £1 1s. will be sent to the reader who submits the best storyette this week, and a copy of "The Iron Cross," by R. H. Sherard, to each of those whose attempts are used. The anecdotes may be either original or selected; in the latter case the source *must* be stated. The prize of One Guinea offered for the best Storyette in this competition has been won this week by Mr. E. Holdsworth, 11 Baxendall Street, Bradford. Attempts this week must deal with Stories about RAILWAY TRAINS, and must reach the Storyette Editor, *Short Stories* Office, Henrietta Street, Strand, London, W.C., by Monday, September 24th. Post-cards only, please.

In Disguise.

ON the occasion of the annual flower show at a certain town some members of the county police were drafted from the neighbouring villages on account of the large number of pickpockets who annually visit the show.

One elderly constable wore his regulation boots and ordinary policeman's trousers, but had donned a small cap in place of his helmet, and a small covert coat over his tunic. This coat was much too short, and the tails of the tunic hung down some way below it. Altogether he presented a most ludicrous appearance.

As he stood apart from the crowd, intently watching, a lady, to whom he was well-known, approached him, and asked him to direct her to a certain part of the show.

He thereupon drew himself up, and in a most awe-inspiring manner said:

"Hush, hush, Mrs. Tompkins. Don't speak to me now. I'm on detective duty." E. H.

One Way of Dispersing a Mob.

A POLICEMAN hailing from the granite city lately made application for a similar situation in the Leeds City Police Force.

The superintendent was examining him on his knowledge of police duty.

"In the event of your having to disperse a mob, how would you use your baton?"

"Oh, sir, we never used a baton for that purpose in Aberdeen. When we wanted to skaill a mob there, we jist pat roon the hat an' askit a collection."

J. B. C.

A Gallant Rescue.

ONE very foggy night last November, a policeman in a quiet suburb of a town not far from Windsor, was engaged in a desperate struggle with two ruffians, whom he found attempting to rob an old lady.

Her piercing shrieks, and the shouts of "Help! in the Queen's name!" brought a passing rustic to the spot, and so valiantly did he perform that the would-be thieves were soon both secured.

The voluble thanks of the old lady and Robert were cut short by the remark:

"Don't mention it, yer Majesty. Thank heaven, I've helped ter save yer from them durned Acanhists."

And the honest fellow really seemed disappointed when he found that it was not his Sovereign whom his gallantry had rescued.

P. M. P.

The Cyclist Scored.

A PORTION of the main road from Manchester to Swinton is very rough and lumpy on one side, while the other side has a very fair surface.

On a recent occasion, there being no other traffic about, a cyclist, who was riding on his wrong side to get the advantage of the good surface, was accosted by a policeman who demanded to know why he was on that side of the road.

"Oh," said the cyclist smiling, "I just came across to answer your silly questions," and the laugh that went up from the bystanders told the man in blue that for once the cyclist had scored. F. D. H.

A Sell for the "Bobby."

IT was in the time of the dog muzzling days.

A young lady was seen by a policeman to be carrying a little pet dog in her arms, which was without a muzzle.

The policeman went up to her and said:

"It is my dooty, ma'am, to take that dog in charge for not havin' a muzzle on."

"Oh," said the lady, "but it won't bite or hurt anyone."

"It's the lor, ma'am," said the man in blue.

Reluctantly the lady gave the policeman her dog, and passed on, leaving the astounded "bobby" with a toy poodle on wheels in his arms!

E. B.

He Performed His Duty.

A YOUNG fellow, standing six feet two inches in height, joined the police force of his native town. At the end of his first day as a constable he dressed in mufti, and walked up to the top of the town to see his chums.

Presently the latter began to play leap-frog in the street, thereby obstructing the thoroughfare, and the new constable joined in with zest.

Suddenly a cry of "Stop!" was raised, and the players fled as the constable on the beat was seen approaching, among the first to run being the new constable.

When they got safely away, one of the players, in sudden recollection, exclaimed:

"Why, Dai, you're a bobby, too!"

Dai was thunderstruck.

"Why!" he gasped, slapping his thigh, "so I am. I've got to arrest you!"

Which he promptly did! W. J. O.

Digitized by Google

He Called the Police.

AT a certain draper's shop in the vicinity of Drury Lane they keep a small boy to run errands.

The other day a young lady came in and asked the shop assistant for a yard of silk. When it was placed in front of her she explained:

"Oh, really, I must be mad! I want muslin."

Hearing this, the boy rushed out of the shop, and, seeing a policeman across the road, ran up to him and shouted excitedly:

"Hi! come over to our shop, quick; there's a gal in there what's gone mad and wants muzzling!"

W. L.

The Sailor's Ruse.

ONE day this summer a policeman on duty near the Customs Offices at one of our southern ports was accosted by an officer from a ship that had just arrived.

The sailor, who carried a parcel in his hand, slipped a 5s. piece into the policeman's palm, with the words:

"I am going to bring some tobacco ashore to-morrow night, so don't take any notice of me then."

The bobby pocketed the coin, but next evening, as the sailor appeared with a parcel under his arm, he stopped him, took him into the Customs Office, and had him searched and his parcel examined.

Great was the policeman's disgust to find nothing on which duty could be charged. He had let the tobacco pass on the previous night!

S. J. B.

Wanted the Quid.

A CONCEITED cyclist, finding his machine was out of order, dismounted by the roadside in order to adjust the bearings, and seeing a country policeman near by he summoned him to his aid.

"Render me some little assistance in the adjustment of my machine, my good fellow," he grandiloquently remarked, "and I will see that you have a *quid pro quo*."

"Robert" scratched his head and assumed a puzzled air.

"If it don't mak' any difference to you, guv'nor," he sagely observed, "we'll say nowt about the *pro quo*, but I don't mind takkin' the quid, though, an' thank yer!"

W. C.

Why the Case was Dismissed.

A MAN was charged in the North with catching a fish that weighed less than two pounds.

The constable who made the arrest testified to arresting the prisoner with the fish in his possession.

"Where is the fish?" asked the lawyer for the defendant.

"Why, it wouldn't keep," answered the officer.

"What did you do with it?"

"Oh, I disposed of it."

"What did you do with it?"

"Well, I knew it wouldn't keep, so I disposed of it."

"But what did you do with it?"

"My wife cooked it."

"And you ate it?"

"Yes, your honour."

The case was dismissed on the grounds that the arresting officer "ate the evidence."

J. H.

"What's Up?"

HE was a stout, middle-aged member of the force, his number X 94, and his beat the busiest street in the town.

It was evening, and as he pursued his not very rapid way, thinking of nothing particular (for the wife of his bosom had been a cook, and he was supplied with every dainty he could desire), a slight touch on the sleeve of his official coat made him turn to see what was up.

It was a young lady, evidently in distress, but well-attired. She spoke not, but made movements with her fingers, to him unintelligible.

"What's up?" he asked.

But no reply came, save an increased motion of the digits. His official mind was puzzled. He took off his helmet, replaced it, pondered, and then the idea came that she was a deaf mute.

A crowd had collected, and were asking each other, "What's up?" Could he find help there?

Happy thought!

"Is there any of you here," he exclaimed, "that's deaf and dumb, and can tell what's up, for I'm blest if I can."

J. T. M.

NOW ON SALE.

No. 2 of

"The Curiosity Shop."

THE ILLUSTRATED COMPANION TO "P.W."

ONE PENNY WEEKLY.

THE CURIOSITY SHOP is the most Wonderful Paper in the whole wide world. Nothing like it has ever before been published—nothing. It is a Marvel.

The contents of **THE CURIOSITY SHOP** are not musty or stale; they are not old or worm-eaten.

Everything in **THE CURIOSITY SHOP** is Fresh and Brand New.

Curiosities need not necessarily be old. People always seem to associate a curiosity shop with ancient and well-worn goods. No mistake could be greater.

Curiosities are of two sorts—old and new.

Old curiosities are curiosities largely because they are old, because we do not see the same things in general nowadays.

New curiosities are curiosities largely because they are new, because ***no one has ever seen or heard of them before.***

These, then, are the curiosities that you will find in **THE CURIOSITY SHOP.**

THE CURIOSITY SHOP contains: Absolutely new and fresh articles. Bright and originally-conceived pictures. Strong and well-seasoned fiction. Nothing that you can get anywhere else.

Unlike all other curiosity shops, the contents of this one are changed every week, and you can buy every article and picture in the shop for one penny.

REMEMBER: ***You can buy*** **THE CURIOSITY SHOP** ***itself for One Penny.***

If you buy **THE CURIOSITY SHOP** ***every week for a year, at the end of twelve months you will have bought 52 shops and their contents for the small sum of 4s. 4d.***

Digitized by Google

COOLIE-LI.

THE STORY OF THE ADOPTED ONE.

THE PROLOGUE.

MORE than forty years ago, there dwelt in the city of Pekin an old Chinaman, by name Wung-Fu.

Where the street of "The Lantern-Makers" abuts upon the covered passage running round the inclosed Joss-House of "The Golden Dragon," stood a little dilapidated lean-to tenement, within the shelter of which lived Wung-Fu and his grandchild, the boy Oh-Sung. The old man's record was open to adverse criticism, inasmuch as in his palmy days he had been more than shrewdly suspected of piracy.

This suspicion, however, went but little in his disfavour with those amongst whom he neighboured. Many, indeed, admired him for his past deeds in the piratical way, for were they not here and there themselves more or less tainted with the same incriminatory perfume.

But Wung-Fu was now old, and worn, and nearly blind. Scarce a body-and-soul existence could he, howsoever painfully, scrape together for himself and the only being left to him since the scourge of the "Black Death" five years before.

Oh-Sung was not a lovable boy. There were indications to the ear, if not to the sightless eyes of his grandfather, that the lad was rapidly developing a selfish, cruel spirit. This, to one of old Wung-Fu's antecedents, might naturally be thought not to have been of much moment, would, in fact, be in full harmony with his own ideas and bent of mind.

But human nature, especially Chinese human nature, is complex and inexplicable. Wung-Fu bitterly resented this early warping of his grandson's disposition. Whether himself having greater leisure for repentant broodings, or whether he had come to believe in respectability and moral virtue as things to be desired to make one wise, no man knoweth.

Certain it is that Oh-Sung came in, not unfrequently, for the thick end of his grandsire's bamboo, much mortification of the flesh thereby ensuing, together with the ignition of a slow, smouldering, vengeful flame. Then there came a day when in the little house food and firing were not.

It was winter.

On a ragged straw mat in a corner of the hut, without covering of any kind, lay old Wung-Fu. A few hours would see the end.

Every now and then, cunningly curious, nothing more, would Oh-Sung peer silently through the doorless entrance in upon the dying man, and then as silently return to his playmates, the juvenile idlers of the street.

Clang! Boom! Clang! Boom!

A mandarin, or maybe the viceroy himself, the focus of a deafening chorus of men's voices and torturous instruments, is approaching along the route of the street of "The Lantern-Makers."

The boys, Oh-Sung in the van, hurry to the spectacle, heedless of the thwacks and hustling of guards and policemen.

Suddenly the great man calls a halt, imperiously beckoning to Oh-Sung to come near to him. He was a finely-made, well set-up, taking lad; the peculiar expression of his eyes, to the superficial observer, detracting in no way from his general beauty and charm.

"Your father, boy, who is he?"

Oh-Sung, too terrified to speak in such a presence, cast down his eyes, and thought only of how to escape. From the outer fringe of the crowd the reply is forthcoming.

"The boy Oh-Sung is the last left to the old Wung-Fu."

Two of the guards drag the speaker forward to the official chair.

"Where lives the old Wung Fu?" came the swift, sharp query.

"Honourable Excellence! Your abased slave will guide you thither; 'tis but a step."

A few bustling minutes, and the boy Oh-Sung, has been bought and adopted by his Excellency, the Viceroy of the Province. Half-an-hour after the consummation of the contract, old Wung-Fu departed this life to join the shades of his ancestors, and Oh-Sung, now, by Vice-regal command to be henceforth known as Li-Sung, set out with joyous anticipation for the unknown fairyland of the Yamen of the favourite of the "Son of Heaven."

* * * * *

It is the present year of grace, 1900.

A small sampan is rocking gently on the swell of the bay. Seated in its after part, lazily manipulating a scull with just sufficient motion to keep the little craft's head to wind, is a man, naked to the waist.

Digitized by Google

He is brown from exposure, and apparently fifty years old. He wears no hat, his cue being wound round his head in the orthodox Chinese fashion.

He appears to notice nothing, waterward or skyward, and yet, were you close enough to him you might observe ever and again a furtively keen glance in the direction of the Ly-ee-moon Pass. He must be a patient man, for he has been upon the spot since sunrise, and now it is long past the meridian.

Suddenly a dull booming roar breaks the silence, reverberating from hill-top to hill-top. Evidently interested, the sampan's owner assumes the alert, sits upright, and with a few strong, rapid strokes impels the tiny boat towards the source of the echo which still trembles on the air.

Her Britannic Majesty's ship *Nelson*, flying the Rear-Admiral's flag emerges from the Pass, and with another thunderous salute, makes for her berth, and is soon at anchor.

No one on board appears to trouble about a sampan which a half-naked Chinaman keeps well in the shadow of the big warship. At length, seemingly satisfied, the occupant puts way upon his little craft and heads for the shore.

That night the innermost and evilest recesses of Tai-Ping-Shan, Hong Kong's native quarter, are a-hum with the low mutterings of a thousand tongues.

Men in groups, men in twos and threes eagerly chatter and gesticulate. Sinister-looking men, truculent, dangerous, ready for murder, rapine, and a wholesale committal of the seven deadly sins. One man in particular moves swiftly and silently from street to street, and from group to group, whispering here, impressing there, with words which seem to burn wherever they are dropped.

This man, though clothed in native dress, is unmistakably him of the sampan. The face alone would identify him. Cruel eyes, set wider apart than is usual with the average Celestial; high cheek-bones, and a complexion burnt to blackness with the winds and suns of more than forty years.

You may hear following him such remarks as: "Coolie-Li, he savvey, trick foleign devil; Coolie-Li no fool! Englishman come; Coolie-Li alle same cut him throat."

For days the British authorities at Victoria had suspected Boxer gatherings and secret society mischief generally as being rife in Tai-Ping-Shan, but although alarming rumours had reached Government House of dark deeds done in Pekin and Tientsin, of ministers and their families slaughtered, and of unrelateable horrors committed in the name of the "Red Dragon," it was deemed improbable that any serious Boxer rising would take place in Hong Kong itself.

True, there was a story afloat, traceable to one Ho-Shan, a shifty, wily ship's "comprador," that a dangerous member of the Boxer Society, one of its chiefs, in fact, was in the town, upon revolutionary propaganda intent.

This man, it was said, owing to his working occasionally as a common coolie, now in this port, now in that, had come to be known in certain circles as Coolie-Li.

Undoubtedly there was a mystery with regard to him. Some averred that he was no better than that which he sometimes pretended to be; others insisting that in some way he was closely connected either by blood or by adoption with a certain great Imperial functionary. Anyway, sharp English eyes, both ashore and afloat, were on the watch for him.

The next evening but one after her arrival H. M. S. *Nelson* lay peacefully at anchor. Save and except for the periodical hoarse interchange of challenge and reply, complete silence reigned on deck from taffrail to knightheads.

Commander Blake sits in his cabin, on the *qui vive* certainly, but at the same time comfortably assured that the ship is ready for "business" at a moment's notice.

Right aft, on the starboard side, a midshipman leans upon the rail looking across at the lights which dot, firefly-fashion, the town and hill above it.

Sound upon the water there is none, only the monotonously pleasant lap-lapping against the ship's side.

About "three bells" the middy fancied he could detect a slight grating noise, and a man's heavy, laboured breathing on the port quarter.

Regulations or no regulations he would go over and find out. When within a yard of the rail he saw distinctly a man's ten yellow fingers spread eagle-wise upon its broad flat top, preparatory evidently to a spring-up on to the deck.

The budding young sailor was, though small for his years, a veritable little hero. Knowing that such a digital display boded no good, could indeed have but a nefarious significance, the ship's cutlass at his side was in a flash, in his hand, and brought down with all his boyish force upon the extended fingers.

A yell! a splash! and a sampan, bottom up, floating away to the southward told the truth of the tale, while, most condemning evidence of all as to criminal purpose, lay, bloody, upon the rail-top the four severed yellow fingers of a man's hand.

Hastily summoned upon deck, the Commander listened to the middy's story, as a consequence ordering a stricter watch to be kept through the remainder of the night.

Two days passed without a sign. On the third day Commander Blake took a day's leave. Before quitting the ship he was warned by his superior officers of possible trouble ahead, impressing upon him the absolute necessity for keeping, during his stay in the town, altogether to the European quarter. Blake, somewhat resentful of interference with his movements, departed in one the ship's boats.

Twenty-four hours—forty-eight hours—three days! but no Commander. Then was a search-party organised on the morning of the fourth day. The town was scoured from end to end without result. There remained only the worst portion of the native quarter, Tai-Ping-Shan. The exploration of this foul centre of native life, this cluster of gambling hells and opium dens, was, indeed, a forlorn hope. Still it must be made. Securing an access of military strength from the barracks, the little force marched resolutely through the dirty, narrow streets, into the very hub of the place.

The streets themselves were quiet, almost to absolute desertion, but from doorway and window yellow faces looked out, scowling hatred and contempt upon the foreign devils. Half-an-hour of this and the officer in command gave up all hope.

Then they came to a dark, tortuous alley, entrance to which was through a ruinous archway at the head of a short flight of rickety steps. The side-posts of the arch, as was the rough carving over the top, were painted a blood-red, while dependent from the centre hung a large paper lantern of grotesque form, and of the same colour.

One of the *Nelson's* men in advance of the rest quickened his pace.

"There's something lying along the top of those

Digitized by Google

steps!" he suddenly exclaimed, pointing his finger towards the dimly-lit spot.

Springing excitedly up the rotten stairway, he saw at once that the search was over. Upon his back, his right arm by his side, the hand holding his cap, lay the hapless Commander. Closer scrutiny revealed a knife, buried to the haft in the dead man's left breast, the weapon serving also to pin down a small black sheet of paper, inscribed with Chinese characters in red.

The houses in the alley appeared to be deserted, so that no arrests or reprisals were possible.

Carrying the body to the ship, a report was presented to the Admiral, who in his turn communicated the matter to the Governor, and for the moment the affair was at an end.

Strong convictions prevailed, however, in official circles that this was something more than the outcome of mere personal revenge.

The middy's story had circulated freely, and English eyes were keenly on the look-out for a Chinaman minus the fingers of his left hand.

Interest in Coolie-Li, as being, if not the actual perpetrator of the outrage, in all probability its instigator, increased hourly. So matters stood when notification of the impending visit to Hong Kong of His Excellency Li-Hung-Chang was received at Government House.

The old dabbler in chicanery and the devious ways of Celestial diplomacy was on his way to Pekin, at the command of and to join the Empress Mother.

In Hong Kong he was no welcome guest, for confidence in his integrity had long been banished from the Western mind.

With the announcement of his almost immediate arrival, there was also a private intimation to the Governor that business of an important personal nature might render the co-operation of the latter necessary.

The Governor, good, easy man, was singularly single-hearted, and, Briton-wise, impatient of mystery and implied deceit, groaned in the spirit in anticipation of coming unpleasantness and political complication.

On board the *Nelson* no expectation existed of another visit from either the "man of the sampan" or of his fellow miscreants. But in China it is as well not to reason from analogy.

The evening of the day before Li-Hung-Chang's advent was sultry almost beyond precedent. About four bells a thunder-storm of exceptional severity broke over sea and land.

It was at the height of the tempest that the sentry forward made out five or six large river or "slipper" boats heading for the *Nelson's* port quarter. In the van a small sampan, sculled by one man, naked to the waist, with his right hand only, seemed alike guiding and rallying point.

In a moment the ship was alive from stem to stern; men sprang to quarters, and the oncoming boats, crowded with men who saw their enterprise defeated, went about in a body and swiftly made for the shore. The man in the sampan in vain endeavoured to inspire his confederates with his own spirit, but to attempt to attack a British man-of-war ready at all points to receive them was an absurdity evident even to their limited understanding.

Then occurred a strange thing.

Among the men upon the *Nelson's* deck was the one who had discovered the Commander's body in the native town, and who had been that officer's servant and orderly. Regardless of consequences and of service regulations, he now cast the end of a rope overboard, and, making the in-board end fast, swarmed down it to the surface of the water.

The sampan-man was now within a few yards of the ship, and the sailor, hoping to reach him before he himself was observed, struck out for the little craft. It so happened that, as he kicked himself free from the *Nelson's* side, the Chinaman saw him. With two mighty strokes the sailor reached the boat, the gunwale of which he grasped with one hand. Down into his face grinned the diabolical eyes of the other.

A knife between his teeth, upon the bright blade of which played occasional flashes of lightning, he appeared the very incarnation of devilry and death.

Not one whit dismayed, the sailor tried to raise himself out of the water. The Chinaman, dropping his scull, sprang at his enemy's throat, to force him back. But the little boat was unequal to the strain. As the Celestial reached out towards the sailor, the latter flung up his left hand, and with a supreme effort dragged the other to him by his loin-cloth.

In a second the two men were in the water. It was then that the plucky tar first noticed the bound-up left hand of his antagonist.

"By Jove!" he cried exultantly, and tightening his grip. "I've been looking for you, my chap! No, you don't!" as the other sought to slip eel-wise from his grasp. "Ahoy! deck ahoy! on deck there!"

Knowing the fate in store for him should he be captured, the Chinaman shook himself free, and taking a leaf out of the book of his prototype the shark, turned suddenly upon his back, with his knife in his hand diving dexterously under his foe.

The fatal upward stroke was made just as the ship's cutter reached the spot, and when lifted exhausted into the boat, Coolie-Li saw that the sailor lay in the stern-sheets white and still, he smiled, the smile of one who had offered a grateful sacrifice to the dark nature of his tutelary deity.

The next day the Viceroy on arrival was informed of the incident of the night before.

"Let me see the prisoner, if I may," said Li.

There being no reason for objection, the Governor consented. The interview took place on board the *Nelson* in the doctor's cabin, that being the only available place for such a purpose.

"I would speak in private with this man," said the Viceroy.

Ten minutes, fifteen minutes, and then a smothered laugh from within. A gentle opening of the cabin door, and the old statesman stands upon the threshold, a half smile playing about his lips.

But the prisoner! Where is he? An open port answers the question.

Li-Hung-Chang revealed nothing, and it is currently reported to-day among the English in Hong Kong that there was beyond doubt some truth in the story of the connection between the great Li and the lesser; and that not only for the sake of that adoptive relation, but from actual sympathy with the revolutionary principles of the "adopted one," he, the shadow of the "Son of Heaven," had allowed the murderer to escape the retributive justice of the foreign devil.

* * * * *

Dr. Frank Nairn, R. N., has upon a shelf in his cabin on board the *Nelson* a fair-sized phial containing, spirit-preserved, four severed yellow, shrivelled human fingers. The good doctor will, when in the vein, expatiate upon their history, and offer them for the inspection of the curious.

RALPH ENDERBY.

Digitized by Google

TRICKING THE EGYPTIANS.

When the firm of Heywood, Stone and Co., of London, established an agency at Cairo, Egypt, I was placed in charge. My business was the buying of rugs, vases, arms, cloths and whatever else might find sale in England. That was what I may call my general and legitimate business. As a side line I was to pick up bargains in mummies. Up to the founding of that agency in Cairo, only a few museums in Europe had been able to secure specimens. To get hold of a mummy with a history required a couple of years diplomatic correspondence between Governments, and the cost would run up as high as £5,000.

Under the laws of Egypt it was death to disturb the dead without official permission, and death to any foreigner discovered trying to ship a mummy out of the country without special license. In justice to the old and respectable house I have named I must say that they had no knowledge of my side line.

I had a partner in London who advanced the money and shared the profits. When I was ready to begin business, we had orders for thirty mummies.

Let me tell you that I had a crafty part to play. In a way the branch was under the supervision of the Egyptian Government. At the end of each week I had to submit a list of my purchases. All my shipments had to pass the Customs officials. My ware-rooms must always be open to official inspection. I was not told in so many words that all this watchfulness was to prevent me from dealing in mummies, but I knew that it was.

My first step was to bribe every official who could obstruct me, and I had to move slowly in the matter and make no mistakes. Then an agent must be found to look up and ship me the specimens from points in the interior, and he had to be a man without fear, as well as an honest man. He in turn would have to find faithful men, and, taken altogether, it was a bit of business to be handled with care. It was six months before I got it under way, and after once fairly in it there was not an hour in which I felt safe from discovery.

In most cases the burial places in Egypt are easily to be got at. Most of our orders simply called for a specimen, and it made no difference about the sex or whether there was a record attached. There were a few museums in want of particular bodies. They wanted kings, queens, generals, or poets who had been dead from 3,000 to 5,000 years. It is perhaps unnecessary to inform the reader that I always executed these orders.

After getting a mummy into my warehouse I had a way of making it fill the bill and give general satisfaction. My assistant, who was a native antiquary, a native doctor and a villain, was handy at unwrapping and rewrapping and carving hieroglyphics and manufacturing relics. If there was fraud in it, I do not seek to defend myself. I simply say that if there is a public demand for the mummy of Pharaoh it is the duty of some agent to supply it as near as possible and keep people good natured.

In the course of two years I shipped fifty-six mummies safely out of Cairo and landed them in London, and I am frank to say that my dividends were considerably larger than those paid last year by the London and North-Western Railway.

The mummy business was booming, and I was executing orders for anything up to 10,000 years old on demand when a Government official gave me a hint that my business had been found out. He exchanged his information for my five-pound note and went his way.

I don't know that anyone had given me away directly, but suspicion had somehow become aroused, and I was to be put under surveillance and caught red-handed. My shipments suddenly ceased, and the mummy market became dull.

After a couple of weeks my assistant villian went up the Nile towards the ruins of Memphis to look for a man. It was a live man and a particular sort of man he wanted, and when he found him the sum of ten pounds changed hands.

Then the man died. At least he was swathed in

Digitized by Google

bandages which had come from the looms 2,000 years before, scented and spiced in A1 style and then put in a coffin which gave him away as having been dead almost twenty centuries.

The hieroglyphics on that coffin and on a manuscript inclosed revealed the fact that the dead man was the celebrated fakir Sonadi Hassassan, and that when he had slept his sleep he would awaken and begin another pilgrimage on earth.

The mummy reached my warehouse one afternoon, and within an hour a Government official, backed by a file of soldiers, had arrived to make a search. There had been no concealment. The mummy occupied a conspicuous position. They had caught me red-handed in a way, and yet they could not understand why I had been so open about it.

"My dear sir," I said to the official, "I know the laws of Egypt. I am not dealing in mummies. The law does not say I may not restore a dead man to life. At this present hour that thing there is a mummy. To-night at nine o'clock it will be a living man."

"What nonsense is this?" exclaimed the man as he struck the coffin with his cane. "Do you think I am a child to believe such tales?"

"I think you are a very smart man," I replied. "But there is yet something to learn. Read of Sonadi Hassassan. He was the greatest magician the world ever knew. He it was who made the Nile flow backwards for a day. When he had lived for 1,000 years, he became weary for the want of sleep. He fell into a trance which was not to be broken for 2,000 years. The time is up at nine o'clock to-night."

"And he will come back to life?" queried the man, with an incredulous smile.

"He will. You and your friends will be here to see. I had read of him, and I was anxious to get his body. I paid a large price for it that I may see it restored to life with my own eyes."

The Egyptian's natural superstition and my earnestness staggered the man, and when I saw it I clinched the matter by saying:

"It is only a few hours to wait. You shall dine with me at eight o'clock. At nine my assistant shall unwrap Hassassan and bring him to life. Let two of your soldiers watch the coffin meanwhile. If things don't turn out as I say, you shall carry me off prisoner and have £20 in gold as a present."

"So be it," he said after a long look at me, "but do not attempt to trick me, I am no fool."

Two soldiers were left to watch the coffin, and in my hearing he warned them that any remissness on their part would be followed by swift punishment.

My living rooms were over the warehouse. When the dinner hour arrived, I had the official and two of his friends to sit down with me. All three of the men had made up their minds that I was playing a game of bluff, and they were curious to know how I was going to carry it through. Five pounds would have bribed any of them to shut his eyes for a year, but in this case they had received their orders direct from the Minister and dared not trifle with him.

They drank sparingly of the wine that they might keep their heads clear, but grew sufficiently good-natured to hope that I might get out of the trouble without serious loss.

"There will be no trouble," I replied, with calm assurance. "Sonadi Hassassan has had his sleep and will return to life, and the Government will probably reward me for restoring such a celebrated man to earth. Come, gentlemen, it is time."

The soldiers had been sitting before the coffin for hours. My assistant was at hand and ready, and we lost no time in getting to work.

The coffin was tilted up on end, the body lifted forward so that it could be got at, and the wraps were soon removed.

I knew that the mummy was a live man, but never had I looked upon the face of a subject showing death and the passage of time more plainly. The face would have deceived the wisest professor in Europe.

There were the sunken eyes and cheeks, the loss of teeth and the seal brown colour, and I found myself wondering if some mistake hadn't been made. The official and his friend quietly chuckled as the business proceeded, and my assistant villain was the only one who was perfectly placid.

He did not hurry his work. He was a full half-hour getting down to the last wrapping, which was a sort of union garment made for the occasion. Then he stepped back with a flourish, picked up a stick, and, striking three blows on the coffin, he called out:

"It is time, Sonadi Hassassan; it is time!"

The chest of the mummy began to heave and its eyes to flutter. Then came a long breath and its eyes unclosed.

The soldiers bolted from the warehouse in affright, and the three men retreated several paces in consternation.

Very slowly and without a false motion the mummy gasped and stretched and looked about. A hand went up to rub sleep from its eyes. Then it moved uneasily, and presently stepped from the coffin, straightened up, and passed out of the door into the night with slow and dignified steps.

"Well?" I queried as I turned to the dumfounded trio.

They stood staring with open mouths, and I had to put hands on them before they came back to earth.

"Did I not tell you so? Did I not say that after a sleep of 2,000 years the great magician would return to life?"

They did not answer, but with pale faces and chattering teeth they tottered out into the darkness with a mighty fear upon them.

I had the agency for two years longer, and there was a continuous boom in the mummy market, but after that incident there was never an official inspection of my stock. The officials could not have been hired for money to poke about in the dark corners.

C. B. Lewis.

YOUR FACE ENLARGED FOR 7/-

If you have a relative who has passed away either at home in peace or abroad in war, send his photograph—which you probably cherish—and we will enlarge it to a beautiful India ink and crayon portrait, 15in. × 12in. mounted on plate sunk mount 24in. × 19in.

Relatives of soldiers at the front may obtain one of these enlargements for 6s.

Other photographs will be enlarged for 7s.

Full particulars have already appeared, and will appear again shortly. They also appear in the current issue of

THE CURIOSITY SHOP.

A coupon from that paper must accompany each order.

Digitized by Google

A YACHTSMAN'S ROMANCE.

THE London season was over, and a considerable number of its late celebrities were collected in various pleasant spots closely contiguous to the waters of the Solent. Blighted beings had repaired to Cowes, and shattered hearts to Ryde. Gentlemen who were, in popular parlance, about "done up," were enjoying themselves with a hilarity that might have betokened the zenith of worldly prosperity and commercial success, in different crafts belonging to the pleasure fleet which covers the English Channel with animation during the months of July, August and September.

The scene is Ryde Pier, and the hour about 7.30 p.m. A pretty spot, and by no means an unfavourable hour for visiting it. Like Melrose, Ryde Pier and the view it presents may be visited with signal propriety by the pale moonlight or in the pale twilight.

The eternal promenade on the pier-head, the perpetual accompaniment of brilliant music and interminable scandal, the ceaseless tide of demonstrative flirtation—these things are pleasant enough *per se*, but they have, no doubt, a tendency to become monotonous. It is a very different thing, Ryde Pier after dinner. You can secure society without crowd and company without effort. You may meditate *solus*, or *solus cum sola* you may flirt. And the prospect is not without its charm. There in the Solent is the squadron of dainty craft, their sails furled, still and motionless at anchor, the lamp fixed to their mastheads reflecting itself with a quivering motion in the tide below; and the whole effect being that of a marine illumination. A little further on, and you can see the line of light on the mainland and distinctly trace the terraces of Southsea and Portsmouth. If you turn round you will see full in your face the little town of Ryde alive with gas and the windows of the Victoria Yacht Club all aglow.

Mr. Jim Lawlesse, to address him at once by his familiar title, was scarcely a gentleman of a poetic temperament, yet from the prolonged intentness of his gaze upon the waters as he lounged across the railings of the pier, and the fact that he had suffered his cigar to become extinguished in his hand, he might, for all one could have told to the contrary, been meditating a sonnet to his mistress's eyebrow, or be speculating deeply on the philosophy of the unconditioned.

Of that little yacht yonder, the one nearest the shore, with its tiny light twinkling from amid its rigging—the *Sea Fan* was her name—Mr. Jim Lawlesse was temporary proprietor.

Jim's friends were in the habit of saying that, having made the land too hot for him, he had taken to the waters; and there may have been reasons which rendered St. James's Street a slightly too public place for our hero. So Mr. Lawlesse had accepted an invitation from an old college friend to go on a yachting trip in the *Sea Fan*. But the *Sea Fan's* owner had been called away, and Mr. Lawlesse was the man in possession for the time being.

A boat containing a gentleman and two ladies pulled up to the pier, and Mr. Lawlesse's attention was aroused. The party had come from the *Petrel*, about a mile out, and consisted of the proprietor of the *Petrel*, Sir Hedworth Dare, and his two daughters, who stood to each other in the relation of step-sisters, as Sir Hedworth had married twice, Edith and Kate. When Mr. Lawlesse went up to the two as they landed it was pretty obvious that Sir Hedworth Dare would have been quite as well pleased had that gentleman not chosen to present himself; for the baronet regarded Mr. Lawlesse as a detrimental, and had a wholesome and parental horror of the class.

"Ah! Lawlesse; thought it was Moonington," said Sir Hedworth, "said he would be here to meet us."

The Hon. Sam Moonington was the eldest son of the heir of Moonshine, and desperately smitten with Miss Kate Dare. Sir Hedworth—so said Ryde society—was bent upon the match.

The Hon. Sam was certainly a catch; so said the ladies; Moonington was an ass; so (somewhat abruptly) said the gentlemen in general, and Mr. Lawlesse in particular.

Jim, however, was not to be taken aback by this very tepid welcome, and walked down the pier with Sir Hedworth and his two daughters.

"Are you going to the ball to-night, Mr. Lawlesse?" asked Kate Dare.

It happened to be within a few hours of the commencment of the Yacht Club Ball.

Of course Mr. Lawlesse was going; and so was Mr. Moonington—that gentleman had just joined them—and so they all were. "And so we shall meet again presently."

And Jim Lawlesse sauntered off after having bade the ladies an au revoir—in decidedly better spirits than when he had first met Sir Hedworth and the Misses Dare too.

"I don't think I should mind backing my luck against that of the Hon. Sam's," said Jim Lawlesse as he proceeded to dress. Miss Kate Dare had promised Mr. Lawlesse the first waltz.

The dance given by the Royal Victoria Yacht Club

Digitized by Google

was unusually and brilliantly successful that year; so said everybody; and the ball is certainly one which, if for no other reasons than those of a spectacular nature, is well worth seeing. The elegant devices which convert a balcony into a corridor, the profusion of banners, the trophies of yachtsmen, the decidedly nautical features in the dresses of the ladies—all these add a charm which is exclusively their own to the affair.

Mr. James Lawlesse entered the room almost at the same time as the Dare party. On the arm of Sir Hedworth rested his elder daughter, and on that of the Hon. Sam, Miss Kate Dare. The baronet's tone was more chilled than ever when he caught sight of our hero approaching in the distance.

Amid an indescribable chatter strongly flavoured with marine jargon the first quadrille was danced. Mr. Moonington's partner was Miss Kate Dare, his *vis-à-vis* the gentleman whom we have for form's sake christened the hero of this slight narrative. But the first quadrille, as even first quadrilles are some time or other, was over at last, and within a very few minutes of its termination Mr. Lawles e claimed the younger of Sir Hedworth's two daughters as his partner in the first waltz; and Mr. Moonington surrendered the lady who without doubt was the object of his affection and ambitions, certainly not with the best grace in the world.

Miss Dare, however, was close by, and disengaged. Would Miss Dare give him, the Honourable Sam, the pleasure of that waltz? Most happy: and the pair whirled off.

The elder of Sir Hedworth's two daughters was far from displeased at the *contretemps*, and she determined to make the most of it. She did not see why the heir to the Moonshine peerage should be calmly appropriated for and by her younger and half-sister. For her part, she could never quite understand what there particularly was to charm people in Kate. Besides, Kate had her time before her; she had only finished her first season, and Edith Dare's first season was an affair of the more or less long past. If Kate did not choose to know her opportunity such a charge of ignorance should not be brought against Miss Dare. In plain truth this young lady was as little pleased with her father as with her sister in the present matter. It would be no such bad thing, she thought, if the event should prove that the calculations of the former were at fault; as for Kate, the child was far too ignorant to calculate at all.

The fair partner of Mr. Moonington put forth all her powers—and they were not inconsiderable—to captivate and please. She suggested a walk in the corridor, it was so hot in the ball-room. Curiously enough, Kate and Mr. Lawlesse had proceeded in the same direction only a few minutes previously. Curiously enough, also the keen eyes of Edith Dare had noticed the movement.

"I think," said that young lady, in a low tone, "we will sit here, just behind that pillar. The air blows in so cool, and we have such a pretty view of the sea."

Almost immediately on the other side of the pillar were Miss Kate Dare and Mr. Lawlesse.

"Ah! Mr. Moonington, there, I declare, are my sister and Mr. Lawlesse. How very sentimental!"

And Edith looked up into the face of the Honourable Sam, who, judging from his expression, was not particularly pleased. He looked in the direction indicated, and then turned again to his partner.

Under the shadow of the pillar Edith advanced with her cavalier a little nearer her sister.

"Romance, did you say, Mr. Lawlesse? I don't think there's much romance in the present century, least of all at Ryde. If you want romance I think it would be necessary to search for it on far wilder waters than those of the Solent."

"I suppose," returned Mr. Lawlesse, who had evidently been reading 'Ixion in Heaven,' "that romance is to the romantic."

"And who is romantic nowadays?"

The pair were standing close together, and Mr. Moonington and his partner could distinctly see Mr. Lawlesse's hand laid upon Kate Dare's.

"I think, Mr. Moonington, we will go inside. It is getting rather chilly here—romantic perhaps, rheumatic certainly," said Miss Dare, in accents sufficiently audible to arouse the attention of her sister and Mr. Lawlesse.

"Hadn't a notion," remarked Jim, turning round with something of confusion, "that anybody was so near."

The Hon. Samuel Moonington did not ask Miss Kate Dare to dance again that evening.

In her dreams that night, when the ball was over and the dancers dispersed, Miss Dare saw herself the Countess of Moonington; and if any thoughts visited her sister's slumber, I am disposed to fancy that they were principally relative to Jim Lawlesse.

* * * * *

A beautiful morning two or three days after the club ball; Ryde was thinning gradually, but among the visitors who remained, were Sir Hedworth Dare, his two daughters, the Hon. Sam Moonington, and Jim Lawlesse, the latter of whom still waited the return of his friend, the proprietor of the *Sea Fan*.

Sir Hedworth Dare was going to take a morning's sail in his yacht the *Petrel*, his two daughters were coming, and they were to be accompanied by Mr. Moonington. The baronet had noticed something of the events of the ball-night, and Mr. James Lawlesse was discreetly omitted from the party.

Kate Dare was passionately fond of the sea, and was herself an excellent oar. She told Jim as much the other night. She could not imagine, she said, any life more perfect than the yachtsman's and it must be allowed that the existence is not without its attractions.

Sir Hedworth's party were on board the *Petrel*, and the yacht was just about to slip her moorings.

"Where's Kate, Edith?" inquired the baronet, not seeing his younger daughter on deck.

"Oh, down in the cabin, papa, I suppose."

These last two words were added in a somewhat lower tone, and as she said them Edith rather blushed. She sat down, however, presently, next to Mr. Moonington, and was soon making the running not less than that of the good yacht *Petrel*.

"Tell Kate to come up," said Sir Hedworth, after he had leisure to think of other things than certain matters of purely nautical importance; and Edith Dare called for her sister down the companion ladder. Receiving no answer, she descended into the cabin.

"Papa," she said on returning, "I don't see Kate at all. I suppose at the last moment she made up her mind not to come."

This was not exactly the truth. Edith Dare had determined from the first that Kate should not be amongst the party, and to this end she had managed to divert her attention to something else at the moment they were leaving the house. Sir Hedworth was not

Digitized by Google

satisfied with the explanation, and knit his brow. His younger daughter was his favourite, and not being blind to the character of the elder, he did, in plain truth, suspect something of the ruse that had been executed; but he said nothing, and the *Petrel* went on.

Some person else had selected the present morning as a favourable one for a sail, and that was Jim Lawlesse. He had taken no companion, and was talking abstractedly to the master of the *Sea Fan*. The regulation telescope was suspended from his neck, and something impelled him to look through it in the direction of what seemed a black speck. He examined it again.

"Looks uncommonly like a boat; and so far as I can make out, whoever is inside her is in distress, for it appears to me," said Jim, "as if they were making signs."

The master of the *Sea Fan* was of the same opinion, and the pair decided that they would "stand about," and try to get at the object.

"By Jove!" cried Jim, as they drew a little nearer, "it's a woman, I declare!"

And a woman it certainly was—evidently exhausted with the severity of her efforts to make headway against the waves. They were now within two or three hundred yards of the boat; and Jim ordered the yacht's pinnace to be let down, and said he would himself run up to this female Columbus.

"Miss Dare!" cried Jim, as the pinnace touched the boat, "is that you? What on earth brought you here—three miles from shore?"

"Oh! Mr. Lawlesse, I am so glad to see you, or someone. I was getting about exhausted, and thought ——"

But Kate Dare was unable to say more, for she fell back in a dead faint.

Jim Lawlesse transferred himself into her boat, and rowed to the yacht; and when Kate Dare next became sensible, she found herself lying in the ladies' cabin of the *Sea Fan*, with Mr. James Lawlesse at her side.

"How very kind!" were her first words; and "How very fortunate!"

"It was certainly very fortunate that I should have seen you; but there is no kindness," said Jim. "Don't speak till you have quite recovered."

The recovery was not long delayed; and Kate Dare commenced to tell Jim Lawlesse exactly what had occurred.

"You know," she said, "that we—that is, papa, and Edith, and Mr. Moonington—were to have gone out for a sail in the *Petrel* this morning. Well, I was dressing and thought I had plenty of time, when, on looking out of the window, I saw the yacht starting. I was determined not to be robbed of my cruise, so I hurried and went down to the water, and got into the little boat. You see, they were close to me. The *Petrel* didn't seem to be more than a hundred yards ahead, and I thought that I could easily attract their notice. Besides, I had imagined, naturally, that they would discover I was left behind; and I thought, most likely, they would put back for me. However, I couldn't manage it; and I rowed on and on; and when I looked back, the shore was ever so far behind, and I didn't know what to do; and I only hoped some person would pick me up—and at last you did; and I am really more obliged than I can say."

Jim blurted out some disclaimer, in reply, which does not materially affect the course of this narrative.

It was decided that the best plan would be to st er for home immediately, and to land as near Sea View as possible—where Sir Hedworth Dare's house was situated.

"People talk so absurdly in Ryde," added Miss Kate Dare, as an argument to clench the plan.

When the shore was reached there was scarcely a person visible; two persons, however, had noticed the disembarkation from the *Sea Fan*—one was Edith Dare, and another Mr. Moonington.

"If that does not convince him no'hing else will," thought Miss Dare.

Miss Dare's wish was accomplished, and before the house was reached the heir of Moonshine had declared himself.

"Where on earth is Kate?" said Sir Hedworth, as he met Mr. Moonington and his newly gained *fiancée*.

"We have just seen her, papa, landing from Mr. Lawlesse's yacht," was the sisterly reply.

"The dickens you have?" replied the baronet, under his breath.

"Ah, here they come, I declare," added Miss Dare. "Hope you've had a pleasant sail, Kate?"

"Kate?" said Sir Hedworth, as that young lady was bursting out into all manner of ejaculatory explanations, "I want to speak to you at once. I am surprised," said the baronet when the library was reached, "that you should have given me the slip in the dishonest manner you did simply to do a most improper thing—go out in the yacht of a young man to whom you know I exceedingly object. As for his conduct it is simply disgraceful. I don't understand it, upon my soul I——"

"Oh, papa! what do you mean?" burst in Kate. "Mr. Lawlesse has saved my life." And Kate narrated to her father all that had occurred. The baronet's face changed more than once in the course of his daughter's story.

"Go up and dress for dinner, Kate. I will go and thank Mr. Lawlesse."

Sir Hedworth met that gentleman standing on the steps of the porch.

"No thanks whatever are due, Sir Hedworth," replied Jim. "I am only sincerely grateful that I saw your daughter when I did."

"Don't go, Lawlesse," continued the owner of the *Petrel*. "Come and stay to dinner."

And so saying, Sir Hedworth turned aside to speak to his elder daughter whom he saw coming.

"Edith," he said, "I should like to know what you meant by telling me that Kate was in the cabin this morning?"

"Really, papa, I knew nothing to the contrary. I'm glad she was in more agreeable society. But Mr. Moonington is in the library and I know he is anxious to see you. He is calling—pray go!"

Later on that evening there was another interview—this time between Sir Hedworth and Mr. Jim Lawlesse, It was entirely satisfactory.

Kate had spoken to her father in the interval on the subject of her lover. Jim had made, and would make no declaration without Sir Hedworth's consent. That consent was given.

"Lawlesse, you have not only saved my daughter's life, you have acted in a manner infinitely creditable to yourself."

"Kate," said Jim to his affianced bride, before they parted that night, "don't you think I was right, that there may be some romance even close to Ryde, and on the waters of the Solent, after all?"

SUSIE LANCE.

Digitized by Google

Have You Eczema?

or any form of Skin Disease? If you have, do go to your Chemist or Store, or send stamps or P O. for 1/3 to the Antexema Co., 83 Castle Road, London, N.W., for a bottle of "ANTEXEMA." It gives immediat re lef directly it is appli d, and soon cures even the most obstinate cases. A Booklet on Skin Troubles is enclosed with each bottle.

All orders are sent securely packed, free from observation.

VARICOCELE.

Every man suffering from Varicocele and the allied troubles, should send for treatise, describing their Causes, Symptoms, Results, and Successful and Painless Treatment without surgical operation or the use of cumbersome trusses and electrical appliances. Will be sent sealed, post free, three stamps.

S. S. MURRAY,
7 Southampton Row, London, W.C.

ALL FAT PEOPLE

can safely **Reduce Weight and cure Corpulency permanently** by taking **TRILENE TABLETS** (Regd.) for a few weeks. They are small, agreeable, harmless, and never fail to IMPROVE both HEALTH and FIGURE without Change of Diet. An English Countess writes: "*Your Trilene Tablets act admirably.*"

Send 2s. 6d. to **THE TRILENE CO.**, Sole Proprietors, **66 Finsbury Pavement, London.**

SAMPLES OF TESTIMONIALS.

Princess Liechtenstein writes from Landsberg, Austria: "Pray send your excellent tablets directly." Mr. Canham, 87 Alexandra Road, Norwich: "Tablets cured my wife of extreme stoutness; it has never returned." Mrs. H. Cox, 23 Warnall Road, Hucknall Torkard, writes: "The Tablets reduced me 1½ stone." Mrs. S. Alexander, 102 Dixon Street, New Swindon, says: "They reduced me 23lb., and I am cured." Mrs. Darnley-Smith, of Landscove Vicarage, Ashburton, says: "Tablets have reduced me very much." Mrs. Crossley, of Rose Hill, Torver, Comston, says: "I weigh much less and can breathe so much easier; I am delighted."

TOO STOUT

I was for years; by chance I came across a simple home remedy that reduced me from 17st. to 10st. 12lb., and I will willingly send particulars **free** to any sufferer enclosing stamp. Mrs. L. E. FELL, 195 Oxford Street, London, W.

SEND FOR

DR. EVANS'S (U.S.A.)

Pamphlet on Nervous Diseases of All Kinds. THIS PAMPHLET describes all the symptoms which arise from Diseases of the NERVOUS SYSTEM. It is up-to-date, having been compiled after years of labour and experience in the Treatment of these Maladies. It is complete, practical, and can be readily understood and acted upon. It gives pure and simple advice to Sufferers. Send stamped addressed envelope to GEORGE WRIGHT, Esq., Colne House, REMBRANDT ROAD, LEE, LONDON, S.E. (*Name this Paper.*)

DO YOU KNOW

that with every copy of THIS WEEK'S

HOME NOTES

A Paper Pattern of a

PRETTY NIGHTDRESS

is

GIVEN AWAY?

HOME NOTES is the best and daintiest of ladies' weeklies. Order a copy at once.

ONE PENNY.

2/9 **CHALLENGE TO THE WORLD—OUR WARRANTED TIMEKEEPER,** **2/9**

With a guarantee to keep correct time for three years, will be sent to any address on receipt of P.O. or stamps value 2/9 and three stamps extra for postage. To every purchaser during this month we give with it ABSOLUTELY FREE a strong Mexican SILVER CHAIN. All we ask of you is to show them to your friends, as by doing so you advertise our business.

GENEVA WATCH IMPORTERS,
106 Hatton Garden, London, E.C.

The Only Efficacious Substitute for Cod-liver Oil.

DEVONSHIRE CREAM

(Really Genuine.) In Patent Air-tight Tins. ¼-lb., **1/4**; 1-lb., **2/4**; 2-lb., **4/-**, including Tin and Postage.

Mrs. Conyers,
MORCHARD BISHOP, DEVON.

A MAGNIFICENT COMPLEXION GUARANTEED

By the free use of LILLIE POWDER. It nourishes, heals, soothes, and brings Health and Beauty.

Order it of your Chemist and refuse all substitutes, as they may be injurious.

Three Tints: Blanche Naturelle, and Rachel.

Of all Chemists, Hairdressers, Stores, &c.

THE LILLIE SYNDICATE,
3 Henrietta Street, London, W.C.

THE
BEST OF ALL BEVERAGES
AND THE
CHEAPEST.

GOOD! IT'S MASON'S

Extract of Herbs

8 Gallons Prime Beer for 6d.

Sample Free for 9 Stamps.

AGENTS WANTED EVERYWHERE.

NEWBALL & MASON,
NOTTINGHAM.

"WORTH A GUINEA A BOX."

BEECHAM'S PILLS

FOR ALL

BILIOUS & NERVOUS DISORDERS,
Sick Headache, Constipation, Wind and Pains in Stomach, Impaired Digestion, Disordered Liver, and Female Ailments.

SALE OVER SIX MILLION BOXES YEARLY.

In Boxes, 1s. 1½d. and 2s. 9d. each, with full directions.

Prepared only by the Proprietor,

THOMAS BEECHAM, St. Helens, Lancashire.

Sold by all Druggists and Patent Medicine Dealers everywhere.

Digitized by Google

The Brain Gymnasium

IN these competitions a prize of £2 will be awarded each week to the competitor whose attempt we receive giving the correct solutions of all the puzzles. If more than one is absolutely correct the prize of £2 will be given to the first correct attempt dealt with.

If no lists of absolutely correct solutions are sent in the first prize will be awarded to the competitor whose attempt is first dealt with showing the fewest mistakes.

Each week we shall award in addition to the above, either ten of our silver plated pencil-cases or ten popular novels, to be distributed amongst the competitors whose attempts are absolutely correct and have failed to win the first prize, or, if no complete lists of correct solutions are received, to those whose attempts show the fewest mistakes.

Write all your solutions on one sheet of paper, putting the number against each. Post the batch in an envelope marked "Brain Gymnasium," to reach the Editor, SHORT STORIES, 18 Henrietta Street, Covent Garden, W.C., by first post on Monday, October 1st, 1900.

Readers are invited to submit puzzles, acrostics, conundrums, word-squares, etc., for publication on this page. A gold-plated pencil-case will be given to each reader whose attempts are used. All attempts must be vouched for as original, and, of course, it is distinctly understood that the sender of a puzzle must neither compete in the competition nor divulge to anyone the solution. Any reader found infringing this rule will be severely dealt with.

No. 217.

MY whole is a fish; my 4, 5, 6, 7, is splendid; my 8, 9, 10, is an adjective; my 1, 3, 11, 2, is a disease.

No. 218.

ONE quarter of tare, plus one-fifth of swear, plus one-sixth of bubble, plus one-fourth of gate, plus one-third of net, plus one-third of tea.

The sum is equivalent to: to diminish.

No. 219.

MY initials and finals, read downwards, will give the names of two great powers:

A village in Norfolk.
A town in France.
A town in Germany.
A town in Russia.
A state in America.
A county in Wales.
A river in Scotland.

No. 220.

MY FIRST a sound which may denote
Disoredit or surprise,
To kiss it, when on bended knee,
Humility implies.

From gold to silver LAST is changed
By alchemy of time;
To tamper with it when not yours
Is deemed a heinous crime.

Unjustly charged, unjustly doomed,
The sage took up my WHOLE;
"With this," said he, "I will unLAST
The mysteries of the soul."

No. 221.

THE following letters, when re-arranged, will form a double word-square, the connecting word of which means a communication:

AAAA EEEEE GG LLLL MM NN PP RR SSSSS UU Y.

No. 222.

A MAN left £400 to be divided among his eight children in the following proportions:

The first was to receive as much as the 2nd and 3rd,					
The second	,,	,,	twice as much as the 3rd.		
The third	,,	,,	,,	,,	5th.
The fourth	,,	,,	,,	,,	6th.
The fifth	,,	,,	one-sixth	,,	1st.
The sixth	,,	,,	twice	,,	7th.
The seventh	,,	,,	one-quarter	,,	4th.
The eighth	,,	,,	one-fifth	,,	2nd, [6th, and 7th together.

What did each child receive?

RESULT OF BRAIN GYMNASIUM.

Nos. 199 to 204.

THE first prize of £2 has been awarded this week to Mr. Charles H. Moore, of The Nest, Record Road, Emsworth, whose solution was the first correct one dealt with.

A copy of "A Strange Executor," by Bennett Coll has been sent to each of the following:

W. Armstrong, Marchmont Road, Edinburgh.
S. S. Napper, Highbury New Park, N.
Miss K. Brien, Wilton Place, Dublin.
Mrs. Frances Thomas, Kingswood, Bristol.
C. G. Chesterman, Fairfield, Liverpool.
F. Lucas, Freemantle, Southampton.
A. Milligan, Lit le Woodhouse Street, Leeds.
A. E. Bunn, Thornham Street, Liverpool.
J. P. Gross, Rue des Belles Feuilles, Paris.
Mrs. J. L. Keys, Flaxman Road, Camberwell, S.E.

SOLUTIONS OF BRAIN GYMNASIUM COMPETITION.

Nos. 205 to 210.

No. 205. 1½.

No. 206. Canton, Stirling, Port Arthur.

No. 207.

O B A N
B A N E
A N E W
N E W T O W N
O B O E
W O V E
N E E D

No. 208. Bream, cream, cram, dram, ram.

No. 209. TARTAR.

No. 210. "Sweet are the uses of adversity."
Afraid, share, verity, toe.

SHORT STORIES ADVERTISEMENT RATES.

Single column, per inch, per insertion	£0 10 0
Double ,, ,, ...	1 0 0
Full page inside, facing page of matter, either white paper or 2nd or 3rd page of cover, or back page, per insertion	10 0 0
Half-page ,, ,, ,, ...	5 0 0
Quarter-page ,, ,, ...	2 10 0
Eighth-page ,, ,, ...	1 5 0
Front page, whole ,, ,, ...	12 10 0
,, half ,, ,, ...	6 5 0

All spaces above one-eighth of a page are charged at per page rate. Series discount: 5 per cent. for 13, 10 per cent. for 26, 15 per cent. for 52 insertions.

Black blocks are charged 25 per cent. extra. All advertisements are subject to approval. All copy must be sent in by Noon on Tuesday, Sept. 25th, if intended for the issue on sale Oct. 9th, and dated October 13th. The Proprietors reserve the right to hold over or suspend the insertion of any advertisement without prejudice to other insertions on order. All communications should be addressed to the Advertisement Manager, "Pearson's Weekly" Offices, Henrietta Street, London, W.C.

Printed and Published by C. ARTHUR PEARSON LTD., at Pearson's Weekly Buildings, Henrietta Street, London, W.C.

Digitized by Google

SEE SPECIAL 10 DAYS' OFFER AT FOOT OF PAGE.

KOKO

FOR THE HAIR

UNDER ROYAL PATRONAGE.

Eradicates Scurf and Dandriff.

Prevents Hair Falling and Turning Grey.

Promotes Growth.

Contains no Dye.

Is delightfully Cooling, Refreshing, and Invigorating.

Keeps the Hair Soft and Pliant, and Imparts to it the Lustre and Freshness of Youth.

Invaluable for Use after Sea Bathing.

Allays Irritation and Keeps the Scalp Clean.

Recommended and Used by
H.M. THE QUEEN (of Greece), PRINCESS VICTORIA (of Schaumburg-Lippe), PRINCESS HOHENLOHE, PRINCESS MARIE (of Greece), PRINCESS HENRY REUS, Rear-Admiral TINKLAR, &c., &c.

KOKO FOR THE HAIR

KOKO FOR THE HAIR

SPECIAL OFFER to those who have not yet tried KOKO.

A 4/6 TRIAL BOTTLE for 2/-.

Any person forwarding this Coupon and P.O. for Two Shillings, and four Stamps to pay postage, packing, &c., will receive immediately for trial, by Parcel Post, under cover, prepaid, **One Regular 12 oz. Bottle of Koko for the Hair**, the price of which is 4/6, provided it is ordered within **ten days from the date of this offer.** In no case will more than one bottle be sent for the use of the same person on this coupon, as we make the offer solely for trial, knowing it creates a demand when once used; and this large bottle gives it a fair trial. We find it better to thus practically **give away** one bottle to make a customer than to spend large amounts in advertising. **Any person into whose hands this offer comes may avail themselves of it.** Address all Orders with Coupons to—

THE KOKO-MARICOPAS CO. LTD., 16 BEVIS MARKS, LONDON.

Orders may be sent with this Coupon after the expiration of date, provided we are then issuing these trial bottle Coupons, and if we are not, the money will be returned. This Coupon will be received at 16 Bevis Marks, E.C., or 113 Regent Street, London, W., and 2/- only will be required when presented personally.

KOKO is sold by all Chemists, &c., at 2/6 and 4/6 per bottle. For the sake of greater profit you may be asked to buy some other hair preparation instead. In justice to us kindly insist on having Koko.

Digitized by Google

OROCO SOX

A New Invention to keep the feet warm and dry yet allowing perfect ventilation

18 pairs post free for 1/-

State size required.

A boon for tender & tired feet

WILL SUIT YOU DOWN TO THE GROUND.

OROCO M'F'G. Co. WIGAN.

PARASITENE

is a new and important remedy for GOUT, RINGWORM, ECZEMA, and all IRRITANT SKIN DISEASES.

Prescribed by members of the London Medical Profession.

Can be obtained from all Chemists as a Lotion or an Ointment at 1/1½ and 2/9, or Post Free from the Proprietors.

"SKIN DISEASES & HOW TO CURE"

By Parasitene Treatment, post free from

The WEDNESFIELD CHEMICAL SYNDICATE Limited,

WOLVERHAMPTON.

Reckitt's PARIS Blue.

The Best is the Cheapest.

"HAIR LIKE AN ENGLISH WOMAN."

That is the generally expressed desire of a foreigner. To have hair like an English woman. Hair is a woman's chief adornment, but hair to be nice must have nice treatment. Hair must be stimulated to live.

Continual brushing does this, and nothing else does it as effectually. Our grandmothers, and even our mothers, knew this so well that hair brushing was one of the most important features of their toilet. Half an hour at night and half an hour in the morning were thought none too long a time to devote to this. If this attention cannot be given, recourse must be had to a stimulant, and as a stimulant for the hair there is none so safe and so effective as the discovery of Mr. Geo. R. Sims, called by him "TATCHO," which is the Romany word for "genuine."

GEO. R. SIMS'

HAIR RENEWER "TATCHO."

"TATCHO" is a brilliant spirituous liquor, the colour of whisky, free from all grease. A sprinkle of a few drops on the scalp and five minutes with the brush daily works marvels with every head of hair, but more especially with those that have not received their quantum of care.

If you value your appearance—and who does not?—get a bottle of "TATCHO" to-day. The result will surprise you and be intensely gratifying.

"TATCHO" will stop the hair falling, and will make it beautiful in texture and double in volume.

"TATCHO" gives vitality to the hair at once, and after a few days of treatment its youthful brightness; and what is more, this vitality and brightness may be retained.

Mrs. BROWN POTTER, whose beautiful hair is the envy of her sex, uses nothing but "TATCHO."

Geo. R. Sims' Hair Renewer, "Tatcho," is obtainable of all perfumers, 2/9 & 5/- per Bottle; or can be had direct in plain wrapper on sending 2/11 or 5/3.

ADDRESS

The Geo. R. Sims Co.,

81c Great Queen St., London, W.C.

SAMPLE TRIAL BOTTLES 1/6 TO-DAY.

Sent post free in plain package, twenty-one stamps.

Digitized by Google

"HAVE YOU GOT THAT TEN POUND NOTE?"
See this week's "Pearson's Weekly."

SHORT STORIES
A WEEKLY MAGAZINE FOR HOME AND TRAIN

No. 613. FOR WEEK ENDING SEPTEMBER 29TH, 1900. [ONE PENNY.

REASONS WHY

YOU SHOULD DRINK THE DELECTABLE

NON-INTOXICATING BEER

MADE FROM

Good for the HEALTH,
Good for the POCKET,
Good for the OLD,
Good for the YOUNG,
Good for EVERYBODY,
Good for YOU!
TRY IT!
SOLD EVERYWHERE

Good for the HEALTH,
Good for the POCKET,
Good for the OLD,
Good for the YOUNG,
Good for EVERYBODY,
Good for YOU!
TRY IT!
SOLD EVERYWHERE

A 6d. BOTTLE MAKES 8 GALLONS OF

WHOLESOME, PALATABLE BEER!!

Try also MASON'S COFFEE ESSENCE (Sample sent free) and
MASON'S WINE ESSENCES (Sample Bottle free for 9 Stamps).

NEWBALL & MASON, Nottingham.

AGENTS WANTED.

Advertisements should be sent to "Short Stories" Advertisement Department, Henrietta Street, London, W.C.

Digitized by Google

KOKO

FOR THE HAIR

UNDER ROYAL PATRONAGE.

KOKO for the HAIR is a tonic, cleansing, invigorating preparation, it eradicates scurf and dandriff, prevents hair from falling or turning grey, promotes growth, contains no dye or greasy substance, is the most cleanly of all hair preparations and invariably gives satisfaction.

1/-, 2/6, and 4/6, of all Chemists, Hairdressers, &c., everywhere.

OLD PEOPLE LIKE IT for its wonderful power to *invigorate decayed hair*, and induce an entirely new growth when that is possible.

MIDDLE-AGED PEOPLE LIKE IT, because it *prevents them from getting bald*, keeps dandriff, away, and makes the hair grow thick and strong.

YOUNG LADIES LIKE IT As a dressing, because it gives the hair a *beautiful glossy lustre*, ensures a *luxuriant growth*, and enables them to dress it and keep it in any style that may be desired.

CHILDREN LIKE IT, Because it keeps the hair and scalp cool and clean, *allays irritation*, and keeps the hair in whatever position desired.

THEY ALL LIKE IT, Because it is as *pure as crystal*, perfectly colourless, contains no poisonous substance, no sugar of lead, sulphur, nitrate of silver, or grease, and does not soil or colour *the scalp, face, or the most delicate fabric in clothing.*

ESTABLISHED 1851.

BIRKBECK BANK

Southampton Buildings, Chancery Lane, London.

2% on CURRENT ACCOUNTS, on the minimum monthly balances when not drawn below £100.

The BIRKBECK ALMANACK, with full particulars, post free.

FRANCIS RAVENSCROFT, *Manager.*

FREE

QUAKER OATS COOKER

OUR OFFER, READ IT

2-Pint Cooker Free. { For **25** white squares like this from front of **2**-lb. packet.

2-Pint Cooker Free. { For **50** white squares like this from front of **1**-lb. packet.

3-Pint Cooker Free. { For **40** white squares like this from front of **2**-lb. packet.

3-pint Cooker Free. { For **75** white squares like this from front of **1**-lb. packet.

Required number of White Squares must be sent in at one time.

On receipt by us, POSTAGE PAID, of required number of WHITE SQUARES, or price mentioned below, before Sept. 1, 1901, a Quaker Oats Cooker will be sent at once, carriage paid, to any address in Great Britain or Ireland.

If you want the Cooker at once, and have not the required number of WHITE SQUARES, send 2/- for **2**-pint size, or 2/6 for **3**-pint size. **The amount you pay will be refunded immediately** correct number of WHITE SQUARES is sent us, postage paid, if received by us before Sept. 1st, 1901. Write your address plainly and mention this Paper.

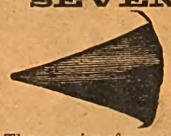
ADDRESS: DEPT. W 3

QUAKER OATS, LTD., EASTCHEAP, LONDON, E.C.

QUAKER OATS, sold in 1-lb. and 2-lb. Packets only.

Beware of substitution. Quaker name and Quaker Figure on every Packet.

SEVEN PRIZE MEDALS.



C. BRANDAUER & Co's CIRCULAR POINTED PENS

These series of pens neither scratch nor spurt. They glide over the roughest paper with the ease of a soft lead pencil. Assorted sample boxes, 6d., to be obtained from all Stationers. If out of stock, send 7 stamps direct to the works, Birmingham.

HAIR DESTROYED.

Send me an envelope (stamped and addressed) and I will tell you how to remove all superfluous hair **free of charge.** (Send no money.) Address, in confidence, MISS E. V. (Room 3), 195 Oxford Street, London, W.

A SUM of from 12s. to 25s. per week can be earned in spare hours or evenings by either sex everywhere.—Send addressed envelope for particulars to Box 24, Eclipse Works, 89 Aldersgate Street, E.C.

DRUNKENNESS

CURED. This can be done with or without patient's knowledge. Send me a stamp and I will tell you how. (Send no money.) Address, in confidence, Mrs. C. H. (Room 8), 195 Oxford Street London, W.

SENSATIONAL BARGAINS for LADIES

LADY'S MARVEL "ACME" WATCH.

A MONEY SAVING OF NEARLY 50 PER CENT.

Every Lady Reader of SHORT STORIES should send a postcard to H. SAMUEL and secure a

HANDSOME FREE GIFT.

Every applicant will receive **H. SAMUEL'S GRAND ALBUM** of Bargains, a magnificent work of nearly **200 Pages**, adorned with **over 3,000 Illustrations** of wonderful Bargains in Ladies' and Gents' **GOLD and SILVER WATCHES**, Clocks, **ELEGANT JEWELLERY**, Plate, **BEAUTIFUL DIAMONDS**, Cutlery, &c., &c., all of which H. SAMUEL supplies to you **direct** at Wholesale Prices. Every volume contains full particulars, and ten lists of **GRAND BONUS REWARDS.** Don't forget it is sent you **ABSOLUTELY FREE.**

H. SAMUEL'S LADY'S "ACME" WATCH,

As Illustrated, has a fine Three-quarter Jewelled Plate Lever Movement, Richly Decorated Dial (Plain, if preferred), and Highly Engraved Case. Warranted for **FIVE YEARS** and sent complete, with Key, Instructions, and **BONUS FREE GIFT** on receipt of 25/-.

A MONTH'S FREE TRIAL

is allowed with every article; thus fullest opportunity is afforded of thoroughly testing the goods.

H. SAMUEL (DEPT. 29), 95, 97, 99, 101, 33, 89 & 121 MARKET STREET, MANCHESTER.

Digitized by Google

SHORT STORIES

No. 613.] [ONE PENNY.

For the Week Ending Sept. 29th, 1900.

PIERROT.

The Story of an Innocent.

AT the foot of a big frowning mountain which for ages has stood like some doughty sentinel, refusing to leave his post, there nestles the quaintest and neatest of all the villages of southern France.

It is not a large village, but is too small to appear on the maps. History does not mention it; fame has not visited it; but it is a very happy little village for all that, and the simple peasants who live in it are contented with their home, and proud to have been born there.

If once in a while a tourist happens to pass through the place, and admits that he has never even heard of their village or the great *château* above it, or even of the fine monument of polished marble which the inhabitants point out with pride as marking the grave of a hero second only to the great Napoleon himself, they shake their heads in pitying astonishment at the crass ignorance he displays.

What! Never heard of Pierrot, their own Pierrot, who was so brave and noble and good? Was it possible!

And here Misette, who proudly asserts that she was named for the hero's young mother, clatters out in her neat wooden *sabots*, and, as the most venerable woman in the village, is accorded the honour of telling this wonderful story to the stranger, while all the other village women, with their round-faced, solemn-eyed brood, cluster eagerly around and listen with reverent awe, although they have heard the tale many times before.

Mère Misette is somewhat garrulous in her story-telling, and intersperses her remarks with pious ejaculations and apostrophes to the many virtues of their own Pierrot.

"An Innocent, M'sieu, as you may see by the words on the monument; but a very wise boy, for all, and a shining example to these lazy, worthless know-nothings!"

All rights reserved.]

Digitized by Google

It happened, oh! long ago, in the golden days of the First Empire, when all France was bubbling over with joy, after many months of boiling over with rage. All the village took a holiday when Gustave and Misette

Pere Milleux came to her as she sat crushed and grief-stricken by her recent discovery.

were married, and all the village wept as one man when the happy couple departed—Gustave proud and radiant, Misette blushing and happy—to "live at the great fort where Gustave's regiment was stationed."

All the maids in the village were more or less openly envious of Misette, not that they did not love her well, or honestly own that she was the gayest and prettiest of them all, but then Gustave was a soldier, very handsome and tall and straight, and wore so beautiful a uniform. He could tell the most marvellous tales, of war and fighting too, until one's flesh would fairly creep with the delighted horror.

Their own more prosaic lovers were quite cast in the shade when Gustave made these all too brief and infrequent visits to his old home; and Pepin, the vine-dresser, and Antoine and Pierre, who worked so industriously in the quarries, felt dreadfully overshadowed and not a little aggrieved when the gay soldier came and absorbed everybody's attention, holding all the village spellbound by his account of how he had actually seen the emperor face to face.

But, when, not a year afterward, Misette returned to them, a desolate and broken-hearted widow, refusing to be comforted, because her merry, loving Gustave had been ordered to the front and cruelly killed in battle, and even his poor mangled remains denied her, being buried hastily, then and there, with many others in a great trench, pretty Marie sobbed from the very depths of her tender little heart, and thanked the Holy Mother that her own Pepin was but an humble vine-dresser, instead of a fine soldier, as she had once wished and all the village wept for sympathy with Misette, and mourned the loss of their gallant soldier.

The days were long and dreary enough for Misette, after that; but soon a little comforter was sent to gladden her eyes and warm her poor numb heart—a tiny, round-eyed baby, with such loves of dimples, and a mite of a nose which looked like a mere dot in the middle of his funny wrinkled face.

He was never romping or naughty, like other children, but would lie quiet for hours at a time, staring with unblinking eyes at the warm blue sky, and making no noise except an occasional gurgling coo.

Misette was charmed, delighted, with such exceptionally good behaviour. Was there ever such a wonderful child as her Pierrot, and would not his father have been proud of the blessed little angel?

Ah, his father! Misette would weep a little at the memory, and hug her Pierrot more closely, as she remembered the gay, brave soldier.

As the child grew older, Misette would sometimes see her kind neighbours look at him in a puzzled way, and then pityingly at her, and shake their heads silently, or even furtively dash away a tear.

She was perplexed for a while at this strange behaviour, for her fond mother-heart could not yet realize what they saw all too plainly—that no gleam of human intelligence lit up the big brown eyes, as wistful and pathetic as a dog's; but, when the time came for the child to talk, and reason a little on his own account, it slowly dawned upon her that something was lacking.

Père Milleux, the good Priest, came to her, as she sat crushed and grief-striken by her recent discovery, and laid a kind hand on Pierrot's chestnut curls—the pretty, tousled locks that hid no actively working mind.

"My daughter," he said, with loving sympathy, "God is good. He sent thee a beautiful child to sustain thee in thine affliction. Now, when thine heart would revolt against His divine will, remember that He does no thing without a wise purpose, and, if thy little Pierrot is an Innocent, be assured that it is because He wishes to use this helpless one for some great good. Be comforted."

Misette bowed her head meekly before the holy man, and said:

"It is the will of God."

But still in her heart she mourned bitterly, and, before another year came, she died, bequeathing her Innocent to the care of the village.

They accepted him as a sacred trust, these simple peasant folk, who knew little of the intricacies of law and government, but ever followed the dictates of their own honest hearts.

The child made his home with all of them, wandering at will from house to house, always welcomed, always cared for tenderly and lovingly, and given a generous

Digitized by Google

share of the poorest meal, because he was an Innocent, their poor Pierrot.

As time went on, he grew into a tall, strong boy pitifully simple and childish in his tastes and amusements, but always faithful and loving to his kind friends, and more than delighted when he could be of some little service to them.

The little children loved him, and clung to their Pierrot with unlimited trust and confidence. Possibly they may have felt, with dim, childish intuition, the mute appeal that always shone in his dull, patient eyes, but they could not realize, and would not have cared if they had, that those eyes were hopelessly vacant, and that he would never be more than a child. They knew that he was an "Innocent," because they had heard their elders say so, but he was their own dear Pierrot, and that was sufficient for them.

Pierrot was happy in the love of little children and dumb animals, and in the beautiful summer land in which he lived. He took immeasurable delight in the great *château* which towered above the village, about a mile away, and he would hover about the deserted grounds for days at a time.

The *château* had been closed and empty for many years, but to Pierrot it was indeed a fairy castle, and almost as wonderful in its loneliness as though it had been thrown open and filled with a brilliant throng of guests.

When he saw workmen busy on the grounds one day, and was told that the grand marquis was coming there for the summer with his lady and their little son, the Lord Montalembert, and all their retinue of servants, his ecstasy knew no bounds; and this feeling the entire village shared with him.

When the long-expected day came when their lord should arrive, they decked themselves in gala attire, and clustered, all agog with eagerness, along the road by which the marquis and his retinue were to pass through the village.

It was a day long to be remembered. Did one ever see such a fine gentleman as their own marquis, or such a sweet and beautiful lady as his wife? Such a handsome, merry little boy, too, was the young lord, who threw coins out of the carriage-window, and shrieked with laughter to see the children scrambling for them, and who thanked Pierrot so politely—the sweet young gentleman—when his fine cap fell off in the dust, and Pierrot picked it up and handed it back with awkward shyness.

Pierrot took him on his broad shoulders and strode patiently along.

Ah! that was indeed a wonderful procession, with servants enough for a king at least, dressed in the most beautiful coats, all aglitter with fine gold lace. It formed a topic of conversation for years.

The next day the marquis rode down into the village with his son, attended by two very erect and stern-looking grooms.

The little lord's face was sparkling and eager at the queer things he was seeing, so different from the sights at his city home, with which he was so familiar.

The wonderful marquis was good-naturedly resigned. He would never have ridden down into the commonplace little village that morning, if the young Lord Montalembert had not coaxed and teased to be taken again to see those funny peasant children and the big boy who had picked up his hat, and, on being refused once, had screamed his displeasure in so terrifying a way that the delicate nerves of his lady mother had been quite shaken.

Madame la marquise had been very, very ill, and they had come to this quiet place for the absolute rest she could not get in any of their gayer homes; but, if the young lord was going to scream like that, she might as well be in Paris itself. So the young lord had his way, as usual, and now, from the back of his shaggy pony, he hailed Pierrot with delightful familiarity:

"I say, come here!"

Pierrot shuffled slowly forward, a big awkward figure, grinning in sheepish delight at the honour conferred upon him, and stood looking at the smart velvet suit and jaunty cap his lordship wore.

Lord Montalembert, on his part, was looking down at Pierrot's bare brown legs and feet.

"Do you never have to wear shoes?" he asked, looking back to his own dantily-shod foot with a dissatisfied air.

Pierrot looked mystified, and shook his head.

After a moment his dull face brightened, and, looking up at the small figure of the seven-year-old horseman, he said in the confidential tone of one who is sure of the efficacy of his charm:

"Rabbits! Bird! Want to see?"

Lord Montalembert was a very human little boy. He slid down from his pony in a twinkling, and was ready to start before his father could interpose a word.

"Come on," he said, peremptorily, and Pierrot went, nothing loth, while an admiring knot of villagers followed at a respectful distance, vowing that there never was

Digitized by Google

such a fine, frank little lord as theirs. He was a merry, imperious little gentleman, sadly spoiled and accustomed to his own sweet will, but with a warm childish heart under all his velvet and lace ruffles. He went to Pierrot as the village children went to him—with a childish trustfulness that this was a friend, a *bon camarade*, in spite of mental deficiencies.

He was charmed with the two shy little rabbits, one of which was promptly given to him and carried back to the *château* by one of the dignified grooms, who looked dreadfully distressed over his wriggling charge; but Father Crow, with his one lame foot and his knowing wink, was a treasure such as all the great shops in Paris did not contain.

His father smiled to himself, and waited with commendable resignation until his son should be through, listening the while most courteously to what Père Milleux had to say about the dreadful leak which let the rain down in Grandmère Gabrielle's cottage, and made her dependent on her neighbours for shelter.

Père Milleux was quickly satisfied with the promise that a carpenter from the *château* should mend the bad roof, but it was quite another matter to persuade Lord Montalembert to leave the novel society of his humble friends.

Not forty paces below the little lordling lay—unconscious or dead.

That afternoon the marquis said to his lady:

"Our son has made a particular friend of that halfwitted boy in the village—the Innocent, I believe they call him—and seems to prefer his society above all things."

"He is fine fun, anyway," broke in the little lord in loyal defence of his new friend. "He knows all about trees and birds and things, and everybody likes him. He is ever so much nicer than cousin Victor. Come, *chère maman*, you will let him come here often and play with me?"

His *chère maman* stroked his cheek with her thin fingers, and smiled down into his eager face.

"From all that I hear, your Pierrot will be a safer companion for you than any groom or tutor we could employ."

That was Pierrot's golden summer. Wherever the little lordling wished to go, he followed like a faithful dog, guarding him from danger and fatigue, and looking after him in a thousand other ways. His plantive brown eyes would brighten at the first glimpse of the slender little figure in its black velvet suit and gay red sash, and the beautiful buckles on his shoes.

Like all summers, this one drew to a close.

Pierrot grieved silently when he was made to understand that within a few weeks his little master and playmate must leave him. He should be so lonely now.

He went up to the beautiful *chateau* quite early one day, and so heavy at heart that he did not see the agile little figure darting behind the shrubbery, until it sprang out with a great "Boh!"

"Come, Pierrot," coaxed the little lord, in his most insinuating tones, "take me over to the quarries. Jean says they are blasting to-day, and I wish to see it so badly. Besides, I shall not be here much longer."

Digitized by Google

Thus artfully adjured, Pierrot obediently started, and his small companion danced and chattered along by his side, singing gay songs and eating the sweets that he had purloined to fill his own and Pierrot's pockets.

The way to the great quarries was very long, and soon the little legs grew dreadfully tired. Pierrot took him upon his broad shoulders, and strode patiently on.

They had arrived on the outskirts of the quarry, and stood by the side of a huge block of marble, which had long rested there on the mountain side, when suddenly there was a great roar and rumble, and the ground rocked beneath their feet.

Pierrot knew that it was only the blast, although he cowered and trembled, being ever afraid of a loud noise, but the little lord, who had never heard it before, shrieked in affright, and, starting to run, tripped over a root and fell headlong, with a single sharp cry of:

"Pierrot!"

Pierrot started frantically after him, his teeth chattering in terror and anxiety lest his little charge be killed. Then he stopped and whirled round, as he heard a noise behind him.

The shock had loosened the great block of marble, and it was slowly tottering, as though uncertain whether to go tearing and rushing down the mountain side, or stay where it was.

Directly in its path, and not forty paces below, the little lordling lay huddled in all the brave finery of the velvet suit and red sash, one little foot twisted under him. Unconscious—or dead? Whichever it was, in another moment the pretty slight figure would be cruelly, remorselessly crushed under the awful weight that threatened to crash down upon him.

All this Pierrot saw, with his dull senses sharpened by love and peril, and as quick as a flash he had leaped under the tottering mass, and crouched at its base.

He had often seen the workmen put huge wedges under a block to steady it, and, as there was nothing better near enough, the wedge this time must be his own strong awkward body.

The great stone wavered a moment, and then settled, with a grinding, crunching, horrible sound, on human bones and flesh—settled and stayed, its delicate equilibrium restored.

Awful thrills of agony shot through Pierrot's crushed and tortured body. He could still see the figure of his beloved playmate and friend, now sitting up and looking around him in a dazed way, and sobbing a little because his leg hurt so, and because Pierrot had deserted him.

Then a merciful God sent kindly oblivion to Pierrot, and, with the last twinge of anguish twisting through his limbs, he dropped his head, and slept.

* * * * *

When a band of workmen came past an hour later, they found the little Lord Montalembert lying there with a broken leg, while scarcely forty paces above him, holding back destruction with his own body, now crushed and mangled to an almost shapeless mass, lay Pierrot, the Innocent, his white face turned in a last look of wistful appeal toward the child he had loved so faithfully and so well.

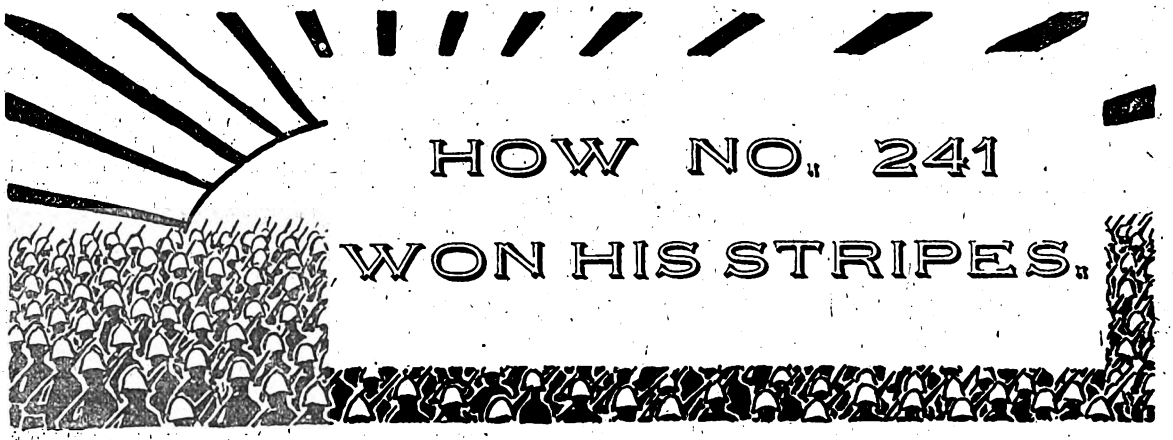
"Now was he not a remarkable boy, M'sieu?" asks Mère Misette, triumphantly, while all the women wipe their eyes sympathetically over the pathetic tale they have heard innumerable times. "There's a real hero, now! How many of your great men would have done it, eh? Easier to stand in front of a bellowing cannon M'sieu, than to crawl under a mountain of marble and have all the life *cr-r-r-ushed* out of one," rolling her "r" with such fearful effect that the round-eyed children quake with fear.

"And this is the superb grave stone the marquis had cut out of the very block that killed him—did you ever see a finer piece, M'sieu? And, when Pierrot was buried, everyone came from miles round, and the little lord, the sweet young gentleman, sobbed as though he had lost a brother. Madame la marquise, too, wept all during the beautiful sermon Père Milleux preached for Pierrot, and the marquis himself wiped his eyes. Ah, it was a grand funeral! He was indeed a brave lad, was our Pierrot."

And the stranger turns with new interest to the polished marble shaft, and bows his head reverently over the grave of a hero.

James Roberts.

Digitized by Google



CONSTABLE JOHN DIXON, Z Division, No. 241, was young and good looking. Constable Dixon was also ambitious. One stripe decorated the arm of his official coat already, and the goal of that ambition was to multiply that stripe by three.

The constable had other yearnings, chief of which was the desire to make Mary Hackett, the pretty housemaid at "The Cedars," Mrs. John Dixon, but this was also contingent upon the stripes.

Mary had more than once hinted at her willingness to content herself with the tunic as it stood, and the limited pay connected therewith, but John was wiser, and resisted the temptation; for in addition to being ambitious, he was likewise conscientious.

There was a feeble old woman living down in the country, to whom the loss of the few shillings weekly, her son sent her out of his pay, would have been a very serious loss indeed.

A constable's wage is not a very extravagant amount, and what remained to John, after his mother's allowance had been sent, would have sorely puzzled even those wise-acres, who write descriptive articles on "How to Keep House on £50 a Year!" to plan out into sufficient for the bare existence of a married couple.

So for the present, John possessed his soul in patience, contenting himself in the interim, while waiting for those extra stripes, with taking Mary an occasional Sunday trip to a bread and butter and shrimp tea at Gravesend, *viâ* the penny steamboat, to the gallery of a theatre, when his "night off duty," and her evening off happened to correspond, to say nothing of a frequent ten minutes chat at the front gate, under the shadow of the trees, which gave "The Cedars" its name.

Constable Dixon had not been long in the force—somewhere about four years—but thanks to his intelligence, and a natural aptitude for the work, he had been very successful. Thanks too, to his former experience as a farm hand, he had not that rooted objection to a wet jacket, or a cold corner, peculiar to the ordinary police officer, consequently he was always to be found upon his beat.

The result of all this was that No. 241 was trusted by his officers, and reckoned by his colleagues to be in a very fair way of promotion, an opinion in which John himself coincided.

In fact, from what the superintendent had recently let drop, No. 241 believed that the next "good case" which fell in his way, would get him the coveted step. From this it may be gathered that when on duty, John kept his weather eye open.

So it came about that on a certain evening of a certain week, when the road in which "The Cedars" stood, happened to be included in his beat, and John likewise happened to be passing, a seedy-looking individual, who after furtively watching the constable down the road, entered the grounds, did not escape his observation.

No. 241 had only caught a glimpse of the man as he slouched by, but there was something about his close-cropped head and peculiar gait, which, to the obs rvant constable, seemed to bear the hall-mark of Portland or Dartmoor.

The family at "The Cedars," which consisted of Mr. Adolphus Rosenberg—a Hatton Garden diamond merchant—his wife and daughter—were out of town for a day or two, so with the exception of the servants the house was unprotected.

Mr. Rosenberg, who was somewhat eccentric in his habits, frequently kept a large quantity of valuable gems in the house, preferring to have them under his immediate eye, at his private residence, and suffer the inconvenience of conveying them to and fro to Hatton Garden, which more than once has been the scene of extensive robberies.

John had observed the man's movements, and his suspicions were therefore at once aroused.

The police-officer who desires to get on, is no believer in the adage "Prevention is better than cure!" So affording the supposed burglar sufficient time to get to work, and chuckling as he went at the thought of giving Mary an ocular demonstration of his prowess, and with a passing glance at his left arm, upon which in his mind's eye he already saw those additional stripes, No. 241 stole back towards "The Cedars."

As he neared the gate, walking slowly—for official "brogues" are not the most noiseless footgear in the wo ld—he heard low voices on the other side of the wall.

So there were two of them, he thought. An entrance into the house had not yet been attempted, probably because the servants had not retired to bed—the hour was ten-thirty.

John stopped and listened.

"Now take care of yourself for my sake, if not for your own, Jim! And whatever you do, don't let John Dixon see you. He is on this beat, and as likely as not he'll be passing directly."

Digitized by Google

"Is Dixon a tall, smart-looking chap—clean-shaven—darkish?".

"Yes."

"Then there's no fear, for I passed him going down the road."

"That's all right! But you'd better go, one of the other servants might come out."

"Right! So long, old girl! See you again in a day or two."

"Yes. Good-night, Jim, dear!"

Then there was the sound of a kiss, and the man issuing from the gate, and catching sight of the lurking figure of the constable, abruptly took to his heels.

No. 241 was too dumfounded by what he had overheard to follow, even had there been an excuse for so doing, which, as far as he knew, there was not.

The stranger had evidently not entered the grounds with any nefarious design, or rather not with one which brought him within reach of the law—for the voice which John had heard in conversation with him was Mary's, and what to the miserable lover told its own tale, the kiss, which he had heard exchanged, was with Mary, too—Mary, upon whose faith, John would, a minute ago, have staked his life.

Before passing condemnation, the law mercifully gives the suspected one the benefit of the doubt. John decided to do likewise, and throwing open the gate, found himself face to face with a trim little figure, looking very attractive, the poor fellow thought, in her black frock, with its white collar and cuffs, her white muslin apron, and natty little cap with its broad white strings.

"Good gracious! How you startled me, John!" she cried, emphasising the fact with a start.

"So it seems," he rejoined, shortly.

He had thrown the light of his lantern upon her, and instead of the usual smiling face, it had shown him one strangely disturbed.

She held up her head for the customary salutation, but John, forgetting his resolution of a moment earlier, thrust her at arm's length.

"Who was that man who has just left you?"

"What man?"

The question was evidently but to gain time, and her lover scorned a reply.

She gave a half-hysterical little laugh and went on:

"Oh, you saw him, then, did you? Did you see his face?"

"No!"

"Ah!"

There was something of dismay, something of relief in the exclamation.

"Who was the man?" he repeated sternly.

"Oh, nobody in particular"—and she seized his arm and endeavoured to peer up into his face—"Why, surely you're not jealous, John?"

"Oh no, not at all! Why should I be? I'm only curious to know who the chap is to keep so carefully out of my sight."

A little catch came in her voice.

"He's only—someone I knew years ago—an old——"

"Sweetheart, I s'pose!"

"No indeed!"—reproachfully—"Only there are reasons why I don't want you to see him. But there's no harm in them."

"And no harm in your kissing each other either?"

"No, John! Truly there isn't!"

"Ha-ha-ha! What a fool you must take me for! Now for the last time, lass," and in his agitation he gripped the girl's shoulder so fiercely that she winced, "will you tell me who he was?"

She hesitated, then replied slowly:

"I—I can't, John—there!"

He drew a deep breath. His face flushed darkly, and he abruptly snatched away his hand.

"Then I'll tell you my opinion on the subject. You're getting tired of waiting for me, and wondering whether I'll ever get my stripes. Like many another of your sort, you think it's as well to have two strings to your bow, in case one fails. Well, I don't intend to be one of 'em any longer."

She went very pale, and her apron, which she was twisting and untwisting, began to tear, still she answered quietly enough.

"Then you mean to break off with me?"

"I do."

The answer came through his clenched teeth.

She sighed heavily.

"You'll regret it by and bye."

"I'll chance it, my girl! In the meantime, I wish you joy of the other chap, for if he isn't a goal-bird, then I'm as big a fool as you've tried to make of me,"—with which startling affirmation, No. 241 turned upon his heel and strode away, leaving Mary sobbing violently.

Despite John's firm resolution to think no more of his—as he supposed—faithless sweetheart, he found the task he had set himself was not one easily learned; and a week or two later, while striving for strength, he was guilty of very great weakness.

Patrolling past "The Cedars" in the small hours, he was seized with an irresistible desire to open the gate and steal into the grounds, which proceeding was merely to give himself the painful satisfaction of staring up at the window of Mary's sleeping room, where perhaps, at that very moment, so he told himself, she lay dreaming of his rival.

The servant's apartments overlooked the back of the house, and thither, treading noiselessly over the soft turf which bordered the paths, No. 241 made his way.

He had expected to find the house in darkness, but to his intense surprise, in one of the lower rooms he saw a light.

John rubbed his eyes, thinking they must have deceived him, for he had no sooner perceived it, than it had gone. But suddenly it came again, and as before, as suddenly disappeared.

The constable's intelligence quickly supplied him with an explanation of the phenomenon. The light proceeded from a dark lantern, which was being used by someone within. A burglary was evidently taking place.

Instantly P. C. Dixon's senses were on the alert, and sinking the lover in the official, he applied himself to a search for the means by which an entry had been made.

He found them in the shape of a small window in the basement, from which a pane of glass had been removed and the catch forced back, in a manner which showed him that the man he had to deal with, was no novice at the work.

Making use of the same means, the constable entered in his turn, and removing his boots, crept upstairs.

On reaching the landing, he perceived a glimmer of light proceeding from a room he suspected to be the library in which Mr. Rosenberg kept his stock-in-trade.

Softly turning the handle, John stepped within and by the light of the lantern which stood on a convenient chair, he saw that the door of a safe stood open, while a rough-looking individual was kneeling before it, examining the contents.

Digitized by Google

Alarmed by the faint noise of the constable's entrance, the man sprang to his feet, and uttering a fierce oath made for the door.

In shadow as the room was, as the burglar came towards him, John's recognition of him was instantaneous. It was none other than "his rival!"

A savage joy shot through No. 241's breast at the discovery, and as the man attempted to dash by him, John seized him by the throat, and after a sharp struggle—for the other was of powerful build—rolled with him to the floor.

There, until the constable's face came within the light of the lantern, the struggle, which was silent and deadly, continued, then the thief suddenly ceased to resist.

"Are you John Dixon?" he gasped.

"I am!" was the exultant reply, "and you are my prisoner!"

"All right! As it's you, I give in!" and quietly the man held out his wrists for the handcuffs."

"If it had been anyone else," he went on, "they should have made a 'stiff 'un' of me before I'd 'ave been took. But as it's you, I ain't sorry, for you'll get your stripes, then you and Mary can get married right away."

"What do you mean?"

No. 241 was so astonished by his prisoner's words that he not only omitted to handcuff him but released his grasp.

The other made no effort to take advantage.

"I mean if I'd been able to get clear away with the 'swag,' I'd have taken a trip across the 'Pond,' but as you've spoilt my chance of that, I may as well go back to 'chokey,' and do you and my sister a turn."

"Your sister?"

Dixon turned his lantern full upon the fellow's upturned face, endeavouring to trace out, in the crime-stained features some likeness to Mary.

The man gave a hoarse laugh as he observed.

"It's true—worse luck for her! I'm Mary Hackett's brother. You wouldn't think it to look at me, would you?"

John shook his head.

"A spell among the stone quarries soon works a change in a chap, and for the worse, most times. That's who I am all the same. Jim Hackett, the convict who broke gaol a month ago, and who your chaps have been looking for ever since. A bit of luck then, for you, ain't it mate?"

John Dixon made no reply.

He understood Mary's conduct now, and was bitterly reproaching himself for his want of faith—thinking what recompense he could make for his unjust suspicions—how make his peace with the girl he had wronged.

He quickly arrived at a decision. There was only one way. Jim Hackett must be allowed to go free. Grave breach of duty as this would be there was no other course. He could not, he told himself, accept promotion at the cost of the brother for whose safety Mary had been ready to sacrifice so much.

"Get up," he said, "and make your escape while you can. I can't take you, and what's more, I won't. Quick man, quick, someone is stirring upstairs."

Hackett bounded to his feet, and seizing the constable's hand, wrung it gratefully.

"You're a good chap, and if there were more like you, there'd be less like me. Tell Mary that whatever happens, Jim Hackett will go straight from this minute," and the burglar sped down the stairs.

A minute later an elderly man entered, carrying a lighted candle in one hand, and a revolver in the other, and in whom John had no difficulty in recognising the diamond merchant.

His eye fell upon No. 241, and an expression of relief swept over his face.

"A constable!" he ejaculated. "What's the matter? What's been going on?"

John pointed to the open safe.

"A burglary has been attempted, sir," he faltered, "but I don't think any damage has been done more than to the safe."

Mr. Rosenberg in his anxiety for the safety of his gems, failed to notice the constable's confusion.

"No! Nothing has been taken," he said, "but"—observing the disturbed state of the room—"there's been a struggle. Burglar got away, eh?"

"Yes, sir!"

"Humph! Well, as the diamonds are safe, that's a minor detail. You were quite right not to leave the room until someone arrived. Most officers would have troubled more about making a capture than saving the property. I shall certainly recommend your discretion to the authorities. In the meantime, take this!" and he thrust notes for a handsome amount into John's hand.

No. 241, being conscientious, made a half movement to decline it, at the same time feeling a strong inclination to avow his unworthiness of the praise which was being passed upon him.

But on second thoughts, he resolved to sleep over the matter, and also to consult Mary. He did both, and the result was, that No. 241 retained the notes, kept his own counsel, and in due time got his promotion—and his Mary; while Jim Hackett was never re-taken, and is now a useful member of society.

Had John Dixon been the creation of a novelist, he would have confessed his deriliction of duty, and been dismissed the force. Being a real personage, his conscientiousness had its limitations.

Hubert Bartlett.

Digitized by Google

THE Strand was at its busiest. The July sun beat down, mercilessly hot, upon men's heads. But of all the much-enduring throng the most to be pitied were the sandwich-men, a long dreary line of whom moved with sadly-solemn deliberation along the gutter-way of the great thoroughfare. Boards on back and breast, overhead boards carried high on shoulder-irons, announced the forthcoming early production, at the Theatre Royal Saint Georges, of a new play.

In itself this was no great novelty, although the title of the piece, *Bathsheba*, had about it a decidedly daring ring, while it certainly promised something out of the common in dramatic experiment.

But it was not so much that which they set forth, as it was one in particular of the twenty or so human derelicts themselves that irresistibly attracted att ntion.

Hunger-pinched, bowed of shoulder, his eyes seeking the ground, he walked as a man in a dream. Old he could not be, in spite of his iron-grey hair, and the bleached stubble of a fortnight's growth of beard.

There was something, too, altogether different to that of his comrades, in his garb, which evidently like its wearer, had seen better days, being well cut although woefullly shabby,

Just where Wellington Street runs into the main artery, continuing i s course over Waterloo Bridge, a block occurred in the road traffic, the long line of peripatetic advertisments halting in obedience to the uplifted hand of authority.

It was then that the man in question lifted his eyes for a moment, to meet those of a gentleman, of spic-and-span appearance, hurrying by from the opposite direction.

As hardly believing what he saw, the latter stopped short in sheer bewilderment.

"It isn't Eliot, is it?" he said in a low tone to the man in the gutter. "Heavens! it is, though! Man!" gripping him by the arm, regardless of the curious stares of the passers-by, "Come out of that infernal crowd! here, up this passage," half-pushing, half-dragging his companion into the comparative privacy of the Lyceum Pit Entrance. "Take off th se wretched boards," excitedly helping him in the process. "Throw them down there, anywhere! they belong to me. Now, tell me! Why don't you speak?"

The other leaned against the wall, reluctance and shame still seal ng his lips.

"Come, Eliot! we'll go into a quiet little restaurant I know of hard by, and over a bit of lunch you shall tell me just so much as you please, and how I can in any way help you."

"You are very good, Barker; as you will, I am incapable of argument or contention. But what about these?" pointing down to the discarded boards.

"Oh! never mind them. Here, you!" calling to the hindmost man of the string, just preparing to move on. "Go you up to the theatre, and tell them to send a boy for these. Sharp! say I sent you—Mr. Barker."

Within five minutes Eric Eliot and his friend were snugly seated in the little restaurant aforesaid, and then the former, under the influence of a generous and much-needed meal, told his tale.

It was an eminently sad one. He a wealthy man, had married a young girl, beautiful, but headstrong, vain and extravagant. Three years after the wedding-day his wife's repeated absences from home, her neglect, not only of himself, but of their one child, a wins me little daughter, together with an utter disregard of his financial position, now seriously involved, rendered necessary some de isive action on his part. This, however, was anticipated by her flight. No letter, no message gave him any clue to her intentions or whereabouts.

Two days afterwards he discovered that he was irretrievably ruined. Bills to an enormous amount came pouring in, and after making over everything to his creditors, and consigning his h pless little one to the care of an old nurse of his own, he left his West End home with a twenty-pound note in his pocket, and blank desolation before him.

This was two years ago, and all that he had undergone during that terrible period he would not say, his pride refused to stoop to a disclosure of mere personal privation, even to so genuine a sympathiser as Frank Barker. Sympathy, to such a nature, is always repugnant.

"And you haven't seen your wife since?"

"Neither seen or heard of her. But let us change the subject, Barker; as you may imagine, it is not one the most grateful fo me."

"I'm sorry, old man! I ought to have known that, but I'm really so wishful to be of some service to you that—well, what *can* I do for you?"

"Get or give me work of some, of any find. I want to earn a living. This," bitterly, indicating with his hand his back and breast, "is but death in life. A university man, and not, I think, a fool, I seem to be banned. People laugh and sneer, are sometimes downright insulting when I apply to them for employment, implying by their manner, if not by word of mouth that there must be something shady about me, or I should not be as I am."

"Hard! very hard! I know the kind of folk you mean. Pharisees every one of them. But let me make a

Digitized by Google

suggestion. How would this do for a start? It so happens that I want an intelligent, trustworthy man to take the one supernumerary part in our new play at the St. George's. There is practically nothing to do, except in the great scene. The salary would be—well—four guineas a week. What do you say? Would it suit you?"

"Barker, your're a good fellow, but your're a bad dissembler. I know the market value of a super's services, that they are far and away below four guineas a week."

"Hang your scruples, Eliot! that's the worst of people like you, your confounded pride, and conscientious stickling for what you believe to be the right thing are always barring the way."

"Perhaps I oughtn't to have said that," said Eliot, gently, yet earnestly, "I beg your pardon, it certainly was ungrateful."

"Then you accept?"

"Yes, only too thankfully; tell me all about it."

"Not now, to-morrow, when you come to the theatre. Now, don't jump down my throat at what I am going to say, but subbing, you know, is a super's institution and prerogative, and so you must allow me to give you a week's salary in advance," laying the money on the table as he spoke.

"I'll take it," said Eliot, "because, in a way, I am going to earn it."

"To-morrow, then," said Barker, wringing the other's hand, as they parted outside the restaurant, "I shall expect you not later than eleven. Good-bye!"

* * * * *

The Theatre Royal, St. George's, is a fashionable house; in not exactly the traditionally theatrical quarter of the town, but upon the fringe of it. It was run by a man moving much in Society, and by a natural sequence it was upon the immediate patronage of Society that its fortunes depended. The plays produced upon its stage were of the drawing-room, chit-chat, and "exclusive" order, "caviare" to the multitude, but to the "elect" milk and honey.

The new play, *Bathsheba*, while mainly dealing with high life, was in the nature of a departure from accustomed and familiar fashion. It had a more serious "*metier*" than usual, and being written by a man whose views upon things social tended almost in the direction of the revolutionary, it was an experiment fraught with no little risk to the producer.

Eliot duly kept his appointment next morning, and was carefully coached in his duties, by stage-manager Barker.

The rehearsals of the piece were over, but as the super's sole entrance consisted only of the delivery of a card, and a message of half-a-dozen words, it was agreed that it would be all right upon the opening night, a week ahead.

It may be briefly premised that the scheme of the play was just a modern version of the old Biblical story.

"Bathsheba," said Barker, "is a woman who succumbs to temptation, the tempter, one Sir Guy Etheridge, being the prototype of King David. By the way Eliot, have you seen our new leading lady, Miss Sara Cleave?"

"No! I haven't been in a theatre for years."

"Well, she, of course, plays the title-role, and although she is a bit of a spit-fire, and confoundedly imperious, I think she'll make a big success in the part. She's only been upon the stage about a couple of years. You know, society beauty, separation, scandal, and all the rest of it; but she's an actress, and a fine one."

"A *rara avis!*"

"Quite. You're all right now aren't you? Ask for me when you come down to the theatre this night week, and make it as near seven as possible."

* * * * *

It so happened that Eric Eliot on the night of the production of *Bathsheba* was oppressed with a strange feeling of coming disaster. Whether it were the failure of the piece, or something more akin to his own personal interests he could not determine. Anyway, as he dressed the feeling of depression strengthened so much that, knowing that his presence upon the stage would not be required before the middle of the third act, he elected to remain quietly in the dressing room till called..

Every now and again could he hear distinctly the the roar of applause going up from a crowded and enthusiastic house.

Evidently the play was going splendidly.

In the course of about two hours Barker sent the call-boy for him. The first scene of the third act was near its conclusion.

"I haven't a minute," breathlessly said the stage manager, "look out for my signal to go on. You enter through that curtained archway, don't forget that."

"I quite understand," replied Eliot. "There's no fear, I think, of my making a mistake."

"That's all right, then. They're shifting the scene now! I must be off!" and he rushed away.

Impelled by a force he has never been able quite to explain, save that his heart must have been the prompter, he moved to where the heavy plush curtains of the archway hid him from the view of the audience. He could see the whole of the stage, though, distinctly.

Sir Guy was writing at a table. The actor playing the part was a man of five-and-thirty, or thereabouts, The character he was assuming, a blasé man of the world.

Digitized by Google

fitted him like a glove. Among his professional intimates as also in the society in which he moved he was known as the "Butterfly." With a superlative self-opinion of his own powers of attraction and fascination, he was never without, at least, one string to his bow.

The new leading lady was his latest flame, and he considered himself as being fortunate in that the play demanded passionate love-making as between himself and Bathsheba.

Eric paid but little attention to him, he was looking, curiously expectant, for the entrance of the exponent of the title part.

Almost before he was aware of her vicinity, she passed him, brushing his feet with the folds of her dress. He saw a tall woman, of regal pose and figure, move towards the baronet at the table. Sir Guy turns his head, springs to his feet, and taking her in his arms imprints upon her lips a passionate kiss.

It was then that the watcher saw her face. He could not err. There was but one face in the whole world like that.

Convulsively grasping a moment at the curtain for support, his soul then leaped to life. With a cry that must have been heard across the footlights, he rushed through the archway towards the pair. Seizing the actor by the throat with one hand, and forcing back with the other the now pallid representative of Uriah's wife, the maddened man shook the pseudo Sir Guy, as does a terrier a rat, hurling him with a mighty effort sheer over the table at which he had been lately sitting.

All was now confusion and hurly-burly.

"Ring down! ring down!" shouted Barker, frantically.

With a crash the act-drop fell, almost crushing in its hurried descent the head of the actor, who had rolled perilously near to it.

Barker's next business was with Eliot.

"You've ruined me and the piece!" he cried.

Eliot stood, altogether oblivious of the manager's presence, gazing fixedly upon the face of the actress, who had not stirred.

She knew him, and all her former contemptuous feeling for him seemed to die away in the glory of his anger. It might be, too, that his sudden and unexpected appearance had much to do with this revulsion of sentiment. Happy, away from him, she had never been; now she would give anything, life itself almost, for one word of his lips, one touch of the hand from him she had so deeply wronged.

"Who is this man?" cried the actor to Barker, and painfully rising to his feet.

"Her husband!" said Eric triumphantly, moving a step nearer to Bathsheba.

A sudden gleam of glory and of hope illumines his face. He looks at her with his heart in his eyes.

Stealing up to him his wife places her hand timidly upon his shoulder.

"Eric! Eric! I did not know you cared so much!"

* * * * *

In a certain western suburb there live a man, his wife, and their little daughter than whom I know not a happier trio.

But a humble daily toiler in the great city, the man ever turns at the day's end, with brightened eye and eager step towards his home.

The woman who greets him is beautiful, but it is the beauty of a transfigured nature. And as the sun goes down it is upon a picture no wall could ever receive, because it is unpaintable.

RALPH.

THE LATEST CATCH PHRASE:

"Have You Got That Ten-Pound Note?"

Read the three startling new developments in the great ***Pearson's Weekly*** scheme.

DEVELOPMENT NO. 1.

FIVE TEN-POUND LADIES

have been dispatched all over the country. Each of them is, needless to say, very charming, and will give up the Sealed Envelope to the lady who fulfils the conditions mentioned in this week's ***Pearson's Weekly***. No gentlemen need apply.

DEVELOPMENT NO. 2.

It has come to the knowledge of the editor of ***Pearson's Weekly*** that there are many thousands of readers who, by force of circumstances, cannot leave their homes for any length of time, and who do not, therefore, enjoy the opportunities for coming into contact with the Ten-Pound Men who are at present wandering about the Kingdom.

Moreover, there are many thousands of people who do not care to approach strangers on the subject of the £10 notes. They are too modest and fear a rebuff.

In order, so far as it is possible, to remove the handicap placed upon such people, the editor of ***Pearson's Weekly*** has prepared a dainty little card with the words: HAVE YOU GOT THAT TEN-POUND NOTE? printed in scarlet upon it. All you have to do is to

PLACE THIS CARD IN YOUR WINDOW,

either that of a private house or that of a shop, and if one of the Ten-Pounders happens to pass along your street, and sees this notice, he will at once call, and upon your producing a copy of the current number of ***Pearson's Weekly*** he will hand you over a Sealed Envelope entitling you to the sum of £10.

Address a halfpenny post-card to ***The Ten-Pound Card Department, Pearson's Buildings, Henrietta Street, London W.C.***, and you will receive one of these cards under cover and post free.

The cards contain full details of the Ten-Pound scheme.

DEVELOPMENT No. 3.

The latest song: "Have you got that Ten-Pound Note?" is being sung every night by ***Mr. R. G. KNOWLES*** in various London music-halls. Copies of the song will be ready on October 8th, and may be obtained at ***1s. 6d.*** each.

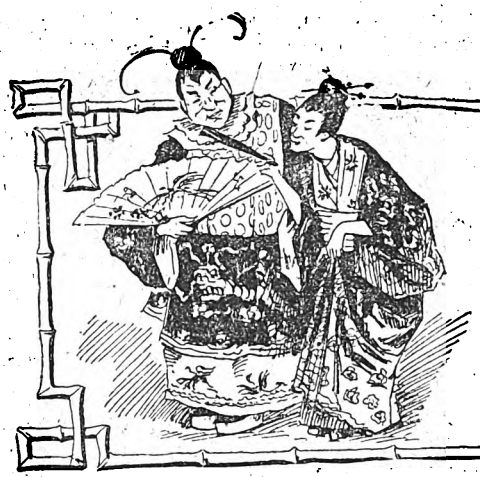
Ten-Pound Notes have already been claimed at London (Ludgate Hill), Norwich, Southend, Wimbledon, Southampton, Brixton, Lincoln, London (East Central), Worcester, and St. Albans, and there are still thirty others going begging.

Full particulars will also be found in ***Pearson's Weekly***, and fresh developments of the scheme appear in the *Daily Express* every day.

The original Sealed Envelopes by which claims have been made can be seen at the following places:

Mr. John Lotan's, Ludgate Hill Station; Mr. H. E. Baker's, offices of *Eastern Daily Press*, Norwich; Inspector Lee's, Cooper Brothers, Cliff Town Road, Southend; Mr. C. Wright's, Crown Hotel, Southampton; Mr. W. W. Tonkin's, Lang Sims, 437 Brixton Road, London, S.W.

Digitized by Google



Mr. Bowser's Tribulations.

XXV.—He Exercises his Will Power to Stop Smoking.

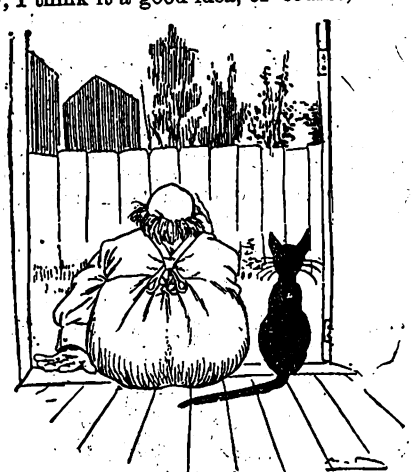
Mr. Bowser came home to dinner the other night looking a good deal worried, but all of Mrs. Bowser's inquiries as to what had happened were put aside until dinner was finished. Then he made a considerable ado about pulling out his cigar case and breaking up three or four cigars and tossing them out of the back window. As he had been an inveterate smoker for fifteen years, and as he had treated the advice of friends and the family doctor with contempt, Mrs. Bowser had a right to feel a good deal of surprise at his action. As she looked at him in an inquiring way he crossed his hands under his coat-tails and fixed a stern gaze upon her and said:

"Mrs. Bowser, you behold before you a man of will power."

"You have decided to stop smoking?" she queried.

"I have. That is, I shall break off for a year and give my system a chance to throw off the nicotine. After thinking the matter over I have fully and firmly decided. It was smoking that ailed me all the time, but I was reluctant to admit it. It has given me about nine different diseases, but if I stop now and drink plenty of butter-milk I am in hopes to restore my health. Have you no congratulations?"

"Why, I think it a good idea, of course," she replied as she remembered fifty other occasions when he had come to the same decision. "Yes, it will be a good thing for you if you can only carry it out."



At the back door.

"If I can only!" he indignantly repeated. "Of course I can carry it out. All that is needed is the exercise of a little will power. I shall hanker for a smoke now and then, but all I have got to do is to stand firm. I should despise myself if I felt that I couldn't get the better of a habit."

Mrs. Bowser looked anxious, and the cat came up the basement stairs with a grin on her face, while Mr. Bowser sat down to his newspaper. He kept quiet for five minutes. Then he rose up with the remark:

"You bet I can stop smoking! If I thought I couldn't, I'd go and hang myself! However, as I don't want any sudden shock to my nervous system I think I'd better——"

"You'd better smoke half a cigar?" suggested Mrs. Bowser with a smile.

"Never. Do you take me for a fish-worm? I have stopped smoking for a year, and that settles it. I was thinking, however, that I might chew cloves or spice or something to divert my thoughts."

He went down to the pantry and got a handful of roasted coffee berries and then sat down for awhile on the basement stairs to call himself names for throwing away three sixpenny cigars instead of putting them away somewhere. The cat came and sat down beside him and plainly showed her sympathy, but at the end of five minutes he gave her a slap and ascended to the sitting-room to announce that he was going over to the chemist's for liquorice root. He was about to put on his hat when he noticed a smile on Mrs. Bowser's face, and he turned on her with:

"Oh, you are grinning are you? You think it will turn out as it has before, but I'll show you to the contrary. If I was told that my life depended on my smoking, I wouldn't take a single puff. After living with me another fifteen years perhaps you'll find out that I'm a man of my word."

"I have always known that you had great will power," she quietly replied.

"You bet I have, and I'll give you a surprise over this smoking business. They say that if you chew liquorice root it will take away the longing, but let her long and be hanged!"

During the next hour Mr. Bowser hunted the pantr

Digitized by Google

for spice, cinnamon, nutmeg and other things, and he even went so far as to sprinkle a piece of raw cabbage with cayenne pepper and shed a liberal supply of tears as he worried it down. The consolation in each instance was brief.

As Mrs. Bowser watched him prowling about she knew what would happen sooner or later, but she was powerless to avert it. As he paced back and forth, his nerves on edge for a smoke, he suddenly discovered a hairpin on the floor. It was a cheap steel hairpin, costing about a fifth of a farthing, but it was enough to serve his purpose.

"Woman, is it any wonder that we are going to the workhouse at a gallop?" he demanded as he picked up the pin and held it out towards her with flushed face.

"It dropped out of my hair," she replied as she took it and found a place for it.

"Certainly it did, and if I hadn't discovered it it would have gone into the ash-bin where millions more have preceded it. Is it any wonder I can't save a penny in the year."

"Please don't make such a fuss about one cheap little hairpin. If I lost a thousand a year you wouldn't be five shillings out of pocket."

"It's not the cost of that hair-pin, but the principle of the thing. A wife who will waste hairpins will waste clothing and fuel and gas and provisions. If I wanted proof that you were a reckless, extravagant wife, that hairpin would be living evidence. I have borne and borne, but I tell you the limit has been reached!"

"If you had been smoking you wouldn't have noticed such an insignificant trifle," she said as he walked up and down and the cat took good care to keep out of his way.

"No, of course not!" he shouted. "If my senses had been steeped in nicotine my eyes would have been blinded to your extravagances. I have been your victim for years and years, but my eyes are opened at last. Beginning to-morrow morning, I shall take the full management of this house into my own hands and make a wonderful change."

On a seat in the back garden.

Mrs. Bowser was wise enough to make no answer, and as he descended to the basement to hunt for something more to chew she slipped upstairs.

He missed her when he came back, and he did not know whether to follow her and make a fuss about the last gas bill or to look over his papers with a view of applying for a separation at eight o'clock in the morning. The question was still undecided in his mind when the thought of a smoke flashed across his mind.

"No, never!" he exclaimed as he drove it out. "I am a man of will power. I have said I wouldn't smoke and I won't."

He had found a lemon on his last trip to the pantry, and he sucked away at it and mused:

"All I've got to do is to put my will to work, and I'll show Mrs. Bowser that it is the will of a Napoleon."

The lemon seemed to increase his longing instead of blunting it, and after exchanging it for a stick of cinnamon he mused:

"Still, the question arises if stopping so suddenly won't give the nervous system a shock? If I should reduce my cigars to two or three a day?"

A gleam of hope came to his heart and a smile to his face.

"Reduce to three a day at first, and then gradually to none at all. Of course, I could stop straight off from to-night and never smoke again. I've got an iron wi l——"

He suddenly remembered that he had a long, black cigar in the pocket of a coat hanging up in the cupboard—one given him by the family butcher as he paid his last bill—and he could hear his own heart beating.

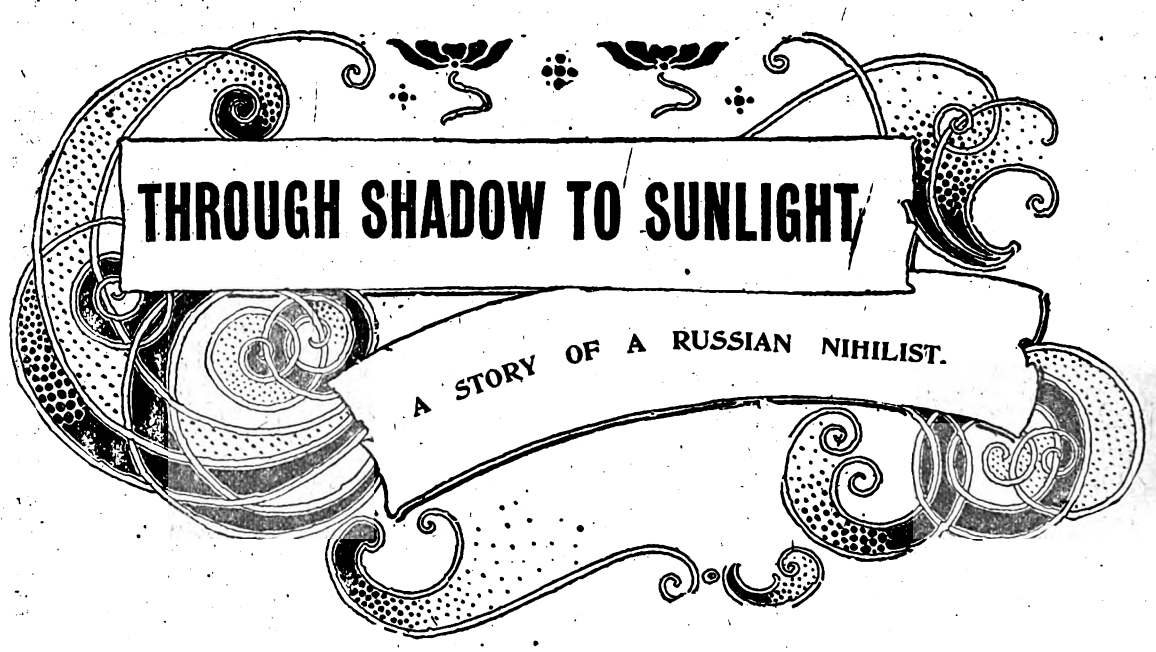
Five minutes later Mrs. Bowser looked out of a back window and saw Mr. Bowser on a seat in the back garden. He was puffing away at that cigar and had the cat by his side. There was a smile of acute satisfaction on the face of each, and as she looked he slapped his leg and laughed and chuckled and said to himself:

"You may take it from me that Mrs. Bowser is one of the most careful and economical wives in this land, and if she wants five pounds pin money in the morning she can have it!"

M. QUAD.

Next week: "He Turns to Root Beer as a Family Tonic."

Digitized by Google



PARGITT'S PRIVATE DETECTIVE AGENCY.

THIS legend was painted on a top-floor window in a street off the Strand. Occupying a room with a blackened ceiling, and no decorative or superfluous furniture, sat the Firm. He was fat, rubicund of visage, and to the least observant eye an ex-police officer. With a look of elation he dipped a pen in the ink, made a mystic flourish, and wrote:

YOUR HIGHNESS,—Obeying your instructions I have made all necessary inquiries concerning Israel Baretsky, *bric-à-brac* dealer of Wardour Street. He is a man of quiet habits, and has no suspicious associates.

He is quite blind, and spends his Sundays near the Marble Arch, listening to Socialistic doctrines. Baretsky is a widower, and has a daughter nineteen years of age. Her name is Ziska, and she is of great beauty. I have also ascertained that nineteen years ago he came into collision with the Russian police at St Petersburg. He was then a member of a Secret Society of Nihilist tendencies. The head of the group was a certain Count Nouvoroff, a Polish nobleman. The police raided the club, upon which occasion the house was fired by the conspirators, the Count losing his life in the flames, and Baretsky his sight. So far as I have learnt Baretsky is now quite unconnected with any Anarchist group. With regard to his means, he appears to be in comfortable circumstances.

Waiting your further instructions,

I am,

Your Highness's

Most obedient servant,

JAMES PARGITT.

Descending the stairs the detective carefully deposited the letter in the nearest pillar-box.

During the day he received a reply.

Princess Sophie Manicheff has received Mr. Pargitt's letter; so far the information acquired is satisfactory. The Princess herewith incloses cheque for services rendered. Her sole object was to ascertain the respectability of Mr. Baretsky as a *bric-à-brac* dealer. Will Mr. Pargitt supplement his inquiries by calling upon Mr. Baretsky, and propose to him the purchase of Princess Manicheff's collection.

Pargitt smiled, but he was as discreet as he was ready-witted, and set off therefore, without delay, for Soho.

The cosmopolitan denizens of the neighbourhood had melted away to cafés and restaurants, and Wardour Street was well-nigh deserted. The shop, when the detective reached it, was in semi-gloom. Through the half-open door he saw into the inner room, where a light was burning. It revealed the blind dealer and his daughter.

Pargitt entered the shop. The slight noise he made was evidently unheard, and he stood for a moment in the shadow. The place was crammed with curios of every description, old helmets, French Liberty knives, bits of faded tapestry, ivory carvings, fans and pottery.

The detective rapped sharply upon the floor with his stick: "Shop!" he cried.

Ziska came forward and turned up the gas.

In a few words Pargitt explained the object of his visit. Whilst he was speaking Baretsky joined them. Save for his infirmity the dealer was a tall, handsome man.

"The name of the lady who wishes to dispose of her collection is Princess Sophie Manicheff, and her address is 171 Grosvenor Square."

The name of the princess had a curious effect on Baretsky. His hand went out, and touched a piece which stood upon an old cabinet. It fell with a crash to the floor. Ziska turned towards her father with a look of alarm. He was trembling violently.

"Father!" she cried, with affectionate concern, "are you ill?"

"No! no!" he said to her, striving to control himself, "it's only the heat, child."

Then to Pargitt:

"Tell the Princess that I will attend to her wishes to-morrow."

"Very well," replied the detective. "Good-night."

Pargitt walked down Wardour Street deep in thought. Coupling the conduct of Baretsky with the transparent "sole reason" of the Princess's letter, it was certainly

Digitized by Google

suspicious. The instincts of the police-officer were aroused, and instead of going back to his den, he made for New Scotland Yard. He wondered whether a warrant under the Extradition Act (particularly with a reward attached) had ever been issued for the arrest of Baretsky for any crime against the laws of Russia.

* * * * *

The marriage of Princess Sophie Manicheff was a failure. The man of her romantic choice was a certain Count Ivan Nouvoroff, a poor Polish nobleman of good family. He was handsome, and everything that a fine manly nature should be; but being also a dreamer and a visionary, his altruistic ideas soon created a gulf between them.

Soon after the honeymoon the spirit not only of conjugal, but of political opposition grew to abnormal proportions. After a terrible quarrel, during which his wife upbraided him with neglect, disloyalty and a thousand other things which come so tripplingly from the tongue of an angry woman, a mutual separation was agreed upon; the Count taking charge of the issue of the marriage, a baby girl. Six months later she heard of her husband's death, during the raid upon the Nihilist rendezvous.

This tragedy seems to have melted the ice of the Princess's nature; she wept and mourned for him, devoting her whole energies to the search for their child, who, strange to say, disappeared the day after the Count's death. She had now pursued the quest for many years, and was at last, she told herself, upon the brink of a discovery, the possibilities of which startled even herself.

The day following the detective's visit to Soho, the Princess remained at home, anxiously awaiting the promised arrival of Baretsky. As the little French clock on the mantelpiece chimed eleven, the strain upon her nerves became almost unbearable. She turned to look at her face in a mirror, and there saw reflected the figure of a tall, graceful girl, who must have entered without sound.

The unexpected always happens, and in this case the surprise was startling and bewildering. Looking for the man who, she believed, could alone relieve her heart of its load of anxiety and maternal longing, it was only natural that the advent of someone altogether different would, at first, disappoint and depress her.

The first to speak was Ziska.

"Madame," she said gently, "you are the Princess Sophie Manicheff?"

Was it the voice of the girl, or was it something in the expression of her features, the poise of her head, the colour of her hair, that carried the elder woman's thoughts back nearly twenty years, to an ever haunting memory.

"Child," she said at length, with trembling lips, "Who are you? whence come you?"

"Madam," returned Ziska, wondering in her own mind at the other's strangely moved manner. "I am sent by my father, Israel Baretsky, of Wardour Street, to discuss with you the purchase of your Highness's collection."

"You!—a girl!—you!" exclaimed the Princess in amazement, surprised for the moment out of her self-absorption in her one great life theme, "What know you of such matters, or who taught you, a mere child? Tell me, why did not Baretsky come himself?"

"Madam knows," replied the girl deferentially, and yet with a sweet smile, "that my father is blind; but she does not know, perhaps, that his sense of touch is as eyes to him, and that it has enabled him to teach me, so that I can now be of use to him, while between us we can judge and buy, and sell."

"Marvellous! but I think, to save time, you had better, perhaps, go and see my pretty things. I will ring for a guide for you," suiting the action to the word

Ziska then left the room upon her visit of inspection. In a short time she returned. The Princess gazed at her long and tenderly, and then handed her an English Society newspaper, drawing her attention to a marked paragraph. It announced the approaching marriage of the Princess Sophie Manicheff with a prominent member of the Russian diplomatic service.

"Take this paper, and when you reach home, read this paragraph to your father," said the Princess.

With hungry eyes she watched Ziska from the window till she disappeared, and with a half-sob she cast herself upon a lounge.

"Pray God!" she gasps, "that my ruse may succeed."

That night the Princess did not attend any society functions. She sat alone in her room with the lamps unlit, waiting, listening, her heart wildly beating.

At last a name was spoken which brought her trembling to her feet. With panting breath she heard footsteps slowly ascending the stairs.

Their sound ceased, and she saw Baretsky standing in the gloom of the room. She stole to his side, and took his hand. "My husband!" she sobbed, "do you forgive me?"

The blind man put out his hand, which touched her hair.

"For years," he said, brokenly, "I have hidden myself from you, under the name of Baretsky. Now, only to save you from committing a great sin, have I, blind, helpless, and a burden sought your presence."

"But suppose," cried the Princess wildly, "that the report is untrue?"

The count dropped his hand, and moved backward a pace.

"If it be untrue," he exclaimed hoarsely, "why did you send the report to me?"

"Because," cried his wife passionately, "I love you! I am older, wiser, and I know now that my life is a waste without you."

"You shall have your daughter," said the Count sadly, "but I—I must go, Sophie."

"No! no!" she cried, "if you love me you will stay, and we will together take up the threads of life again."

* * * * *

Note (belated) from detective Pargitt to the Princess Sophie Manicheff:

> Your Highness,—I have just discovered that Israel Baretsky was killed in the fire at St. Petersburg, and that Count Ivan Nouvoroff has been passing under his name.

Telegram from the Princess Sophie Manicheff to detective Pargitt:

> I knew it long ago.

Ralph Enderby.

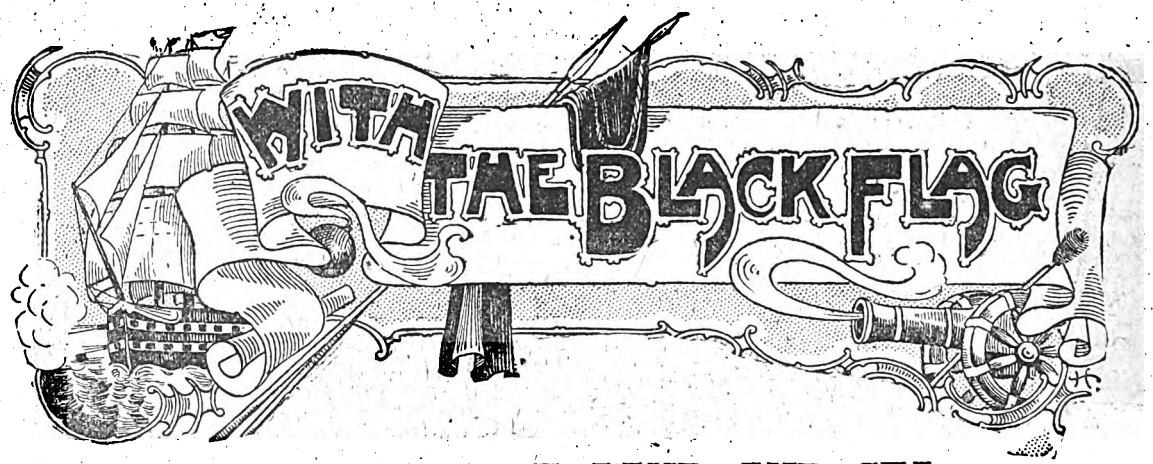
THE MISTAKES WE MAKE.

Compiled by C. E. CLARKE, with Index.

Fcap. 8vo, cloth. Price, post free, 1s. 8d.

C. ARTHUR PEARSON LTD., Henrietta Street, W.C.

Digitized by Google



A ROMANCE OF LAND AND SEA.

By William Westall.

Author of "With the Red Eagle," "The Phantom City," "Nigel Fortescue," etc., etc.

PRINCIPAL CHARACTERS.

Major Wyvenhoe, commander of an expedition which went out from England to help the Venezuelans in their struggle for liberty. He is intrusted with dispatches for delivery to Bolivar, the Supreme Chief.

Captain Cautley, who is in charge of the ship which took the expedition out.

John Ready, the servant of Wyvenhoe.

General Arismendez, ex-Governor of Pampatar and Vice-President of the Venezuelan Republic. He received Wyvenhoe and Cautley on their arrival in Venezuela.

Dons Iago Santleo, and Antonio Bonanza, two Venezuelans who accompany Wyvenhoe when he takes the dispatches to Bolivar.

CHAPTER XIV.

The scene was wild and picturesque, and reminded me—with a difference—of the stories I had read about Robin Hood and his merry men.

The guerilleros and their guests were gathered round the fire, which, fanned by a light breeze, flared and roared like a furnace, sending forth showers of sparks that were like to make a bonfire of the entire grove, and had not rain fallen a short time before should have had a general conflagration. Even as it was I felt by no means sure that we might not have to run for our lives. But the blaze had the satisfactory effect of keeping all winged and crawling vermin at a respectful distance.

In the background the horses and mules, divested of their trappings, were browsing with good appetite, and on improvised spits were roasting the remains of the buck which was to form the *pièce de résistance* of our supper.

I suggested to El capitan, as the guerilleros called their leader, that the fire might be seen by the Godos, and inquired whether there were no pickets in the neighbourhood.

"The Godos have too much respect for their skins to venture forth at night when we guerilleros are about," he answered with a scornful laugh, "and they know that if they established pickets we should stalk them. They dare not post sentries at night more than a stone's throw from the walls, or even by day if there be cover within musket shot. You may go to sleep with an easy mind, señor, the Godos won't disturb your rest."

El capitan was evidently an embustero, yet I thought there might be truth in this, also that the favourable opinion Santleo had formed of the fellow was not without warrant. Though his ugliness was satanic his manner was straightforward, and he had not the look of a treacherous dissembler. But looks are not always to go by, and on the whole I would rather have been in other company.

The venison was served on palm leaves. We had neither bread nor salt and our fingers had to do duty for forks, but I was too hungry to be fastidious, and never did I more enjoy a meal or eat with better appetite. Presently the aguardiente began to go round, a raw, fiery spirit, of which we took no more than courtesy compelled, but it was greatly relished by the Zambos, whom we had hard work to prevent from getting drunk.

The guerilleros, however, drank copiously, and after a while started gambling, which before long led to quarrelling. Fierce oaths were shouted, knives drawn, and if Gonsalvo had not knocked a few of the roysterers down and threatened to brain the first man who broke the peace there would have been battle and sudden death.

Order being restored, quietness followed, and most of the men disposed themselves for sleep. I was so sleepy that I could hardly keep my eyes open, partly as the result of the long ride yet more of the enervating heat which had made me feel unspeakably somnolent and limp.

"Do you see that the Spanish deserter—I have ascertained that he is a deserter—and the mulatto with whom he has been talking so much are as wide awake as ever, and they drank next to nothing," whispered Don Antonio. "They must be closely watched, and Diego is fast asleep already. I shall take the first watch, Don Iago the second, and Ready the third, so that you may get a good long rest."

To this I objected as unfair, and proposed that I should take the second watch if not the first.

"No, let it be as Don Antonio says," urged Santleo. "Unless you have a good long sleep you will be ill. I can see it in your face, and that won't do at all. Besides, we are acclimatised and you are not."

"And I can pretend to be asleep yet keep awake all night," put in Bonanza.

I was too tired to insist, almost too tired to talk, so folding myself in my cobija I laid my head on my saddle-bag and was asleep almost before I could shut my eyes.

"Already! You might have given me an hour," I exclaimed when Ready roused me.

Digitized by Google

"An hour! You have had nearly nine. It is nearly five, and the men are beginning to stir."

"But why did you not waken me sooner that I might take my turn at watching?"

"Don Iago and Don Antonio would not let me. They said you needed a long sleep. They did not waken me till past three."

"Where are they?"

"There, fast asleep."

I looked round. Fresh logs had been thrown on the fire, water was boiling in great pans made of bull's hide, the guerilleros were moving about, rubbing down their horses and seeing to their saddles and arms. Diego still slept, and I could see nothing of the deserter and the mulatto. But that did not trouble me. If they had intended to sell us to the enemy the peril was past; all were on the alert and daylight near.

"*Buenas dias*, señor!" said Gonsalvo, coming forward to greet me. "I hope you have slept well. Your friends are sleeping yet. Better awaken them. Breakfast will be ready in a few minutes, and we shall cross the river at sunrise."

"You also are going to cross the river then?"

"*Si*, señor, and it will be well for us to cross together. The Godos are less likely to attack a large party than a small one."

So El capitan was afraid of the Spaniards despite his boasting.

"I thought the Godos never ventured outside the walls," quoth I.

"I meant at night. They are bolder by day, and might send a detachment to intercept us at the pass, which is another reason for being well on our way before we can be seen."

On this I awakened the two dons and told them what had passed.

"That is the secret of our hospitable reception and handsome treatment. Gonsalvo wanted a reinforcement, and cutting our throats would have defeated his object," said Santleo, laughing.

After a hasty breakfast of coffee and tasajo (jerked beef) we mounted our horses and el capitan mustered his men.

"Two are missing. What has become of Calzada and Lucar?" he asked.

Nobody answering, he turned to Santleo and me, who were near him.

"I don't like this at all," he observed in an undertone. "Calzada came to us from the Godos only a few days ago. He may have gone back to them, and Lucar, who is a great friend of his, with him. Both of course knew that we meant to cross the Apure this morning. What do you think, señores. Would it be wiser to fall back towards San Juan?"

"In my opinion there is just as much danger in falling back towards San Juan as going on forward," said Don Iago.

"Anyhow, we shall go on," I added.

The guerilleros started quarrelling.

"And we will go with you," quoth Don Gonsalvo after a moment's thought. "As we are thirty well-armed men and the Godos know me, they may not molest us. But we shall have to look out. I never quite liked Calzada, and regret that I received him into the band." Then to his men: "We cannot wait for those two fellows. But one of you might look round for them and follow on. You, Laterro."

"*Si*, Señor Capitan, I will look for them," answered the man.

"Good! But you must not tarry long or you will have to cross the river alone. Now march!"

So soon as we were out of the wood we rode in twos, Gonsalvo and Soto, his lieutenant, first, to whom followed our party, Don Iago and myself leading.

It was still dark, and the sun would not rise for an hour.

"We shall be at the pass just in time, and must cross the moment we can make out the other side of the river, and if possible before we are seen by the Godos," remarked Gonsalvo as we emerged from the grove.

A pass in Venezuela is not necessarily a ford, rather a point where the stream runs between two ends of a trail and is accessible on both sides. Where the banks are steep or swampy, or covered to the water's edge with dense vegetation, crossing is of course impossible. The pass by which we were to cross the Apure was near San Fernando. Unless we found canoes, which was very unlikely, we should have to swim, not an agreeable undertaking even had there been no Spaniards to fear, for the river thereabouts swarm with alligators and caribe fish, the latter a species of diminutive demon shark, formidable by their numbers and ferocity. Blood has an irresistible attraction for them. They fasten on the slightest wound or cut, and will disable a horse in a few minutes.

We had ridden about half-an-hour, all smoking, for the benefit of the zancudos, which filled the air with their humming, when three or four vulture-like birds rose right in front of us and flew heavily away.

Gonsalvo pulled up in sudden alarm.

"Look! What is that?" he exclaimed, pointing to two dark forms that lay like logs across the track. "Dismount and see, Soto."

The lieutenant obeyed, and after he had examined them, kneeling, looked up.

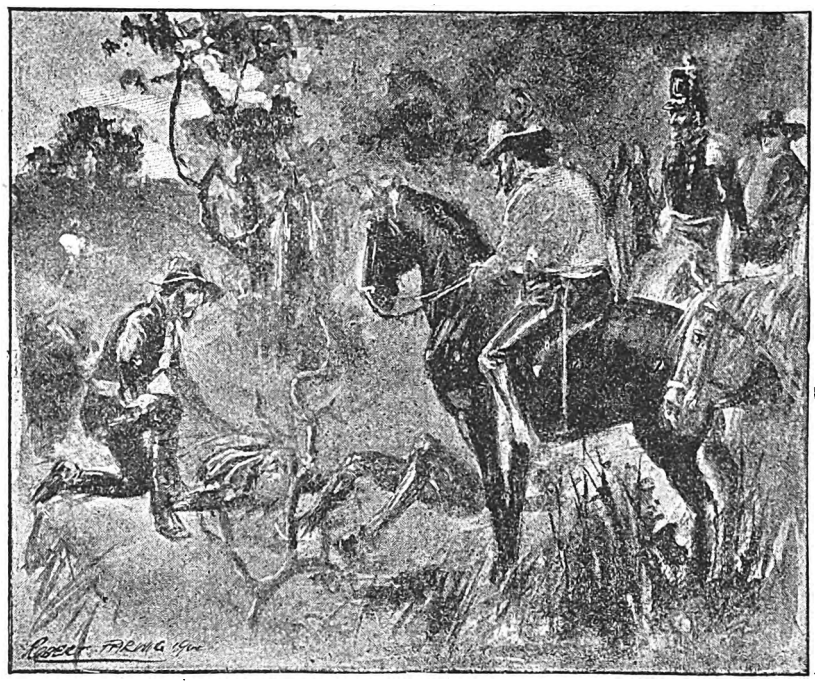
"What are they?" demanded Gonsalvo somewhat impatiently.

"Two dead men, Señor Capitan—Calzada and Lucar. I cannot see their faces, but I know them by their clothing and their weapons."

"*Cien mil demonios!* The Godos have done this."

"I don't think so, Señor Capitan. The Godos would have taken them to be questioned by the general before execution. Besides, the Godos don't kill people in this fashion. Calzada's head is nearly severed from his shoulders and

Digitized by Google



"They are two dead men, Señor Capitan—Calzada and Lucar."

Lucar's skull is split in twain. Only one expert with the machete could have done the work so neatly."

"Who then?"

"*Quien sabe?*" (Who knows). "Either robbers or *Indios brutos*" (wild Indians) "I should say."

"It is very strange. The two men could only have had one object in coming this way—to give information to the enemy, so they are rightly served. Shove the bodies on one side. You have good ears and sharp eyes, Señor Teniente. Ride ahead, and if you hear or see aught suspicious let me know."

"I also have good ears and eyes. I will go with him," put in Bonanza.

"Many thanks, señor. I shall be glad of your company," replied the lieutenant, and they rode off at the swift ambling run known as "pacing" peculiar to South American horses, which are never taught or allowed to trot and seldom gallop.

We others followed more slowly and reached the pass just as the sun rose fiery red, throwing a ruddy glow on the great rolling river.

"The coast seems to be quite clear, and if we are sharp about it may get over before the Spaniards get sight of us. We shall have to swim with our horses though, there are no canoes," observed Don Antonio.

So all went into the water, some riding, others, like ourselves, dismounting and holding on to their horse's mane, and gained the other side without accident. There was no blood to attract the caribe fish, and alligators seldom molest a crowd, probably because they object to splashing and like a quiet meal.

Bonanza and I were amongst the first to reach dry land.

"Do you know how those men came by their deaths?" I asked him.

"I don't know," he answered with a strong emphasis on the "know."

"Have you any idea?"

"Well, Diego was away for two hours during the night, so you may draw your own conclusions, and if he did it he deserves our thanks, for if those rascals had got to San Fernando we should not be here now, nor perhaps alive."

I had a strong suspicion that the Zambo had not gone alone, but I said no more. Calzada and Lucar doubtless deserved the fate that had befallen them, and if I had objected to killing suspected traitors without absolute proof of their treachery Bonanza would have thought me a fool for my pains. Everybody in Venezuela appeared to act on the principle enunciated by General Arismendez of never sparing an enemy, actual or potential.

"Look out!" cried one of the guerilleros as a dull roar came from the ramparts, and a cannon ball plumped into a sand-bank close behind us.

A general scramble followed, all the band mounting in hot haste and hurrying away.

"Won't you wait for the man you left behind?" I asked Gonsalvo.

"Not I. Laterro must take his chance," he replied, and rode off.

"Well, we will wait for him," said I. "Don't you think we should, Don Iago?"

"Certainly," was his answer.

"As you please. It's all in the day's work," remarked Bonanza resignedly. "Nevertheless, I don't see that our waiting will do the fellow any good. Ah, there he comes!"

Laterro rode boldly into the river, guiding his horse obliquely up stream so that he might the better breast the current and land at the right place. All went well until they were two-thirds of the way across when a great alligator appeared in front of them, so startling the horse that he reared and swerved, on which Laterro, to save himself from drowning, slipped out of the saddle, but only to meet the alligator, which made for him with wide open jaws.

The poor fellow screamed for help, which we were powerless to render, and struck out for the shore, but it is not easy to escape from a cayman by swimming. We thought Laterro's doom was sealed, and I was averting my face to avoid witnessing the sickening catastrophe that seemed inevitable when a second ball from the ramparts hurtled over our heads and fell between the alligator and his prey with a mighty splash, so alarming the creature that it turned tail and made off. On this Laterro swam after his horse, seized its mane, and in a few minutes the two were on dry land.

A word of congratulation and we were mounted and away. The Spanish gunners had got our range and we had every reason to believe that if we had not been intercepted we should be pursued. But save a few more futile cannon shots nothing further happened, either, as we supposed, because the governor of San Fernando had no horse at his disposal, or knowing that General Paez and his llaneros were not far off, deemed it advisable not to risk an encounter in which the royalist cavalry were sure to be worsted.

Though still among woods we were in a less thickly timbered country than that which we had left behind us, a level country of broad savannahs, interspersed with clumps of trees and bosky glades, and here and there a farmhouse or plantation, all, like the few villages we encountered, wasted by war, deserted and forlorn.

Digitized by Google

Gonsalvo and his band had gone their own way, whither and for what purpose we neither knew nor cared.

We rode on in the track of the army until nearly noon when we overtook the rear guard, and presently came up with Bolivar and his staff. It was the most grotesque-looking army and the queerest staff I had ever beheld.

Compared with those Venezuelan soldiers the ragged regiment which Falstaff led through Coventry was gorgeously apparelled. Many of the infantry had not even rags. A pair of crossbelts, to carry his ammunition and his bayonet or machete, an old hat, and an apology for a fig-leaf constituted the whole equipment and clothing of many of these multi-coloured warriors, for like the devils in "St. Anthony's Temptation" they were of every shade and hue and as many breeds and half-breeds as the republic could produce.

Many wore the simple national costume which I have already described, some wore Spanish uniforms, captured from the enemy, and several companies were clad in cast-off militia uniforms brought from England.

The cavalry presented a somewhat better appearance than the infantry, though even of them many were more than half naked, but Paez's guard of honour, a picked body of five or six hundred men, wore serviceable uniforms, yet none of the privates and few of the officers were shod.

As we approached Bolivar several of his officers rode to meet us and asked our business. When I announced that we brought dispatches from Angostura there was great excitement, and Don Iago and myself were straightway introduced to the Chief, who had just ordered a halt for the midday meal and rest, alighted from his horse.

He received us with the high-bred courtesy of a Spanish hidalgo of the blue blood, for Don Simon belonged to the most exalted order of colonial nobility, and after asking a few questions about our journey sat down under a tree to read the dispatches, an opportunity by which I profited to observe his person and study his face.

At this time Bolivar was about thirty-five years old, but looked at least ten years older. His typically Spanish face, begirt with bushy black whiskers, was thin and careworn and expressive rather of patient endurance than stern resolve. His eyes were dark and intelligent, and it was said on occasion could blaze with anger, but in repose they were dull, furtive, and shifty. Except under great excitement he never looked a man in the face, and when speaking he had an unpleasant habit of glancing sideways and turning his head like a hare.

In height the Supreme Chief was perhaps five feet five, rather less than more, his hips were very narrow, and his legs fully answered to Bonanza's description of them, being short in proportion to his body, and his tight-fitting scarlet breeches and wide horseman's boots made their thinness and shortness all the more conspicuous.

For the rest, he wore an English yeomanry helmet, a round-about jacket of blue cloth, with three rows of gilt sugar loaf buttons, and when mounted carried in his hand a light lance with a black bannerol, or pennon, on which were embroidered a white skull and crossbones, and the legend "*Muerte o Libertad*" (Death or Liberty).

The officers by whom Bolivar was surrounded were nearly all men of colour, some of them full-blooded Indians, two black as night, the rest, except one who was almost white, a fantastic mixture of hues and breeds.

Their uniform consisted of a shirt made of handkerchief pieces, as many coloured as Joseph's coat, with wide sleeves, worn outside roomy drawers which reached to a little below the knee, and a hat of split palm leaves with variegated plumes. One colonel, however, sported a silver helmet; another wore a helmet with a casque of beaten gold. Most of the officers carried a lance ornamented like Bolivar's with a death's head bannerol.

All were barefoot, and all wore on their naked feet either brass or silver spurs armed with rowels five or six inches long.

When Bolivar had run through the dispatches he invited me and Santleo to sit down, one on either side of him. Bonanza, whom he had not yet deigned to notice, was talking with the officers, all of whom he appeared to know.

The Chief was very courteous and his manner sympathetic and engaging. He asked us about our journey, and seemed greatly interested in the story we had to tell him. Thinking to put in a good word for Don Antonio I said how useful, bold, and resourceful he had been, and that without his help I doubted whether we should have won through.

"Oh, Captain Bonanza is brave enough, nobody can deny that, but he is very erratic, often acts and speaks foolishly, and I should not advise you to trust him too much," was the rather chilling answer.

Then the General spoke graciously and gratefully of the help he had received from England, adding that his secretary, Colonel O'Leary, was an Irishman, that several British officers were then present with the army, and that he hoped ere long to be joined by a large body of British troops.

"You shall of course have a command, Major Wyvenhoe," he said, turning to me, "unless you would prefer to join my staff for a while."

This offer I accepted as a matter of course. Without giving offence I could not have done otherwise, nor, to tell the truth, did I particularly desire a command in an army which, I felt pretty sure, would be scattered to the winds at its first encounter with the enemy.

"Good! You shall be my second aide," returned the Chief, "and I shall promote Don Iago to major in consideration of his valuable services and the help he has given you in bringing these dispatches."

Santleo made a suitable reply, and we were rising to take our leave when the Chief invited us to join him at his frugal repast, which would be ready in a few minutes.

"I cannot offer you luxurious fare," he observed, smiling, "only a sancoche de gallina (chicken broth) and cold fowl, but both of you have seen war and know what it is to campaign in a country bare of supplies, and I am afraid our commissariat service leaves a good deal to be desired."

Don Iago and I of course protested that we wanted nothing better than sancoche de gallina and cold fowl,

The alligator made for Laterro with wide open jaws.

Digitized by Google

which were presently brought, and with them, to my surprise, several bottles of London porter.

"My favourite beverage," said Bolivar. "I drink little else and nothing stronger. I hope you will not find it too warm. It is kept in wet cloths frequently changed so should be in pretty good condition."

It was rather warm, though less so than I expected, and I found it vastly refreshing, but Don Iago who had never tasted malt liquor before pulled a wry face.

"You don't like it? Well, Chateau Lafitte would be better, but unfortunately I have none to offer you. This is very different from a *déjeuner à la fourchette* in the Palais Royal or a luncheon at Limmer's Hotel."

"You know Limmer's Hotel?" quoth I, more surprised than before.

"Yes, it was at Limmer's I had my first bottle of double stout. There used to be a famous waiter there."

"You mean John Collins, head waiter at Limmer's. He is there still, at any rate he was when I left London, and likely to be as long as he lives."

"I remember him well, an amusing fellow whose fame has been celebrated in verse, something like this I think:

"My name is John Collins, head waiter at Limmer's,
At the corner of Conduit Street, Hanover Square;
My chief occupation is filling up brimmers
To solace young gentlemen laden with care.

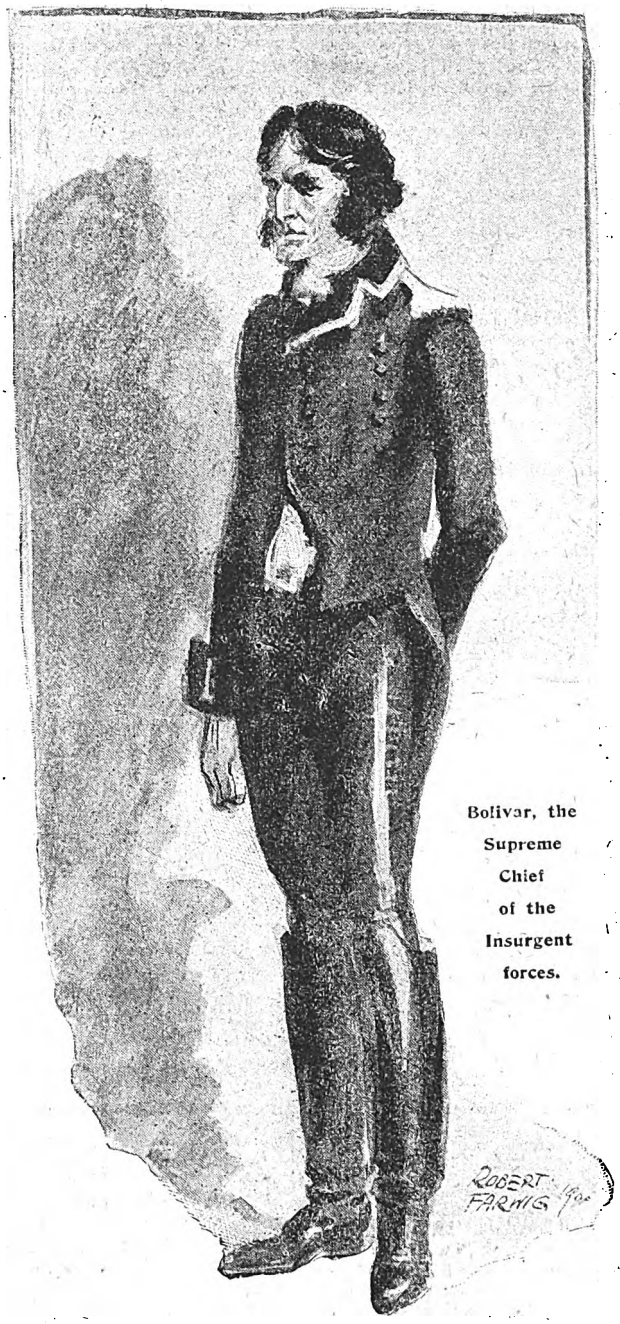
"Do I quote correctly?"

"Quite, and with a good accent. You know English well, Señor General."

"I know French better though," and then he spoke of Paris, where, when he was in Europe, he had made a long stay, and, judging from the stories he told, had led a wild life. "I wish I were there now, and if my country would spare me I would be," he added with a sigh of regret.

When the march was resumed Bolivar kept me with him, but Don Iago, not being included in the invitation, found other company.

"How do you get on with Captain Santleo?" asked the Chief in English, in order, I supposed, that those of his officers who were with us might not know what we were talking about.



Bolivar, the Supreme Chief of the Insurgent forces.

"Very well. We began by being comrades, and are now, I think, fast friends."

"Did he tell you much about himself or his family?"

"Not much—practically nothing."

"So despite your camaraderie and friendship you are no better informed as to his antecedents than any of us. Santleo is a very mysterious gentleman. He entered the army as a private two or three years ago and distinguished himself in several engagements that we gave him a commission, and he is evidently a caballero and a man of some education. But his reticence is extraordinary.

"When asked whence he comes his answer is always either from the west or from the mountains, meaning, I suppose, the Cordillera, which comes to the same thing. The lightness of his complexion adds to the mystery. He is generally mistaken for an Englishman, and if he spoke the language might pass for one. Of course there is a secret, and he must have some motive for guarding it so strictly. What it is I can only conjecture."

"And your conjecture, Señor General?"

"Is very simple and therefore very probable. I think Santleo comes from Grenada and that he belongs to one of those fanatically loyal families who would rather perish than renounce their allegiance to Spain, and that this young man, sympathising with the patriots, enlisted under a false name, unknown to his people, after telling them, perhaps, that he was going to travel in Europe or North America. That would account for a good deal. As for his light complexion that, after all, is nothing. Most men of our blood are dark, but there are blonde Spaniards, and his mother may be English, or German, or an American of the North."

This was a plausible theory, though it failed to explain why, if Santleo had learnt English from his mother, he did not say so, nor why, seeing how intimate we had become and how unreserved on my part had been our intercourse, he refrained from telling me in confidence something about his family and something more about himself.

"I may be mistaken, for all this is pure conjecture,"

Digitized by Google

Bolivar continued. "Nevertheless, I think my guesses are not very wide of the mark. Curiosity is one of my weak points. I like to know all about people, especially about my officers, and if Santleo tells you aught of his past and his connections, or you can worm anything out of him, you will perhaps be good enough to inform me."

This was an awkward request. I had no intention of trying to surprise my friend's secret either for the gratification of Don Simon's curiosity or my own. But as saying so might be detrimental as well to Don Iago's interest as my own I answered diplomatically:

"If I do worm anything out of Captain Santleo I shall not fail to inform your excellency."

Bolivar gave me a suspicious side glance as though he detected the equivocation and divined its motive, and, changing the subject, questioned me straitly about Margarita, as to what had happened there during my stay, and the differences between the two generals, of which there was mention in the dispatches.

I answered frankly and fully, being too much incensed against Urdenetta either to disguise my sentiments or keep aught back, telling him all that had befallen, how well I had been treated by Arismendez, how ill by Urdenetta, against whom I made a formal complaint for arresting me on a trumped-up charge without asking me a question or giving me a hearing.

"General Urdenetta must have been misinformed, and I think I could guess by whom. He is a particular friend of mine and one of our bravest generals, and I think it would be worth your while to preserve silence as to what happened at Margarita and let bygones be bygones," said the Chief quietly and, as might seem, kindly, but there was a nameless something in his tone that told me, and I had no doubt was meant to tell me, that if I desired to retain Bolivar's favour I must keep on good terms with his friends.

(To be continued.)

SAVING THE CIDER.

Mr. Hathaway, Mr. Leffingwell, Mr. Anderson, and Mr. Sherwood are four gentlemen who board together, and are the best of friends. The other day they invested in a cask of cider, and at supper that evening sampled its contents.

"One thing is certain," said Mr. Hathaway emphatically, "forty gallons of cider won't keep while we're drinking it. There must be something to put in it to keep it from spoiling, and I've heard that mustard seed is the article."

"I agree with you," observed Mr. Leffingwell. "If we don't take care of it the cider will go sour; but I incline to the idea that horse-radish is the best. Put in horse-radish, and your cider will keep any time."

"Let me remark, gentlemen," said Mr. Anderson, wiping his moustache, "that raisins are what you want. Dump in plenty of raisins, and you've got your cider as long as you want it. Don't you think so, Sherwood?"

"I can't say I do," rejoined Mr. Sherwood. "There is no doubt that the cider will spoil unless you put in something, but what you want is borax. A pound of borax will keep that barrel of cider until winter."

Each gentleman sustained his view with potent arguments, but the dinner was finished before any conclusion was arrived at, and the party separated.

"They can talk about their borax, and raisins, and horse-radish till they're grey," said Mr. Hathaway, as he flopped out of bed at daylight the next morning, "but I'll have my mustard seed in before they roll over," and cautiously stepping downstairs he extracted the bung and poured a liberal dose of the seeds into the barrel. "That will keep," he muttered "for six years," and driving the bung home he went back to bed.

"It's clear to my mind that Hathaway is trying to save that cider by faith," muttered Mr. Leffingwell, an hour later, as he groped round for his clothes. "Mustard seed! Why, he might as well put in melon rind. I'm going to fill that barrel with horse-radish before he's up, and show him how to keep cider. Mustard seed! I'll head a subscription list with a sovereign to test his sanity."

And Mr. Leffingwell shivered down to the cellar and cracked away with a hammer until the bung flew out like a bullet. "There!" he ejaculated, as he poked the horse-radish in with his thumb, "that'll do the business," and with chattering teeth he prowled back to his room.

"One would think to hear these people talk that they'd been brought up in an orchard," said Mr. Anderson to himself as he jabbed the right foot into the wrong slipper. "Borax! Horse-radish! Mustard! What that cider wants is raisins, and that's what it's going to get."

Upon which Mr. Anderson crept down into the cellar, and inoculated the barrel with a couple of pounds of raisins. "It's beginning to spoil already," he soliloquised, eyeing the floating seeds and radish suspiciously, but without identifying them. "If I hadn't been quick we'd have been drinking vinegar by this evening." And, satisfied that he had saved the beverage, he went back to the sheets.

"What I'm afraid of," remarked Mr. Sherwood, as he opened his door and slipped downstairs, "what I'm afraid of is that those fellows will begin to tinker with that barrel before I can get there. If they manage to stick their foolishness in first I'm done, but if I can empty in this borax before they're about there's so much cider saved."

Mr. Sherwood belted away at the barrel until the bung toppled out, and in went his borax. "That's the business," he observed with great satisfaction as he replaced the bung. "It will teach those boys not to be so dogmatic with their remedies hereafter."

"I don't believe that cider was very good in the first place," said Mr. Anderson, as he pushed his glass from him that night at supper. "We got swindled about that cider."

"I think so," said Mr. Sherwood. "It had a very bad taste when we tapped it. It isn't fit to drink now."

"It certainly is not," observed Mr. Leffingwell severely. "It is not good cider. We couldn't have put anything in to keep it. What do you think, Hathaway?"

"I had my suspicions of it from the first," replied Mr. Hathaway. "It's old stock, and I think we'd better give it away."

And then there was silence, and each gentleman wondered if it would not have been better to have let the other gentlemen try their various recipes before zealously administering his own.

Digitized by Google

SHORT STORIES ABOUT CATCH PHRASES.

We devote, every week, two pages of *Short Stories* to pithy, humourous anecdotes similar to those which appear in these columns. A prize of £1 1s. will be sent to the reader who submits the best storyette this week, and a copy of "Three Women and Mr. Frank Cardwell," by W. Pett Ridge, to each of those whose attempts are used. The anecdotes may be either original or selected; in the latter case the source *must* be stated. The prize of One Guinea offered for the best Storyette in this competition has been won this week by Mr. A. E. Thomas, 34 South Road, Kingswood, Bristol. Attempts this week must deal with Stories about DUSTMEN, and must reach the Storyette Editor, *Short Stories* Office, Henrietta Street, Strand, London, W.C., by Monday, October 1st. Post-cards only, please.

Mr. Bowser and the £10 Note.

BOWSER was taking Mrs. Bowser for a walk in town the other day, when he was accosted by a nervous-looking individual, who was carrying a copy of *Pearson's Weekly*.

"Excuse me, sir," said the man, "but have you got that Ten-pound note?"

Bowser glared at him wrathfully for a full half-minute before replying, and then the torrent burst forth.

"Now look here, my man," said Bowser, "you are the nineteenth fathead who has asked me that question this week. Confound your impudence! Do you take me for a travelling missionary box, or do you think I am an automatic machine, that only requires a penny in the slot to deliver ten-pound notes like chocolates?"

Turning to Mrs. B., he went on: "I can't get any peace in the town, let's get right away to the restful country, where they haven't heard of this mad scheme of *Pearson's*."

Next day accordingly they went. The first man they met was Dusty Jim, sitting on a head of stones by the roadside, reading a copy of *P.W.*

"Say, mister," said the tramp, "have you got that ten p——"

Before he could finish, Bowser had rushed at him, but, profiting by experience, Dusty Jim fled.

A. E. T.

A Prophetic Retort.

SOME years ago when the catch phrase "Does your mother know you're out?" was on everybody's lips, a bye-election took place at one of our northern constituencies.

One of the candidates for Parliamentary honours was a noble lord of extremely youthful appearance, and on this alleged weakness his opponents taunted him on every possible occasion.

A few days before the election he was addressing a meeting, and was just warming to his subject when he was interrupted by one of his opponents exclaiming:

"I say, boy, does your mother know you're out?"

"Yes, she knows I'm out," retorted the youthful candidate, "and I venture to prophesy that if she's living at this time next week, she'll know I'm in."

The effect of his words on the audience was electrical, and during the cheering which followed the would-be heckler contrived to make himself scarce.

Better still, the prophecy was fulfilled to the letter, for on the day of election he was returned as member by a substantial majority.

A. V.

The Ten-Pound Note Again.

IT was in a railway carriage two scowling men sat one on each side of the carriage, brooding darkly. What was it they contemplated? At first they glared at each other, and then cast down their eyes. The man on the right muttered and said. "It has been on my mind all day. Dare I do it?" The man on the left to himself did say: "Shall I screw up courage and chance it now?"

They both clenched their fists and fidgeted about, and then, suddenly bringing forth a paper with a red cover, they flourished it in each other's faces, yelling:

"Have you got that ten-pound note?"

O. E.

They All Came.

BIFFKINS is dead against catch phrases since he invited his Uncle George to spend a week with him.

"Look me up any time, uncle," he said one day, "and I shall fix you up for a week easily."

"What about the missus, an' childers?" said the cautious uncle.

"Oh, never mind them," said Biffkins, smiling, "'let 'em all come,'—good-bye."

The result of Biffkins using this catch phrase was that Uncle George, the missus, and eight of a family turned up, and Biffkins had to bear it.

W. H.

Too Sharp.

A FEW weeks ago, at a certain seaside resort, I was in a music-hall. One of the audience, evidently trying to be witty, called out: "There's 'air!"

The comedian, pulling off his hat and showing an abundant crop of hair, exclaimed:

"You didn't expect to see feathers, did you?"

R N.

What the Officer of the Watch Said.

A BURLY tar was recently called up to give evidence at a court-martial.

Ex: "Were you on the bridge at the time the ship ran ashore?"

Jack: "Yus, sur, I wor."

Ex: "What did the officer of the watch say?"

Jack: "Wal, sor, seein' as 'ow what he said warn't regulation like, I dunno as 'ow I orter say."

Ex (flaring up): "Now, sir, on your oath inform this Court immediately, all you heard the officer of the watch say at the time the ship struck the bottom."

Jack: "All I 'eard 'im remark, sor, was, 'Watto she bumps!'"

C. R. F.

Digitized by Google

SOME OTHER LITTLE STORIES.

A Hard Bull.

Bowser: "Where's that fierce bull you had last time I was down here—the one that tossed me into the duck-pond?"

Farmer: "Oh! yes, I know; I've had a lot o' trouble over that beast. I left the gate open one night, thinking the critter would stray on to the railway and get cut into mincemeat, and then I'd send in a heavy claim to the company."

Bowser: "Didn't work, eh?"

Farmer: "Not exactly. The darn thing charged the engine and threw the blessed train off the rails, and now the company is suing me for damages." E. C.

The Cheque was Incomplete.

"Here is a poem which you may publish in your paper," said a young man with eyes in a fine frenzy rolling, as he entered the editorial room. "I dashed it off rapidly in an idle moment, and you will find it in its rough state, as it were. You can, of course, make such corrections as you think necessary."

"Ah, much obliged," said the editor. "I will give you a cheque for it at once."

"You are very kind," said the contributor. "I shall be delighted."

"There you are," said the editor, giving him a cheque.

"Many thanks," exclaimed the young man; "I will bring you some other poems."

When he got to the door he suddenly paused; then he came back.

"Excuse me," he said, "but you forgot to fill up the cheque. You have not written the date, you see, nor the amount, nor have you signed your name."

"Oh," said the editor, "that's all right. You see, I have given you a cheque in its rough state, as it were. You can, of course, make such corrections as you think necessary."

He Obeyed Too Literally.

"Now, Harry," said the bride, "I want you to understand distinctly that I do not wish to be taken for a bride. I am going to act exactly as if I were an old married woman. So, dearest, do not think me cold and unloving if I treat you very practically when there is anybody by."

"I don't believe I can pass for an old married man. I am so fond of you that I am bound to show it. I am sure to betray myself."

"No, you mustn't. It's easy enough. And I insist that you behave just like old married men do. Do you hear?"

"Well, darling, I'll try, but I know I will not succeed."

The first evening of their arrival the bride retired to her chamber, and the groom fell in with a whist party, with whom he sat playing cards until four o'clock in the morning. His wife spent the weary hours in weeping. At last he turned up, and met his grief-stricken bride with the hilarious question:

"Well, ain't I acting the old married man well?"

She never referred to the subject again, and everybody knew after that they had just been married.

The Infant Again.

"Why do your part your hair in the middle?" said Mrs. Jones to Mrs. Brown. "It is not nearly so becoming as at the side. I used to part mine in the same way until I knew better."

The conversation then became general, and Mrs. Williams told how she used to do her hair, and Mrs. Jenkins lamented the bad taste of the present styles of hair-dressing.

The only lady who did not join in the conversation was Edith's mother, who sat silent in the corner. Evidently Edith did not like to see her mother ignored, as she thought, for presently her little voice was heard to exclaim:

"My mother parts her hair on the table!"

G. A. F.

From Sunshine to Storm.

The other day an Irishman went to his late employer's house and said cheerfully:

"Good morning, sor. Begorra, you're a gentleman," shakes hands with him; "shure yer woife's a perfect lady," shakes hands with her; "yer daughter's a little angel," takes her up in his arms and kisses her; "and yer dog's a beauty," pats dog on the head.

"Well, Pat," said his employer, "I must thank you kindly for your compliments, but I am very sorry to say I have no work for you this morning."

"What!" exclaimed Pat aghast, "no work? Then yer an ould pig; yer woife's a female alligator; yer daughter's a baboon-faced haythen, an' yer dog's not worth cats' meat," and then he bolted. M. A. B.

To Reclaim His Brother.

An unpopular German, who has long stuck to the position of cashier in a mercantile office, is loud in his praises of conscription, and does not spare the feelings of the British clerks beneath him.

"You keep saying we are afraid of compulsory service," retorted a plucky junior once, "and that we should funk the fighting when it came, but how about yourself? Have you ever stood your chance at the ballot?"

This was a facer, and the German flushed and hesitated, but soon recovered himself.

"Ach! no," he exclaimed. "It is true I never wore my country's uniform, but I did not run away. I came to find my brother, who lost heart and fled from the conscription many years ago. I don't know where the coward is—the world is wide—but I shall find him before I die, and send him back to serve the Fatherland. Ah, yes! Even if I have to pay his passage home, he shall not escape." R. A. H. G.

YOUR FACE ENLARGED FOR 7/-

If you have a relative who has passed away either at home in peace or abroad in war, send his photograph—which you probably cherish—and we will enlarge it to a beautiful India ink and crayon portrait, 15in. × 12in. mounted on plate sunk mount 24in. × 19in.

Relatives of soldiers at the front may obtain one of these enlargements for 6s.

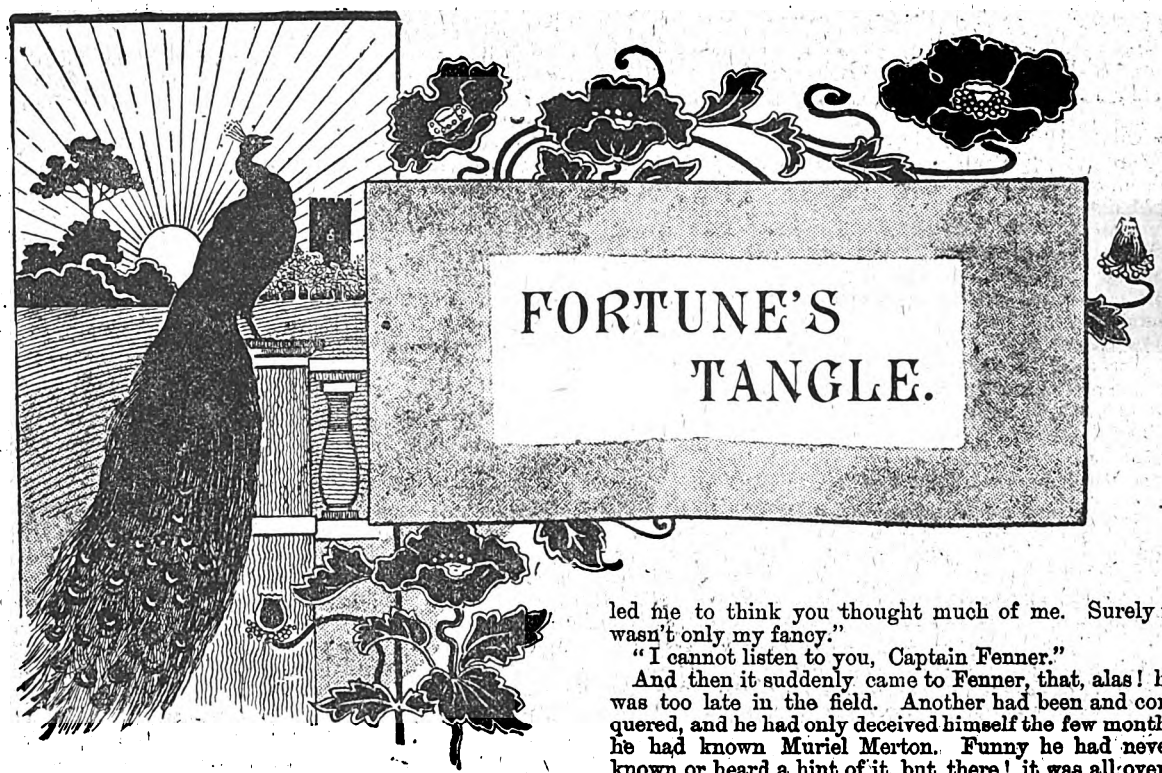
Other photographs will be enlarged for 7s.

Full particulars have already appeared, and will appear again shortly. They also appear in the current issue of

THE CURIOSITY SHOP.

A coupon from that paper must accompany each order.

Digitized by Google



THE windows looked over the waters of the Western Pacific, and Fenner in this crucial moment could not help comparing their perfect blue with that of Muriel Merton's eyes.

They were alone—by a wished-for disposition of Providence; and he, in the few minutes succeeding the participation in tea which never seems so refreshing as in China, determined to put his fate to the test, and to ask her the question which she had shown herself almost waiting for some days before.

Lately, however, ever since the evening young Merton made such a fool of himself after mess and lost some hundreds to the Major, she had treated Fenner much less warmly. Hence perhaps, his sudden determination.

The remembrance reminded him of some tale of young Merton's suddenly going to Pekin, of which he had not taken much notice.

This however, again sank into oblivion before his present thoughts.

She turned very pale as he spoke and clutched the side of the window as if for support. She seemed to be afraid to look at him then.

"No, Captain Fenner, it is very kind of you to do me—"

"Don't call it honour, Muriel; say, oh! say you do love me, you must have seen—"

"I cannot marry you, I simply cannot," and she moved away.

He was sorely puzzled. The tone of her voice was not that of a girl who meant what she said, and yet it all seemed so stereotyped. He stepped forward.

"Why? Tell me why! You have, meaningly or not, led me to think you thought much of me. Surely it wasn't only my fancy."

"I cannot listen to you, Captain Fenner."

And then it suddenly came to Fenner, that, alas! he was too late in the field. Another had been and conquered, and he had only deceived himself the few months he had known Muriel Merton. Funny he had never known or heard a hint of it, but there! it was all over; and yet—he had grown to love her more than he had ever thought he could love anyone. Well, well, he could forget her, perhaps. He felt a feeling almost of resentment that she had not told him of this attachment—such is the illogical and inconsistent reasoning of man.

Yet how different would have been his thoughts had he but known.

Muriel Merton apparently cool, and austerely collected, though with a certain sympathy in those blue eyes, went out of the room, rushed to her own room and threw herself headlong on her bed, and burst into tears of misery.

"To think he would be so mean, and I did— I do love him so much. Oh! how could he take advantage of poor Hugh's weak will and make him play, play, play. Oh! those vile cards, and we're so poor, too. Oh! it was mean, mean."

And here was a pretty little complication so dear to Dame Fortune's heart; Muriel under a mistaken impression, and Fenner fancying himself too late.

Fenner walked back to his quarters, moodily accompanying some brother officers. Their conversation scarcely interested him save that the name Merton made him give a listless sort of attention to it.

All he gathered was that Merton had been very much in the dumps for the last day or two and had suddenly applied for leave to go to Pekin, in fact had gone that morning. They could only explain that it was something to do with that money he had lost and of course must pay Major Crookes.

The Mertons' had an uncle, a prominent personage in the English Legation, and the men guessed it was to him he had gone.

Fenner had only recently arrived in China from

Digitized by Google

home on his way to a military post at the Pekin Legation, and had been detained by orders from home in Faihi. China for a year or two had been a smouldering heap, ready to burst into flame at the least fanning. The European Ministers were helpless in face of the machinations of the Empress whose position had been won at the expense of the lives or imprisonment of others of the Imperial family.

Joint letters were of no avail to stem the tide of rebellion against all order and rule, and especially against foreign interference, which a huge section of the Celestials were resenting very practically.

For some days Fenner saw no more of Muriel and then he heard that she, too, had gone on to Pekin. Mrs. Hawley, her boon companion told their mutual friends she had gone on a visit to this same uncle, though Fenner, among other wild ideas, thought his successful rival might be a Pekin Englishman or, but scarcely possible, that she had gone to avoid himself.

Outside Pekin more anxiety was felt for the Europeans than those in the capital itself, and it was being felt advisable to leave the city unless kept there by actual business.

The people of the Pekin Legations, however, could see no immediate danger, and only awoke to reality when the German Ambassador had been assassinated and the way to the coast was practically blocked by rebels.

Just before communication was cut off, a letter arrived from Merton to Mrs. Hawley, throwing everyone into consternation by asking why he had not heard from Muriel who, he thought was coming up, and saying that none of his letters had been answered.

Muriel not in Pekin? What had happened? and everyone was dumfounded. She had certainly left with the intention of going to Pekin, and she—yes, there was no doubt—she must have fallen into the hands of the Boxers either en route, though that seemed impossible before the line was touched, or on arrival at Pekin.

No fiercer, more uncontrollable fanatic lives than the hardly-roused Chinaman, and many feared that the worst had befallen the girl. Fenner became almost a raving madman. Nothing could be thought of for a moment, till someone suggested the most likely thing was that the girl had been entrapped en route, and if alive was in one of the monastries, the most impenetrable buildings in China.

Fenner needed no more suggestions, but for want of a better clue laid himself out to follow up this hazy chance.

* * * * *

The Mandarin Ku Lu was a *persona grata* at the Manling Monastery where the High Priest Kung Chin had been Ku Lu's friend for many years. Ku Lu was a person of much importance in the province of Faihi, and as such had come into continual contact with the English quarter residents. It is necessary for the climax of my story to retrace our steps thus a little, for it was owing to the Mandarin's headstrong infatuation for Muriel Merton, which was quite unsuspected, that the after occurrences took place. The old Chinaman—not so very old though, after all—knew it was useless to expect to make the English girl his wife with the consent either of her or of her friends; and for some twelve months he had nursed his desires in secret. Time would doubtless have increased Ku Lu's discretion, and he would have learnt to put the idea aside. The Boxers' rebellion, however, had furnished the wily old Chinaman with—if not a pretext—certainly a blind wherewith to baffle his pursuers.

And so it was that the unprotected girl had with little trouble been wheedled away from the train on the way to Pekin and had been placed in the charge of Kung Chin at the monastery.

It was unfortunate for Ku Lu's plan that an English official at the particular station remembered, when Fenner's investigations brought him there, one or two circumstances which made Fenner fasten his attention upon the Manling Monastery. How to reach it he knew not. He dared not report the matter for fear of its being a mistake or that he might bring the fanatical Chinese near Faihi to still more heat. And he puzzled his brains for days while the vague tales of horror from Pekin and the threats of the scarcely quiet provincial population almost unnerved all the Europeans.

Some ten days after it was known that Muriel Merton had disappeared, a Chinaman, evidently a high functionary, made his appearance at the gate of the Monastery praying for admittance and an interview with the High Priest on grave matters. Though the order of Confucians to which the monks belonged was not so strict as some others, it was very difficult for even a Chinaman to be admitted, and it was only on persuading the officials that he was sent by the Imperial Court in connection with the rebellion, that Fenner, thus disguised, was admitted. He entered the awful presence of the High Priest with his life in his hand, for he had not been able to formulate any plan, and he felt convinced that time was the chief object. I say, he entered the presence, but he had to wait till Kung Chin came in, and in the meantime was astonished to recognize the Mandarin Ku Lu leave the room as he came in. The Mandarin disappeared behind a heavy awning, and for the minute or two in the deathlike silence of those present Fenner could hear voices in the apartment beyond.

The prostration of the few monks assembled—in masks—called his attention to the entry of the High Priest. Fenner prostrated himself. The High Priest—as autocratic as the Emperor himself—demanded his errand. In short, jerky sentences which by their very formality passed muster, Fenner announced that the Aunt of the Son of Heaven wished to know whether His Holiness was at all disposed to mediate with the Boxers if they rose in that province. Fenner was all ears at the same time, for he had an impression that he had heard English sentences behind the awning.

Now Fenner had rather reckoned without his host, for Kung Chin knew that the Empress was behind the Boxers and was practically as well as morally encouraging them. Fenner's want of forethought almost deserved a fatal issue, for he had entered the place quite blindly, only hoping for inspiration on the spot. He had, however, taken the one precaution which was his salvation. He had left word with his friends that if missing, there he was to be searched for and the limit of time was two days.

It needed very little investigation before Kung Chin gave orders for the imposter to be seized. He had to be taken to his dungeon through the apartment into which Ku Lu had disappeared.

Imagine his surprise to see Muriel Merton, pale with fright and misery, trembling before the mandarin. Ku Lu hastened forward to find out the cause for the disturbance, and in the midst of the scuffling, Fenner revealed himself to the girl by calling her by name. His

Digitized by Google

disguise, being disarranged, however, as it was, it needed little trouble for the wily Ku Lu to recognise him.

Quick as thought the cunning old Chinaman had thought of a diabolical plan. Evidently this foreign devil was known to Muriel; was even, perhaps, her lover. Her submission alone should save his life.

Dragged off to his dungeon and disarmed, Fenner felt helpless. He could almost see through the mandarin's designs, however. His expectations were realised when he was visited by Ku Lu, and the latter's nefarious scheme unfolded to him. Then his naturally ready wit came to his rescue. He was informed that each day the girl refused to comply with Ku Lu's wishes he should be tortured as only Chinese know how to torture. He asked to see her, and while endeavouring to influence her he, unnoticed, managed to get her to promise the mandarin to give him her final answer in five days, without letting her think he should suffer for it. The gratitude in her looks to him made him more her devoted slave than ever, but the fixed idea that she was promised to another and had no love for him, had taken very deep root and he could only, from blind love for the girl, suffer.

The details of the sufferings poor Fenner went through are not necessary; suffice it to say that the fourth day saw him nearly succumb. In the time that he was alone on the fourth day, all his poor limbs racked with awful anguish, a sudden commotion in the building accompanied by heavy firing from inside told him that the English troops had arrived and were bombarding the place, their admittance being refused.

His first thought was for Muriel. Would the brutes do her any harm in vengeance? The door opened and Kung Chin thrust the girl inside, telling her in English in his hurry that her English friend was evidently dying, and that was what her non-compliance had caused, and his death could only result from her continued obstinacy.

But the mandarin was too sanguine. The English soon had the place at their mercy.

* * * * *

"Don't trouble about me, Miss Merton," said poor Fenner, as he lay in the camp outside when the storm was over, "I shall be all right."

"But I do trouble about you. I know now—I want to——"

"No, no! don't thank me. Be happy, forget me," mumbled Fenner, his one idea again coming uppermost.

"I can't, I can't be happy without you. Tell me you still love me," she sobbed.

Cobwebs and misunderstandings were soon swept away, and Fenner's unreasoning love had its reward.

STUART BLOFELD.

YOUNG MR. FITTS (at breakfast): "You look annoyed, my dear. Is it anything I have done?"

Mrs. Fitts: "——."

Mr. Fitts: "I say, is it anything I've been doing?"

Mrs. Fitts: "——."

Mr. Fitts: "For goodness sake, don't sit there dumb. What's the matter with you this morning, anyway?"

Mrs. Fitts: "You were talking in your sleep last night, and—and——boo-hoo!"

Mr. Fitts: "And I said——"

Mrs. Fitts: "And I listened and listened as hard as I could, and you wouldn't say a single word that I could understand. There!"

NOW ON SALE.

No. 3 of

"The Curiosity Shop."

THE ILLUSTRATED COMPANION TO "P.W."

ONE PENNY WEEKLY.

THE CURIOSITY SHOP is the most Wonderful Paper in the whole wide world. Nothing like it has ever before been published—nothing. It is a Marvel.

The contents of THE CURIOSITY SHOP are not musty or stale; they are not old or worm-eaten.

Everything in THE CURIOSITY SHOP is Fresh and Brand New.

Curiosities need not necessarily be old. People always seem to associate a curiosity shop with ancient and well-worn goods. No mistake could be greater.

Curiosities are of two sorts—old and new.

Old curiosities are curiosities largely because they are old, because we do not see the same things in general nowadays.

New curiosities are curiosities largely because they are new, because *no one has ever seen or heard of them before.*

These, then, are the curiosities that you will find in THE CURIOSITY SHOP.

THE CURIOSITY SHOP contains: Absolutely new and fresh articles. Bright and originally-conceived pictures. Strong and well-seasoned fiction. Nothing that you can get anywhere else.

Unlike all other curiosity shops, the contents of this one are changed every week, and you can buy every article and picture in the shop for one penny.

REMEMBER: *You can buy* THE CURIOSITY SHOP *itself for One Penny.*

If you buy THE CURIOSITY SHOP *every week for a year, at the end of twelve months you will have bought 52 shops and their contents for the small sum of 4s. 4d.*

An Interesting Book.

CONSULT THE ORACLE;

OR,

How to Read the Future.

Crown 8vo, price 1s. Post Free, 1s. 3d.

Some of the thirty-nine chapters are:—

The Meaning of your Dreams	Chap. I.
Omens, Charms, and Spells for Lovers	Chap. III.
Judging Character by the Hands and Fingers	Chap. VII.
Married Life Begun as it Should Be	Chap. XV.
Table-Turning	Chap. XXIV.
Mystery and Danger of Mesmerism	Chap. XXVIII.
Things Seen by Second-Sight	Chap. XXXIII.
Looks showing your Character	Chap. XXXIX.

C. ARTHUR PEARSON LTD., Henrietta Street, W.C.

Digitized by Google

A DIAMOND RING.

If any one had told my friends that I was possessed of the slightest spark of romance at the age of forty-five, the information would have been received as a base canard. A bachelor of that age who has drifted about with all sorts of people and had all sorts of adventures is pretty sure to have had all romance knocked out of him.

He thinks more of his hat than his heart and more of his pipe than the female sex. Yes, I was a hardheaded, practical man, and had the most beautiful woman on earth attempted a flirtation with me I should have scowled on her.

That was the sort of man I was, and I gloried in it, but, alas, no man can tell just what day in the week he is going to fall over his own feet and make an ass of himself.

On a certain Tuesday I took a train at Elmer Junction for London, and as there were but few passengers I had a compartment to myself. I had been busy with a newspaper for half an hour when I noticed a small package lying under the opposite seat. I found it to be a plain cardboard box and was prepared to find a free sample of cocoa or a new brand of cough drops inside. It was something different, however.

It was a lady's diamond ring made up of five stones of the purest water, and on the inside were the initials "B. P." The ring was a double hoop of gold and had probably been made to order.

It was lying loosely in the box, and the box had once contained steel pens. I argued that it must have been some careless person who carried a valuable ring about in that fashion and that it had been lost by a passenger who had left the train at the junction.

I am only a fairly honest man. My first idea was to keep the ring and sell it, but I remembered that I was known to the railway porter and that the property might be traced to me. If not strictly honest, I am prudent, and I therefore gave up the idea of realising the ring. I would keep it for a reward, however. That bauble must have cost at least fifty pounds, and was perhaps valued beyond price as a gift. I calculated that I ought to get ten pounds out of it, and I calculated just what I would do with that extra money.

Half an hour later I felt a curious sensation stealing over me. I began to feel sentimental. I began to connect that dear little ring with a dear little golden-haired, blue-eyed girl. I got up and kicked myself three times and called myself a fool, but the feeling did not go away. To my astonishment and indignation I found it growing stronger, and before I knew it the grip of romance had got me by the neck.

I was a man of leisure, though I had no great amount of money to my credit. I would hunt up the owner of that ring, and if everything went well I would marry her. I settled on that, even as I kicked myself again. Common sense told me that I might better fall in love with the old apple woman at the Waterloo terminus, but when romance takes hold common sense has to let go.

For a week I watched all the papers, but the ring was not advertised. This seemed to prove to me that the loser was either rich and indifferent to her loss, or for some reason the loss had not yet been discovered.

Romance made me anxious, and I therefore went to the expense of advertising in five different papers. I simply stated that a diamond ring had been found in a railway carriage and asked the loser to correspond.

Inside of three days I received about one hundred and fifty letters in reply. They came from all sorts of places and from all sorts of people. The number of stones was given all the way from one to ten, and almost every railway in the kingdom was mentioned. The one hundred and fifty writers knew nothing about the ring, and the true loser had not answered me. I was a bit nettled at this neglect on her part. She was not meeting my romance half way. I advertised a second time, and this time I gave date and day and train.

Again I got a peck of letters, and at least half of them were from people who had answered before. As none of them could describe the ring I was no better off than before. Indeed, I was worse off.

A railway official wrote me that in keeping an article of value found on the line I had made myself a thief, and that he would take great pleasure in seeing me behind the bars.

I was now in love with the loser of that ring. Sentiment had a firm grip on me, and I got all sorts of silly notions into my head. I must see the affair to the end at whatever cost, and the end must be my marriage with the fair-haired Beatrice. That was the name I gave her, and I put her age at nineteen without stopping to reflect that I was probably as old a man as her father.

A third crop of advertisements went out. This time I called it a hoop ring, and I got two hundred replies from losers of hoop rings. In sending out the fourth batch of advertising, I described the ring with the exception of the initials. The replies numbered over four hundred. I also got something beyond replies. A detective followed me to my lodgings and was insulting enough to ask:

"Look here, my man, what sort of a game are you trying to play on the public with that ring?"

"None of your business," I replied in my anger at finding I had been dogged.

"But it is my business," he insisted. "I don't exactly twig your lay, but I'll have an eye on you for the next few weeks and be prepared to make it hot for you."

"If you want to know who I am, go to Brown and Brown, solicitors."

"I'll find out soon enough without any help from them."

For half an hour after he had gone I was too put out to feel much romance, but as I cooled off it came gently stealing back, and I was more than ever determined to find my unknown love.

With that independence which should characterise the actions of a fairly honest man I advertised for the fifth time. This time I asked "B. P." to communicate with me in case she had lost anything.

There was just one hundred and seven "B. P." answers, but among them I selected one which appeared to be genuine. This "B. P." had lost a double hoop diamond ring containing five stones. It had been lost in a railway carriage and was a birthday gift from a dead mother.

I was asked to call at the chambers of a certain solicitor to have the ring further identified. There is

Digitized by Google

nothing romantic about calling on a solicitor. It was quite possible, however, that the golden-haired heiress would be at the solicitor's and that all would be well, and so I was there at the appointed hour.

So was a stern-faced and aggressive looking householder, together with a sleek-looking villain whom I at once spotted for a detective and a young woman whose hair was red instead of golden. The ring was speedily identified by the stern-faced man and red-headed girl. "B. P." was Bertha Perkins, and her father and her maid were before me. Perkins was a country squire, and on the night previous to my finding the ring his daughter's jewels had been stolen. The hoop ring was part of the plunder.

Of course, I was ready to hand over the ring, but it wasn't to stop there. That red-headed maid was sure she recognised me as the man who was hanging about the grounds a few hours before the robbery, and that villain of a detective was only too glad to snap the handcuffs on my wrists and hurry me off to gaol.

It took me three days to prove myself a respectable character and an alibi. They had to give me my liberty, but it was grudgingly done, and the detective said he'd have an eye on me all the rest of my days.

Old Perkins had helped the red-headed girl to conclude that I was the robber, and I went down to his country seat to receive an abject apology or pull his nose. He not only refused an apology, but threatened to kick me off the grounds, and the red-headed girl declared that I had a cast in my left eye, and by that cast she would swear to me in any court as a man who would not stop at murder.

There was one more thing to be cleared up. I wanted to find out about "B. P." herself. Was she the golden-haired, blue-eyed girl of my dreams, and was she worthy of my love? I had not long to wait. I was walking from the house to the village when a dogcart knocked me down and rolled me all over the road, and the driver halted to call me a tramp and threaten me with the law. The driver was "B. P." Her hair was dyed, her eyebrows coloured, and her nose turned up. She had a big mouth, and green eyes, and when she drove on she whistled like a man.

C. B. LEWIS.

IN A MAD WORLD.

"WHAT a lovely old house!" said the lady.

"But what a terrible condition it has been allowed to get into," said the gentleman.

As it certainly had.

It was set down in the midst of a small, but beautiful park-like demesne. Old elm trees of gigantic height and girth shaded it on every side, except that on the front lawn, hidden from the road by a rustic fence, and an immensely high and thick hawthorn hedge, grew a large, widely-spreading cedar. This gave the name to the house, and as the "Cedars" it had, until within about two years previously, been known as the scene of many a county festivity and revel.

It seemed strange that the owner, Colonel Reuth, should have had no relatives, or rather that such were neither seen nor alluded to, even remotely, by either himself or his servants. Country folk have a way of putting two-and-two together and so here. Spite his artistic tendencies the Colonel would have no picture hung in his house. His especial predilection was for old glass, Venetian, Old English, etc., notably that of the Georgian period.

His collection was esteemed by experts to be the finest in Europe, consisting as it did of some of the rarest examples of old "Kit-kat" club wine-glasses. The inspection and consequent admiration of these, was always an important item upon the programme whenever visitors were present. So it was hinted that the lack alike of pictures and relatives had a more than ordinary significance.

Matters went on in this fashion for some years, but there came a day when without word or warning the Colonel disappeared.

Local conjecture waved rife as to the cause.

Although the Colonel was an admitted bachelor, there were rumours to the effect that at some time or other he had been married. If that were so his wife must have been dead for many, many years; while so far as the quidnuncs knew no children existed.

There was a nephew some said, whom at one time the old man had made much of, but who after an unusually festive Christmastide has ceased to appear at the Cedars. Without doubt a serious quarrel had taken place between the two men, but the nature and practical outcome of it were wrapped in mystery.

So much, however, of the loud war of words in the library was overheard by the servants, as to make it clear that the younger man had deeply committed himself in some way and that not for the first time. The Colonel's last words were:

"Long ago I forswore and discarded the name you have disgraced. You have already made my life a misery and a burden to me! by this last act you have altogether wrecked it!"

Within an hour the delinquent had left the house. The same night, after paying and discharging his whole household, the Colonel, too, departed. Whether he went abroad, or merely hid himself in London, or some other great city none knew. A caretaker was put into the Lodge by the agents to the estate, and curiosity had to be content with general surmise, and much imaginative weaving of probabilities. In the east turret-room, a fitful light might now and again be seen towards midnight, but, inasmuch as the village was a model one, and early hours the rule, it passed unnoticed.

The house was shut up, and where once had reigned brightness, laughter, and all the sun-flecked atmosphere of vitality and warmth, now hovered the brooding influence of desolation and neglect.

The lady and gentleman passed through the rusted, dilapidated gates, and along the leaf-strewn, weed-disfigured carriage drive up to the front door of the house.

The lady was young, piquantly fair, exquisitely gowned in the latest Paris mode, and without doubt the object of adorative attention to her companion.

He was, it was easy to see, a military man, tall, upright, about thirty years of age.

Digitized by Google

"Alwyn, it's very nice, you know, but I'm just a tiny bit afraid; it all looks so weird doesn't it?".

"It certainly does. But," looking at his watch, "I wonder where Carstairs can be, it's more than half-an-hour past the time he appointed to meet us here."

"My dear fellow! I've been here an age," came in unimpassioned tones from immediately behind the other.

Ethel uttered a little scream, while Alwyn turned sharply round in the direction of the voice.

At an open window, nearly on a level with the ground, lounged, smoking a cigar, and leaning carelessly with one arm upon the sill, an individual whose personal peculiarities seemed to fit in admirably with his surroundings. He was pale to ghastliness; his eyes piercingly black, and set somewhat unpleasantly close together. This with black hair cropped short, a heavy black moustache, and a nose of the Cæsarian order and proportions, indicated at least a forceful if an unscrupulous nature.

"Oh! Mr. Carstairs! how you startled me!"

"Did I? Sorry I'm sure. Wait a moment, and I'll open the door for you, there isn't a soul about but myself," with that disappearing into the gloom of the room.

"Well," said Alwyn, while they waited, "I always thought Carstairs to be a trifle uncanny, but his appearance in this fashion is dramatic to a degree. He looks the familiar spirit of the place to perfection, doesn't he?"

"He does indeed, dear, I hope, however, he won't be too familiar, and call up his brother spirits."

"I haven't any, Miss Devine, that I am aware of," said Carstairs imperturbably, as the door opening at that instant, he himself stood in the entranceway.

"Mr. Carstairs! if you continue to startle me in this way, you'll really frighten me to death."

"I hope not—but come in. Perhaps you don't know that the owner of this place, Colonel Reuth, is my uncle, and that 'yours truly' is the heir expectant."

"No," returned Alwyn, "is that so? You'll have to spend some money upon it when you do come into possession."

"Oh! I don't know; I rather fancy it in its present state. This is the only habitable room in the house," holding open the door for them to pass in. "The collection of old glass is here, and although you were ignorant of my connection with the owner, at the time I invited you here to see it, you will now understand that as a guide, philosopher, and so on I am in a position to be especially authoritative."

Seyd Carstairs, M.D., was no ordinary man. While walking St. Luke's, the leading London hospital, he had evinced acute perceptive powers, and a faculty for scientific investigation that earned him the approval and encouragement of his chiefs. Toxicoligy and hypnotism were not only his fads but a positive passion with him. More than once had whispers reached the Colonel's ears of shady tricks done in connection with the latter, but until he himself had personally suffered, but little credence had been given by him to the incriminatory rumours.

Since his uncle's strange disappearance he had rummaged the old house for what he could find, and had discovered, among other things, a certain old wineglass, time of the second George, connected with which was a tradition, that fairly harmonised with his own ideas of supernatural influence and power.

Now, as he ushered his visitors into the room, lined round, ceiling-high, with books in rare old bindings, he appeared to be the true presiding genius of the place.

In the centre of the room was a large octagon-topped table of heavy mahogany, black with age, its massive central supporting pillar terminating in three immense feet, carved as dragons.

Upon this table, and in the midst of it stood, upon a large silver salver of ancient workmanship, a slenderly-tall, short-stemmed wine-glass. It was of delicately thin crystal, the rim being engraved with a beautiful running pattern, gold-incised. On its side was also graven the head of a young girl, her hair arranged in the towering fashion of one-hundred-and-fifty years ago. Underneath the portrait ran the legend:

"Charming Miss Jenny Adair! Kit-Kat Club, 1792."

It needed, of course, close inspection to see this inscription clearly.

The moment Ethel's eyes encountered this crystal treasure, she was fascinated, Seyd Carstairs keeping his own gaze fixedly upon her the while.

"Oh! Mr. Carstairs! what a beautiful old glass! May I take it in my hand?"

"Not just yet, please, presently you shall."

"In all the Colonel's collection," said the doctor "this old glass," pointing to the one upon the table, "is the most remarkable specimen. Tradition has it (and from certain documents I have seen, tradition may in this instance be relied upon) that this wine-glass possesses the strange power, when in the hand of a sensitive subject, of revealing (under certain conditions, unnecessary to explain) the fate of the holder through the spirit-lips of its original Georgian owner. It is said its realistic power is so great that the old Sir Carnaby Carstairs of that day appears to the subject to be actually present and speaking."

"How interesting," said Ethel animatedly. "I wonder what he would have to say to me!"

"Nothing but good, I am sure," observed Carstairs smilingly.

"Now I am sure you must be in need of refreshment after your journey here; allow me to give you a glass of wine."

So saying he filled two glasses, but from two separate decanters.

"We will imitate the men of the period when that relic was in nightly use," he said, smiling peculiarly. "Charming Miss Ethel Devine!" lifting his glass high above his head.

"Charming Miss Ethel Devine!" repeated Alwyn, entering into the spirit of the thing.

"Gentlemen! I thank you!" and Ethel sank down in one of those old-world stately curtsies, beloved of our great, great grandmothers, the art of which, except upon the stage, and among the very few, has been lost for ever.

Still the inscrutably peculiar smiling expression on Carstairs' face.

"I don't feel quite well," said Alwyn, suddenly, "it must be this musty old place. I think I'll take a turn in the open air."

"Yes, do," said Carstairs, with a professional air, "the best thing, quite the best thing. "I'll look after Miss Devine."

"Yes, do, Alwyn, and Mr. Carstairs will explain about that glass to me while you are away."

"With pleasure," said Syd, bending his head courteously.

Alwyn Brocklebank had scarce set foot in the corridor when Carstairs, with a swift stride towards the door locked it, putting the key in his pocket.

The click of the turning key caused Ethel to look

Digitized by Google

round, and see upon the doctor's face the expression of triumphant devilishness.

"Dr. Carstairs! please unlock that door! I think you are behaving very strangely. Unlock the door at once; I wish to join Mr. Brocklebank."

"Pardon me, you will sit down upon that chair," indicating one with his finger, and fixing his eyes intently upon her own; looking into them as if he would sound their very depths.

Ethel, like a bird held by the eye of some venomous snake, struggled bravely to shake off the influence of Carstairs' fascinating gaze. But in vain.

She walked to, and sat down upon the chair he had pointed out, and although trembling in every limb, submitted dimly to a power she was altogether unable to fight against.

Never taking his eyes from her face Carstairs reached out his hand and took up the wine-glass from the centre of the table. He held it out to Ethel.

"Hold it in your right hand," he said distinctly and deliberately.

She did so, passively, but with a tremor that caused wet beads to break out upon her white brow.

Drawing a chair close to her left side, Carstairs sat down, and lifting her hand, took hold of the thumb, firmly pressing it. He then after making two or three passes before her eyes, with his right hand finger tips, gently, and by a semi-rotary motion, stroked her forehead.

"Do you see anything?" he asked her.

No answer.

"Do you see anything?" in a sharp, angry tone.

"Yes, I see an old gentleman in a strange dress. He has on a wig, a large wig, and a sword by his side. He is coming towards me. He is very grave, but kindly looking. He is sitting now in the large leathern armchair by the table."

"Go on," said Carstairs, stroking her forehead once or twice again gently.

"I can hear his voice now. He is speaking to me. He calls me by my name. He says that he will tell me his own story first. 'I was a member,' he says, 'of the famous Kit-Kat Club, and can remember how Lady Mary Wortley Montague, as a small child of five years, was brought there one evening by her father the Duke of Kingston, and how we all toasted her till she clapped her little hands with glee.'"

"Don't let him run into irrelevant reminiscences," said the doctor, impatiently.

"I have asked him who the girl is whose head is on the glass, and he says:

"'That was our charming Jenny—my Jenny. We never met on club nights but we toasted her in full bumpers. One night my Lord Tregarthen slightingly mentioned her name in connection with mine. I threw a glass of wine in his face. The glass is that you hold in your hand. The next morning at daybreak, we met behind Montague House, and he ran me through the body. He had taunted me with my age, and with her youth. I was certainly an old man compared to her; but old as I was, I could have shielded her from all sorrow and care.'

"He sighs, and opening his coat, shows me a large red stain upon the bosom of his white cambric shirt. He is speaking again. 'You are young and beautiful. Your lover is a good man and true. There will be a brief moment of suspense and agony, and then all will be well. Beware of a dark enemy. He seeks now an admission of love from you. His own love for you is false, cruel, deadly! Be not deceived. Listen not to him. Beware!'"

At this moment the room was violently shaken.

"Open the door at once, whoever is inside," said a stern voice from without.

Carstairs recoiled with a white look upon his face as he recognised the speaker's tones.

"If you don't unlock the door at once, it shall be burst open!"

A moment's pause and then with a thunderous noise, the effect of a heavy body's ramming of the obstruction, the door flew open, in the entrance-way standing a tall, grey-bearded man of distinguished appearance; his eyes fiercely glowing like coals of fire.

Simultaneously with all this, was Ethel started out of her temporary trance, at the awakening moment, dropping out of her hand on to the floor the wineglass, which was shivered into a thousand fragments.

Carstairs made as if to pass by the stranger, and leave the room; but the latter gripped the doctor by the coat collars and held him as in a vice.

"So, Seyd Carstairs, you thought me miles away, did you? When I have been at your elbow here, in the Turret-room, for months, sir, watching your every movement, and witnessing your miserable endeavours—futile, I am glad to say—to get at those papers you and I know of. Young lady," continued the captor, to Ethel, who sat, trembling and white, unable to move, "young lady, I need not ask if this scoundrel, whom I have the honour to call son, has been trying his dastardly tricks upon you. My name is Reuth Carstairs, at your service, and I shall have much pleasure in doing for you everything in my power!"

"Quit your hold of me, sir!" said the younger Carstairs to his father, "or I may possibly forget myself."

"You did that years ago when you sought to clutch at my money, over my body. For a parricide, even but in intent, what mercy can there be? Still, for your mother's sake—for this young lady's sake—I will so far have consideration for you, as to let you go, but on the condition that you leave England within forty-eight hours, never to re-visit it. On this condition, and on this alone, I will remit you, to your order, wherever you name, a yearly sum sufficient to keep you, should you be so inclined, which I very much doubt, out of mischief. Now, sir, relieve us of your presence."

As the baffled man turned to go, Alwyn, roused from his torpor by the uproar and bustle (he had fallen in the corridor on his way to the garden after drinking the drugged wine) met him face to face.

Both young; both hot tempered, the consequences of a personal encounter between the two would have been serious, but the Colonel took the matter into his own hands.

"You!" to his son, "go! and you, sir," to Alwyn, "let an old man advise you, attend to this young lady, who sorely needs your aid. As for that person I have dealt with him, and you will be troubled with him no more for ever."

In a short while Ethel recovered, leaving the house with Alwyn and the Colonel.

She never mentions now the terrible experiences of that day.

The Colonel still lives, and although he has made no definite promises, a little bird has whispered that some day Ethel's eldest son the second Alwyn will reign as master in a rehabilitated and glorified Cedars.

R. E.

Digitized by Google

FREE, FREE. NO MONEY REQUIRED. WE TRUST YOU.

Our £2 10s. Real Silver Watch (with chain), or A Real Gold Ring

Set with REAL DIAMONDS and other stones.

SEND NO MONEY.

We give you your choice of either of these handsome presents for selling NINE articles of Jewellery at 1/6 each. (Regular price 2/6).

We do not want your money. Just send us a stamped addressed envelope and say that you will either sell the jewellery or return it to us if you fail to sell it. On receiving your letter we will at once post you the jewellery.

When sold, send us the 13/6 you have received for same, and we will at once send you ABSOLUTELY FREE our £2 10s. Real Silver Watch with Chain, or the Gold Ring, which-ever you desire.

A WRITTEN GUARANTEE for TEN years sent with each watch.

You can sell our Jewellery in a few minutes at 1/6 each article. We have thousands of testimonials as to the quality and value both of our Jewellery and Presents.

Send no money. Write to-day.

BRITISH PREMIUM SYNDICATE (Dept. 5). 282 CENTRAL CHAMBERS, GLASGOW.

VIE D'OR FOR THE HAIR.

THE AMERICAN TREATMENT.

Vie d'Or puts 10 years on the life of the hair.

SOLE AGENT:

GUSTAV ROSSELLI, 4 New Park Street, Park Lane, LEEDS.

Price 2/9 post free.

WHY BE FAT?

When a lady, who has discovered a simple means of Self-Cure will be happy to send particulars of same to any sufferer from this distressing complaint. Free on receipt of stamped addressed envelope. ADDRESS:

Mrs. TREVOR WELLS,

63 HIGH HOLBORN, LONDON, W.C.

THE "IBIS" TOOTH POWDER

(Registered)

Is the only Dentifrice which, if regularly used, cleans discoloured teeth and dissolves away tartar. It is by this wonderful power that it permanently preserves good teeth and prevents further decay in bad teeth. In this way also it is an effectual PREVENTIVE of toothache, neuralgia, and gumboils.

Sold in 6d. and 1/- boxes, or post free for 7d. and 1/- from the ANTEXEMA COMPANY, 83 Castle Road, London, N.W.

Neuralgia Positively Cured!

Free Test Offered.

The annexed cut presents in the prominent white lines the nerves most liable to attacks of Neuralgia. Sufferers will know only too well the pain tracks, and will be glad to know of a Simple and Sure Remedy. The proprietors will send Free two sample ZOX Powders to any reader of *Short Stories* sending stamped envelope to ZOX CO., 11 HATTON GARDEN, LONDON, E.C.

DO YOU KNOW

That with Every Copy of This Week's

HOME NOTES

A Complete Novelette of 16 pages, entitled "A Leap in the Dark," is

GIVEN AWAY?

HOME NOTES is the Best and Daintiest of Ladies' Weeklies. You should Order a Copy at once.

ONE PENNY.

VARICOCELE.

Every man suffering from Varicocele and the allied troubles, should send for treatise, describing their Causes, Symptoms, Results, and Successful and Painless Treatment without surgical operation or the use of cumbersome trusses and electrical appliances. Will be sent sealed, post free, three stamps.

S. S. MURRAY,

7 Southampton Row, London, W.C.

TOO STOUT.

I was for years; by chance I came across a simple home-remedy that reduced me from 17st. to 10st. 12lbs., and I will willingly send particulars free to any sufferer enclosing stamp. Mrs. L. E. FELL, 195 Oxford Street, London, W.

2/9 CHALLENGE TO THE WORLD—OUR WARRANTED TIMEKEEPER, 2/9

With a guarantee to keep correct time for three years, will be sent to any address on receipt of P.O. or stamps value 2/9 and three stamps extra for postage. To every purchaser during this month we give with it ABSOLUTELY FREE a strong Mexican SILVER CHAIN. All we ask of you is to show them to your friends, as by doing so you advertise our business. GENEVA WATCH IMPORTERS, 106 Hatton Garden, London, E.C.

SEND FOR

DR. EVANS'S (U.S.A.)

Pamphlet on Nervous Diseases of All Kinds. THIS PAMPHLET describes all the symptoms which arise from Diseases of the NERVOUS SYSTEM. It is up-to-date, having been compiled after years of labour and experience in the Treatment of these Maladies. It is complete, practical, and can be readily understood and acted upon. It gives pure and simple advice to Sufferers. Send stamped addressed envelope to GEORGE WRIGHT, Esq., Colne House, REMBRANDT ROAD, LEE, LONDON, S.E. (*Name this Paper.*)

KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR

KAPUTINE

SAFE REMEDY CURES

HEADACHE and NEURALGIA

IMMEDIATELY,

And is sold by all leading Chemists in Packets of 18 Doses, 1s.

To ANYONE HAVING THE LEAST DIFFICULTY, it will be sent post free for 12 Stamps by "KAPUTINE Ltd.," Huddersfield; or, on receipt of a stamped addressed envelope, A. M. Kaputine, Huddersfield, you will receive a free sample.

The fact that "KAPUTINE" is recommended by many leading Medical Men, and is used in National Hospitals and Infirmaries proves that it is THE, THE recognised SAFE REMEDY FOR HEADACHES.

Refuse Substitutes and demand "KAPUTINE," the Safe Remedy. There is no substitute "LIKE IT"; nothing "AS GOOD"; nothing "SIMILAR."

KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR

Digitized by Google

The Brain Gymnasium

IN these competitions a prize of £2 will be awarded each week to the competitor whose attempt we receive giving the correct solutions of all the puzzles. If more than one is absolutely correct the prize of £2 will be given to the first correct attempt dealt with.

If no lists of absolutely correct solutions are sent in the first prize will be awarded to the competitor whose attempt is first dealt with showing the fewest mistakes.

Each week we shall award in addition to the above, either ten of our silver plated pencil-cases or ten popular novels, to be distributed amongst the competitors whose attempts are absolutely correct and have failed to win the first prize, or, if no complete lists of correct solutions are received, to those whose attempts show the fewest mistakes.

Write all your solutions on one sheet of paper, putting the number against each. Post the batch in an envelope marked "Brain Gymnasium," to reach the Editor, SHORT STORIES, 18 Henrietta Street, Covent Garden, W.C., by first post on Monday, October 8th, 1900.

Readers are invited to submit puzzles, acrostics, conundrums, word-squares, etc., for publication on this page. A gold-plated pencil-case will be given to each reader whose attempts are used. All attempts must be vouched for as original, and, of course, it is distinctly understood that the sender of a puzzle must neither compete in the competition nor divulge to anyone the solution. Any reader found infringing this rule will be severely dealt with.

No. 223.

WHAT is the word which, if spelt forwards, is a measure, backwards a tree, and, transposed, a river in England?

No. 224.

I WAS before the Creation, I still exist in the depths of the earth, and yet a babe can destroy me in a moment. What am I?

No. 225.

THE following letters, when re-arranged, will form a well-known proverb:

AA BB DD EE HHHHH IIII NNN OO RR SS TTTT U WW.

No. 226.

FROM equivalents of the following, form a word-square, the diagonal of which will give the names of two famous cities in the British Isles:

Pure; full of interstices; a plant; a disease on cloth; a bird; an idea.

No. 227.

MY FIRST must surely be my WHOLE,
Although he looks so learned,
He sees not Simpkins with my NEXT,
Each time his back is turned.

And thus, though Simpkin's known to be
My WHOLE, the lazy loon
Will get a wrangler's first degree,
While I, at most, the spoon.

No. 228.

THE initials read forwards, and the finals read backwards, of equivalents of the following, will give the name of something no one can do without:

A flower; a fruit; a kind of pigeon; a reverberating sound; an American root.

RESULT OF BRAIN GYMNASIUM.

Nos. 205 to 210.

THE first prize of £2 has been awarded this week to Miss Isobel Barnes, of 68 Lydford Road, Paddington, W., whose solution was the first correct one dealt with.

A copy of "The Hope of the Family," by Alphonse Daudet, has been sent to each of the following:

W. J. Barter, Cork.
D. Jelly, Plumstead.
J. L. Robertson, Dundee.
George Humphreys, Nottingham.
A. Gresham, South Hackney, N.E.
J. Morris, Oxford.
J. B. Crane, Bognor.
F. J. Porter, Liverpool.
Miss Jessie Whitaker, Barnsley.
H. Amdrus, Beckenham.

SOLUTIONS OF BRAIN GYMNASIUM COMPETITION.

Nos. 211 to 216.

No. 211.

D E W E T
E D I L E
W I G A N
E L A T E
T E N E T

No. 212. Proeuberance.

No. 213. "Where ignorance is bliss, 'tis folly to be wise."

No. 214. M.P.

No. 215. OTHELLO LAERTES.

O pa L
T itani A
H eb E
E lixi R
L imi T
L ov E
O asi S

No. 216. SERINGAPATAM.

SHORT STORIES ADVERTISEMENT RATES.

Single column, per inch, per insertion	£0 10 0
Double " " "	1 0 0
Full page inside, facing page of matter, either white paper or 2nd or 3rd page of cover, or back page, per insertion	10 0 0
Half-page " " "	5 0 0
Quarter-page " "	2 10 0
Eighth-page " "	1 5 0
Front page, whole " "	12 10 0
" half " "	6 5 0

All spaces above one-eighth of a page are charged at per page rate.

Series discount: 5 per cent. for 13, 10 per cent. for 26, 15 per cent. for 52 insertions.

Black blocks are charged 25 per cent. extra. All advertisements are subject to approval. All copy must be sent in by Noon on Tuesday, Oct. 2nd, if intended for the issue on sale Oct. 16th, and dated October 20th. The Proprietors reserve the right to hold over or suspend the insertion of any advertisement without prejudice to other insertions on order. All communications should be addressed to the Advertisement Manager, "Pearson's Weekly" Offices, Henrietta Street, London, W.C.

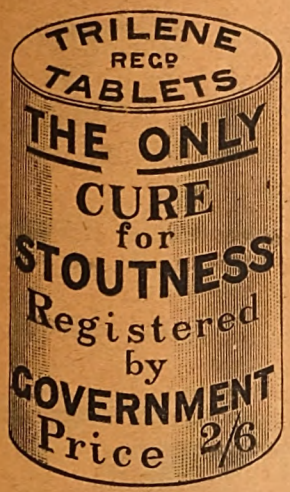
Printed and Published by C. ARTHUR PEARSON LTD., at Pearson's Weekly Buildings, Henrietta Street, London, W.C.

Digitized by Google

ALL FAT PEOPLE

Can be **CURED** by taking

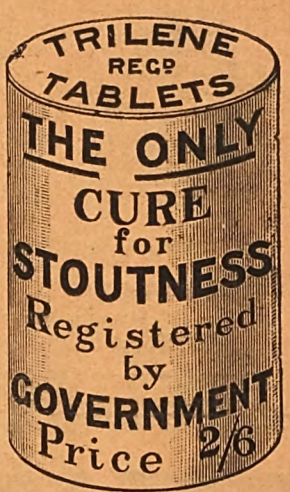
TRILENE TABLETS Regd.



For a few weeks. They will safely REDUCE WEIGHT and CURE CORPULENCY PERMANENTLY, whether Abdominal or General. They are small, agreeable, harmless, sent privately, and never fail to Improve both HEALTH and FIGURE without change of Diet.

An English Countess writes: "Your Trilene Tablets act admirably."

Send **2s. 6d.** to THE TRILENE ASSOCIATION, 66 Finsbury Pavement, London, E.C.



SAMPLES OF TESTIMONIALS.

"87 Alexandra Road, Norwich, October 19th, 1896.

Gentlemen,—In reference to Trilene Tablets, I may say that my wife found the greatest possible benefit from the use of them; their action was rapid, and exceeded our utmost expectations, as they were also most beneficial to the respiratory organs. My wife was many years growing so stout, but although the disease was, I consider chronic, the Tablets soon reduced the same completely. You have our united thanks, and if I can do anything to promote your interests I will freely use my utmost endeavours to do so.

"Yours faithfully, J. B. CANHAM."

MRS. DARNLEY SMITH, Landscove Vicarage, Ashburton, writes: "Trilene Tablets have reduced my weight very much. I am so much lighter in every way, and better in health."

COUNTESS SECKENDORFF, of Berlin, writes: "The Tablets greatly benefited me personally, and I am recommending them to friends."

MISS CHATTERTON, 7 Salisbury Villas, Banstead, Surrey, says: "I weighed 12st. 8lb., but am now 11st. and getting much better."

Nurse CROUCHER, at Mrs. Bennett's, 14 Buckleigh Road, Streatham, says: "I lost 9lb. from the box I took."

"77 Hindhill Street, Heywood, February 5th, 1898.

"Gentlemen,—I have not quite finished the box of Tablets and am 21lb. lighter. The change is great, and several friends are beginning the treatment, which not only reduces fat but strengthens rheumatic joints—such has been the case with me. "Yours sincerely, M. A. HEYWOOD."

MRS. D. BURTON, of Silverleigh, Tunbridge, writes: "I am very pleased with difference in size, my friends all telling me how much thinner I am getting."

MISS NORTHLEDGE, The Laurels, Riseholme Road, Lincoln, says: "The Tablets reduced me 1st., so that I am cured."

West Cornforth, Ferryhill.

MR. WM. USHER says: "A sister of mine, who was 17st., was greatly reduced by your Tablets to 15st."

Extract from *The Lady*, September 3rd, 1896: "Many stout persons have suffered untold agonies in unavailing efforts to reduce their bulk, either by means of severe dieting, or by taking more or less deleterious drugs; but all these pains would have been saved if they had only invested in a box of the wonderful Trilene Tablets which are quite harmless, containing neither mercury, arsenic, nor any other mineral poison, and which are an unfailing cure for obesity."

MRS. T. BOSTON, Cambridge Villas, Clifford Street, South Wigston, says: "I congratulate you on your wonderful Tablets. My weight at first starting them was 11st. 7lb., and I now weigh 9st. 11lb."

MR. MCLEOD, 44, Calside, Paisley, writes: "I have been cured. If you want to know my weight now, it is 10st.; reduced 1st. 8lb., and I am quite content."

A. M. PRATT of Ongar House, Ongar, says: "My weight is so much reduced it is unnecessary to take more. The reduction of weight was from 12st. 6lb. to 10st. 4lb."

MRS. H. COX, 28 Watnall Road, Hucknall Torkard, writes: "The box of Tablets has reduced my weight 1½ stones."

MR. WALKER, 236 London Road, Hazelgrove, Stockport, says: "I have used one box and am 14lb. lighter. Send another soon as possible."

Col.-Sergt. WHITTLE, of East Lancashire Regt., Burnley, Lancs, says: "A man in our regiment in 1891 lost several stone from taking your Tablets."

MRS E. ALEXANDER, 102 Dixon Street, New Swindon, says: "They have reduced me quite 2 stone, and I am now quite cured."

Mrs. W. A. RADFORD, of High Street, New Brinsley, Eastwood, writes: "Before taking Tablets I was 46 inches round waist, now I am 32 inches. I hope soon to be 23. I could hardly move or get up, now I get about easily. Please use this as you wish."

Countess FURSTENBERG, of Germany, writes: "They act speedily and well."

The Princess LIECHTENSTEIN writes from Landsberg, Austria: "Pray send me your excellent Tablets."

Mrs. WEAVER, of Greenpits Villa, Ross, Hereford, writes "I am reduced from 13st. 8lb. to 11st. You may use this if you like."

MRS. CROSSLEY, of Rose Hill, Torver nr Coniston, says: "There is a very decided diminution of fat. I am delighted, and cannot speak too highly in praise of Tablets. My heart is better, and I can breathe so much easier. You may refer to me as often as you like."

Lady C. CONRAD writes from Wiesbaden: "I am very pleased with your Tablets."

Mrs. TAYLOR-ROBINSON, of Tweed Green House, Whalley Range, Manchester, says: "I feel so much lighter and better since taking your Tablets, and am so much thinner that I hardly recognise myself."

Miss A. LONG, of 9 South Parade, Waterford, writes: "Your Tablets have reduced me 14lb."

Miss A. DAWSON, 62 Orchard Street, Weston-super-Mare, says: "Glad to say the Tablets have sufficiently reduced me. I shall always recommend them."

Miss F. L. BALL, 47 Chesterfield Road, St. Andrews, Bristol, writes: "I am quite cured through your Tablets. They improve the figure, and greatly relieve shortness of breath."

Miss PATIENT, of Woodberry, Theydon Bois: "Feel great benefit from Tablets. I have lost 2st., and am sufficiently reduced."

Mrs. DREW, of 1 Bellevue Gardens, The Nursery, Devizes, writes: "I took Tablets some years ago; they soon reduced me and I have not got stout since. Send me a box for my mother."

THE TRILENE ASSOCIATION, 66 FINSBURY PAVEMENT, LONDON.

Digitized by Google

THE "GEO. R. SIMS"

HAIR RENEWER "TATCHO"

"While you wait"

LARGE TRIAL BOTTLES TO-DAY.
1s. 6d.
Sent Post Free in plain package, twenty one stamps.

MRS. BROWN POTTER, whose beautiful hair is the envy of her sex, writes:
"I Use only 'TATCHO.'"

If your hair is falling or failing, you have your remedy. Don't hesitate. Use "TATCHO." The result will surprise you and will be intensely gratifying. It is sold in bottles by Chemists and Hairdressers all over the world, 2/9 and 5/-, or may be had direct in plain sealed package, post free, 2/11 and 5/3. Address:
The Geo. R. Sims Co., 81c Great Queen St., London, W.C.

"WORTH A GUINEA A BOX."

BEECHAM'S PILLS

FOR ALL
BILIOUS & NERVOUS DISORDERS,
Sick Headache, Constipation, Wind and Pains in Stomach, Impaired Digestion, Disordered Liver, and Female Ailments.

SALE OVER SIX MILLION BOXES YEARLY.

In Boxes, 1s. 1½d. and 2s. 9d. each, with full directions.
Prepared only by the Proprietor,
THOMAS BEECHAM, St. Helens, Lancashire.
Sold by all Druggists and Patent Medicine Dealers everywhere.

A FREE TRIAL FOR 2/6

DESCRIPTION:
New Sun Shade Eyepieces.
Telescopic Slides Ormolu Gilt
Ebonised Adjusting Screw.
Crocodile Leather Covered Body.
Nickel and Gilt Lens Mounts.
Catalogue FREE.

J. N. MASTERS LTD, will send one of these handsome FIELD and MARINE GLASSES, price value 14/6, complete with Crocodile Leather Case and Sling, to any reader who mentions *Short Stories* on receipt of 2/6. If you do not approve of them, we will return your 2/6 in full. If you approve of them you send us 2/- on receipt, and 2/- each month for five months; but should you prefer to send the balance at once, send only 10/6, as we allow you 1/6 discount; or you may send 13/- at once, and if you do not approve of the Glasses we will return your 13/- in full.

J. N. MASTERS LTD., RYE, SUSSEX.

EVERY RING 18 CARAT GOLD HALL MARKED, SET WITH REAL GEMS.

FOR SIZE CUT HOLE IN PIECE OF CARD BOARD.

Ring Size-card FREE.

J. N. MASTERS LTD., RYE, SUSSEX.

Advertisements should be sent to "Short Stories" Advertisement Department, Henrietta Street, London, W.C.

Digitized by Google

FRESH FACTS ABOUT THE £10 NOTE SCHEME. *See page 425.*

SHORT STORIES

A WEEKLY MAGAZINE FOR HOME AND TRAIN

No. 614. FOR WEEK ENDING OCTOBER 6TH, 1900. [ONE PENNY.

Indigestion:

The Stomach is like "Fire" or "Water," a good friend but a bad master. As a friend it craves work to do, which is shown by good Appetite, and it sets about its work with so much energy that we have efficient Digestion, and later on perfect Assimilation—the Source of Life and Strength.

On the other hand, the Stomach as a master works fitfully and in a sulky manner. This soon spoils the Appetite and ruins the Digestion. Then the suffering begins. The partially-digested Food becomes an irritant, and we have a host of disagreeable Symptoms, such as Nausea, Flatulence, Distension, Pain, Loss of Appetite, Headache, Constipation, Sleeplessness, and a general tired feeling of weakness.

Now we can change the Stomach from a despot master into a willing friend by simply helping it with occasional doses of Guy's Tonic, until it is shortly able to carry on its work without assistance.

As a direct consequence of taking Guy's Tonic good Appetite returns, and with it the capacity to enjoy Food, to digest it, and to gain strength therefrom. General experience extended over many years proves conclusively that Guy's Tonic corrects and cures both neglect and misuse of the Stomach, and strengthens it for future work.

Flatulence Corrected by Guy's Tonic

Mr. A. J. Crabb, writes from 41 Upper Tulse Hill, London, S.W.:

"A Lady friend of mine, who has been for a long time ineffectually treated by a Physician for Indigestion and Flatulence, wishes you to know that Guy's Tonic has quite cured her. I must say that in all cases where I have recommended Guy's Tonic the effects have been simply marvellous."

Starving Amid Plenty.

Mrs. F. Thomason, of 27 Park Road, Folkestone, writes:

"I have derived wonderful benefit from Guy's Tonic. Everyone says I am looking better, and then I tell them what I am taking. They hardly believe that a simple Tonic would make such a change in me, because I was simply Starving through my Food not Digesting."

A new size (Six Ounce) Bottle of Guy's Tonic, price 1s. 1½d., is now on sale at all Chemists and Stores.

10/6 **Allen Foster & Co** 10/6

SOLE MAKERS OF

THE 'ALFOSCO' COSTUMES

Buy Direct by Parcel Post from the Leading Firm of London Manufacturers.

Design No. 326. 10/6.

A Costume any Lady can wear.—Prettily and neatly trimmed with tucks of velvet and cloth. STERLING VALUE. This bodice has a tight-fitting back, with full front. The Skirt is cut to drape gracefully. Made in the Specialite Serge or Venetian Cloth—two splendid wearing materials. Colours: Black, Navy, Grey, Light and Dark Fawn, Brown, Green, Royal Red, Purple, Blue-Grey, &c. **Good Fit Guaranteed.** Price only **10/6.** Carriage paid, 6d. extra. Skirt alone, **5/6.** Carriage, 5d. In sending order, please give bust measurement (under arms), size of waist, and length of Skirt in front.

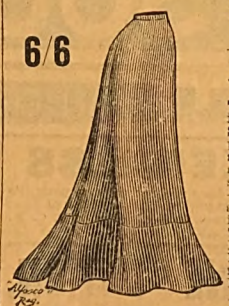
10/6

7/6

Send Postcard for PATTERNS and New Sketch Book for Autumn, and CATALOGUE of BARGAINS, Post free.

Design No. 2161. 7/6.

A Great Bargain in Jackets. Marvellous Value for 7/6. Made in good President Beaver Cloth in Black, Fawn, and Brown. The Jacket is stylishly braided, and has a Velvet collar. All Sizes in Stock. SEND FOR ONE. Price only **7/6.** Carriage 6d. extra. In sending order, please give bust measurement (under arms). Money returned if not approved.



6/6

Design No. 323. 6/6.

Design No. 326. 10/6.

Design No. 323. 6/6.

The New and Fashionable Costume Skirt. This Skirt has proved an **immense success.** It is made in all the colours of the two splendid wearing fabrics—The Specialite Serge and the Venetian Coating. All Sizes in Stock. This Skirt is cut in the New Circular Shape, and has a 16-inch flounce round bottom, which is lined with good linenette. A Bargain for **6/6.** Carriage paid, 5d. extra. **Send for one.**

ALLEN FOSTER & CO.,

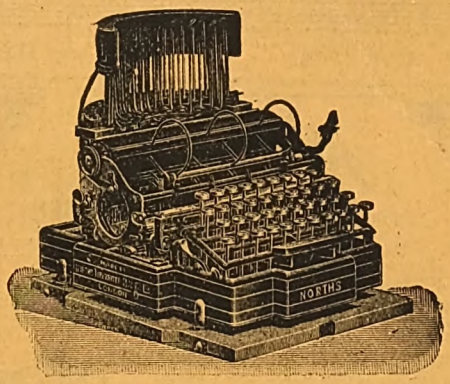
THE LONDON MANUFACTURERS,

47 Golden Lane, Barbican, London, E.C.

Digitized by Google

NORTH'S TYPEWRITER.

THE PREMIER MACHINE OF ENGLISH MAKE.



CATALOGUES—Apply

27a LEADENHALL STREET, LONDON, E.C.

35 TITHEBARN STREET, LIVERPOOL.

COSTUMES AND MANTLES FOR LADIES AND CHILDREN

Sent by Parcel Post without delay direct from

JOHN NOBLE Ltd.

☞ **MODEL 256.**—A Velvet-trimmed, well-cut Bodice and full wide Skirt in the latest tailor design. Price complete Costume **10/6**; carriage 6d. Skirt alone, 5/6; carriage 5d. Produced in the John Noble Cheviot-Serge or Costume Coating.

PATTERNS SENT POST FREE.

A FULL DRESS LENGTH of Costume Coating or Cheviot Serge (6yds.—52in. wide) for **7/6**; carriage 8d.

Colours: Black, Navy, Myrtle, Brown, Fawn, Khaki, Grey, and Royal Blue.

Sizes in Stock of Ladies' Costumes are: 34, 36, 38 in. round bust (under arms); Waists 24, 26, 28 in.; Skirts being 38, 40, 42 in. long in front. Any other size made to measure, 1/6 extra.

SPECIAL VALUE.

MODEL 274. ☞

Tailor-designed Sac Coat made in good Fawn or Black Beaver Cloth—Velvet Collar. Price only **8/6**; carriage 6d.

Please send bust (under arms) measurement when ordering.

Readers will oblige by naming *Short Stories* when writing to

JOHN NOBLE LTD.,

No. 46 BROOK STREET MILLS,

MANCHESTER.

TO THE QUEEN PURVEYORS

CROSSE & BLACKWELL'S

GREEN PEA. GRAVY. JULIENNE. MULLIGATAWNY. TOMATO. HOUSEHOLD. CRESSY. &c.

SOUP TABLETS

OF ALL GROCERS ETC. THROUGHOUT THE WORLD

DRUNKENNESS

CURED. This can be done with or without patient's knowledge. Send me a stamp and I will tell you how. (Send no money.) Address, in confidence, Mrs. C. H. (Room 8), 195 Oxford Street, London, W.

SULPHOLINE LOTION,

For clearing the skin from Spots, Blemishes, Redness, Roughness, giving a Beautiful Complexion and pleasing appearance.

SHILLING BOTTLES.

A SUM of from 12s. to 25s. per week can be earned in spare hours or evenings by either sex everywhere.—Send addressed envelope for particulars to Box 24, Eclipse Works, 89 Aldersgate Street, E.C.

WHY BE FAT?

When a lady, who has discovered a simple means of Self-Cure will be happy to send particulars of same to any sufferer from this distressing complaint. Free on receipt of stamped addressed envelope. ADDRESS:

Mrs. TREVOR WELLS,

63 *HIGH HOLBORN, LONDON, W.C.*

HAIR DESTROYED.

Send me an envelope (stamped and addressed) and I will tell you how to remove all superfluous hair **free of charge.** (Send no money.) Address, in confidence, Miss E. V. (Room 3), 195 Oxford Street, London, W.

ESTABLISHED 1851.

BIRKBECK BANK

Southampton Buildings, Chancery Lane, London.

2% on CURRENT ACCOUNTS, on the minimum monthly balances when not drawn below £100.

The BIRKBECK ALMANACK, with full particulars, post free. FRANCIS RAVENSCROFT, *Manager.*

Advertisements should be sent to "Short Stories" Advertisement Department, Henrietta Street, London, W.C.

Digitized by Google

SHORT STORIES

No. 614.] For the Week Ending October 6th, 1900. [One Penny.

THE WIDOW'S ENTANGLEMENT.

Dear Charlie,—Come to Willow Lodge for a week or two by the next train—if you can't come then, come Monday. My wife has arranged a picnic for Tuesday, and she says she must have you. It is your dull season now, I know, so you can get away well enough, and I shall take no excuses.—Fred Winkley.

P.S.—Mrs. Winchester is here—I thought it right to tell you, because you hate widows; but she is quite harmless.

I sat there in a brown study over this characteristic epistle. I could go well enough—there was no reason in the world why I should not do so, and Winkley's was the most charming, sociable, free-and-easy place at which to visit—a perfect Liberty Hall. But——

When I had reached this stage in my reflections, Kate came in. Kate is my sister, and because she chanced to be born a year and ten days before I did, has always felt it one of her duties to exercise over me a sort of superintending care—to see that I did not suffer for want of good advice. I tossed her the letter to read.

"It promises well," said my sage monitor in pink muslin, "all but the postscript. Charlie, as sure as you go there you are a lost man; the widow will have you."

"But Mrs. Winchester is not the dangerous kind of widow. Her husband has been dead four years, and she isn't married yet. Besides, she has no need to be in a hurry—she is only twenty-three."

"You seem to know all about her!"

There was a satirical twinkle in Kate's eye which I did not like. I defended myself.

"Of course I do. She is Fred's wife's cousin. No one could see Fred Long without hearing of her—he thinks she is perfection, and he wanted to introduce me to her long ago, only I told him widows were my detestation."

"So he invites you to spend a week or two in a house with one? Very handsome of him, upon my word."

"I suppose he did not think about her until he had written the note; you see, he only mentions her in the postscript. I won't be oolish enough to give up such a pleasant trip because Mrs. Winkley is entertaining her cousin. I shall go on Monday."

"The widow will have you."

Kate shook her head solemnly.

"We shall see."

All rights reserved.]

"I'll lay you a wager—the best box of cigars I can find in London, against what?"

"A pretty set of pearls, which you shall wear at my wedding if the widow gets me. And, now, Kate, do look out for my buttons. It would be shocking to encounter my fair enemy in a state of dilapidation."

"Oh, men, with sisters dear!
Oh, men, with mothers and wives!
It is not linen you're wearing out,
But human creatures' lives,"

hummed Kate's saucy voice, as she bounded upstairs to register our wager.

Monday afternoon found me at Willow Lodge. It was just after dinner—the hour at which everybody in the country goes to sleep. Not knowing when I should come, no one was at the station to meet me, and I walked up to the house, leaving my portmanteau to be sent for later.

The front door stood open, and I went quietly into the drawing-room. It was untenanted; at least, I thought so at first, but as I walked along towards the farther end of the apartments, I saw lying on a sofa a lady.

She was reclining there with the careless grace of a child. She had on a muslin dress, of a cool, fresh tint, with loose, full sleeves which revealed plump, tempting arms. One hand was crushed like a roseleaf under her glowing cheek, and the other still held a favourite volume. Her lips were bright as scarlet berries, and her hair was gold, just dashed with bronze, such hair as Page always paints for his ideal women.

I never could have a better chance for looking at Mrs. Winchester—for I made certain she was the lady. I could see everything but her eyes, and I decided that they were blue.

I was very much surprised—half disappointed, perhaps—the lady was so different from the ideal I had formed of her. Fred had never described her to me, except by such vague adjectives as "splendid," "magnificent," "stunning,"; but somehow, I had always thought of her as a regal, commanding brunette, a type of proud, stately, impassioned womanhood. She was nothing of all this. Small enough, a most, for a big fellow, like Fred Winkley, to put in his pocket, with cheeks that suggested dimples, and a coaxing, girlish expression on her face, even in sleep—surely, I was in no danger. My cigars were safe enough, and my heart

Digitized by Google

likewise. But it would not do to stand there looking at her too long. She might wake up, and what a scene there would be for a bashful man!

I went away from her with the sort of regret one always feels in leaving a pretty picture, and made my next sortie into the library. Here was another sleeper—Fred, himself, this time. To him I was merciless—I overset a footstool which was in my way, and strode noisily towards him. He started up, rubbing his eyes briskly.

"What, Charlie, that you? Too bad, upon my word. I ought to have been at the station to elbow you up here. But you never wrote what train you would take."

"It's all the better as it is. My unexpected advent has procured me an unexpected pleasure. I have seen Mrs. Winchester—asleep, in the drawing-room."

Fred laughed, a good hearty laugh, full of fun and frolic.

"That is rich. What do you think of her?"

"I think you were talking nonsense when you called her magnificent. She is simply a pretty girl — very pretty."

"Very pretty," repeated Fred after me, with a whistle of consideration. "Not at all in Vi's style, but very pretty, surely."

"Vi" was Fred's wife — a superb woman of the dark type, kindly, but hasty and passionate. It had been a love-match, and Fred thought her perfection. What good critics we men are of other men's wives!

She was reclining there with the careless grace of a child.

That evening, before tea, I was formally presented to Mrs. Winchester. Her eyes were not blue, as I had fancied, but brown.

"She has eyes so soft and brown,
She gives you a side glance and looks down;
Beware, beware,
She is fooling thee,"

I muttered to myself, taking a leaf out of Kate's book.

I had to acquit her, however, of taking much pains to please me. She ate her supper quite silently, with a kind of preoccupied air. Mrs. Winkley attempted to rally her.

"Maud's thoughts are prophetic," she said teasingly. "They have gone into the country of to-morrow, with Longfellow's Indian. We are to be a merry house to-morrow, Mr. Cothwaite. Dr. Dinsmore and his sister are coming in the morning. They are Mrs. Winchester's special friends."

Even this did not provoke Mrs. Winchester to any retort. When she had finished her coffee she went out upon the terrace, and looked off where the shadows of the sunset clouds were resting phantom-like on the mountain. Naturally enough I followed her. It was a splendid sunset—June at its ripest and richest; when the world, in a dream of beauty, forgets itself for a little while and lapses into Eden.

Looking out over the mountain, neither of us spoke until Fred and his "Vi" came upon the scene. Then the conversation was lively and general. Maud Winchester began to sparkle. A pretty little pink spot burnt into each cheek, and her brown eyes kindled. I understood, now, Fred's raptures about her. I could see that she might be very winning. If she had not been a widow, I even thought I might have loved her myself.

The next morning, walking down the carriage drive after breakfast, a gay train flashed by me. Half-a-dozen ladies and gentlemen all on horseback, and, leading them, a handsome, haughty woman, in dark grey riding habit. I followed slowly, and reached the house just in time to see the gentleman of the party bow with the grace of a courtier over Mrs. Winchester's hand, and then raise it to his lips.

"Dr. Dinsmore!" I said to myself. "Mrs. Winchester's No. 2, probably," and I surveyed the stranger with a scrutinising, anxious interest, for which I should have been puzzled to account. I did not like his looks. There seemed to me something wily and cat-like in the glance of his uncertain, unresting eyes. His suave features looked to me like a mask; his very air of ceremonious politeness repelled me. Nor, when I was presented to him, did I like any better the persuasive, insinuating tones of his gently-modulated voice. The whole man seemed to me hollow and insincere.

His sister was the haughty beauty I had seen at the head of the cavalcade. I liked her looks better. At least, I thought, she was honest and fearless. She made no attempt to conciliate anyone, yet, instinctively, everyone obeyed her.

Digitized by Google

The rest of the party have nothing to do with my story. They were lay figures, merely, imported for the day in sufficient numbers to make our picnic entertaining—they went away at night, and I saw them no more. Dr. Dinsmore and his sister I soon found were to stay for some time in the house.

Time went on, and I was puzzled as to the nature of the acquaintance between Dr. Dinsmore and Mrs. Winchester. He was constantly by her side. He put on her shawl; he carried her basket or her parasol; he seemed to make it his study to anticipate her wishes. But yet, in spite of his devotion, I began to doubt, after a little while, whether she liked his attentions. Either she did not care to be alone with him, or she thought it rude, in so small a company, to confine herself exclusively to one. She evidently strove to make the conversation general. I could have fancied, even, that she preferred talking to me. I should have been better able to judge had not Miss Dinsmore, in her grand, careless way, appropriated me, and kept me constantly by her side.

A week passed on so, and at its close I made some feeble suggestion about going home. It was to Fred, and he at once over-ruled my weak intention.

"You must stay for a week or two yet—at least, until Dinsmore and his sister go away. I don't like either of them, and I am not going to be left alone to entertain them. I wonder what hold Dinsmore has on Maud Winchester? She seems to me like a poor little struggling fly, whom a great, black, ugly spider has got stranded in his net."

Before I had been ten days at Willow Lodge, I loved Mrs. Winchester with every pulse of my heart. It was a perfectly inexplicable matter to me. I really knew nothing of her, beyond the playful grace of her manners, the sweet, winning style of her beauty. I had not had one hour of serious conversation with her—I knew nothing of her principles, little, even, of her tastes, and yet I would have staked my life on her goodness; trusted, without a moment's hesitation, my whole future happiness to her keeping.

I determined to stay on at Willow Lodge until I knew something more definite of the relations between her and Dr. Dinsmore. I looked out of the window, as I made up my mind to this, and I saw them coming up the walk together.

She had never looked lovelier, more girlish and beguiling. I went out and joined them. I was not deceived, I could not be, in the eagerness with which she turned to me from her companion; or the relief she seemed to manifest at having their *tête-à-tête* interrupted. Still, five minutes after, when he told her, rather than asked her, to go with him to the top of the hill, where they could get the best view of the sunset, she turned to go at once.

I was just resolving to make a third to their company, at the risk of being considered an intruder, when Miss Dinsmore's compelling hand fell on my arm.

"Let us go sunset-seeing, too, Mr. Cothwaite," she said, in tones that I could not have disregarded without rudeness; and then, seeing my eyes still follow those two retreating figures, she added:

"Not with them, though. Have you not eyes enough to see that they are in that stage when two are company? They were a great deal together last winter, and I have always found they liked their own society better than mine."

I went with her, after that, unresistingly. So this singular intimacy was no new thing! Miss Dinsmore must have found me but a stupid companion, for while I walked mechanically at her side, my thoughts had followed Maud Winchester's light footsteps to the hill-top. Probably this mattered little to Anna Dinsmore, for I could see clearly enough that she took no interest in me, beyond the service she could do her brother in keeping me out of the way.

This was only a specimen of the way we went on for a week longer—Mrs. Winchester evidently, as it appeared to me, almost disliking Dr. Dinsmore, and yet constantly with him—almost servilely obedient to his commands. Once or twice I came upon them suddenly, engaged in very earnest talk. She seemed to be pleading with him for some promise which he would not give her. I loved her more every day, and my interest in the matter became so intense it was almost painful.

At length I had an opportunity to understand it all. I had stretched myself on the grass, at the foot of a clump of the pines which were scattered here and there in the grounds, and I lay there thinking silently, busied in conjectures about the doctor and Mrs. Winchester. I had no thought of hearing anything then and there which would tend to elucidate the mystery; but presently they came, walking together as usual, and sat down on the other side of the trees, where I could hear every word they said.

Strict honour would have dictated that I should at once have made known to them my presence, which clearly they had not suspected. But I was in love, and here was an opportunity to unravel the mystery which hung around the woman to whom I longed to consecrate all my future. "All's fair in love and war," says the old adage, and perhaps, most men would have lain still as I did, and—listened. (It is an ugly word, and does not look well written.) Mrs. Winchester spoke first.

"Once more, Dr. Dinsmore, I implore you to release me from our engagement. I do not love you. Is it manly to force me to be your wife?"

"I think it is,"—in those smooth, hypocritical tones of his—"at least, I think it is like a man who loves to win his prize in whatever manner he can—by fair means,

The gentleman of the party bowed with the grace of a courtier over Mrs. Winchester's hand.

Digitized by Google

Miss Dinsmore's compelling hand fell on my arm.

if possible, if not, by any which present themselves. Why do you not have some consideration for me? My happiness is worth just as much to me as yours is to you. Why did you promise to be my wife if you did not love me?—or what right have you to be so capricious?"

"None—no right," she said humbly. (Poor little frightened dove). "I know it is all wrong on my part, only that you did over-persuade me, and I promi ed you thoughtlessly. But I don't love you, Dr. Dinsmore, and I can't make you happy."

"But y u should love me, Maud"—his voice sank into low, pathetic, passionate pleading—"you should love me—I would make you. You couldn't live with me and receive the devotion of my whole life, and not love me. Once mine, and I know I can win your heart, unless—Maud, you have not dared to love anyone else?"

How eagerly I listened for her answer.

"No one else has ever asked me to love them. It is not that."

I suppose her words satisfied him, but there was no hope in them for me.

"Then, child, I can make you love me—I know it."

"Why don't you?" she said, with a sort of dreary hopelessness that was very touching, "When I promised to marry you, that was the way you persuaded me. You said you loved me as no one else would ever love me again, and you would make me love you. I have been waiting for that time to come, and it has not arrived. I do not even like you as well as I did eight months ago."

"It would be all different then. You do not understand it. I have no opportunity to make you love me now. It would be different if you were all mine—my wife, whom I had a right to love, and protect, and cherish."

Her answer came to my ear, very low, but firm.

"I think that would not make you dearer, Dr. Dinsmore. Remember, however I may seem to you, I am a woman, and no child. I have been married once to a man whom I did not love. I would rather die than go through the same ordeal again."

Her words thrilled me with a strange joy. If I could win her, then, I should have no rival, not even in the memory of her dead husband.

At this stage, Dinsmore's temper got the better of him. He said, in a low, stern, angry tone—if she had heard him speak so many times, it was no wonder she did not love him.

"Madam, if you have no consideration for me, I must have some for myself. I will not be the victim of a jilt. If you refuse to fulfil our engagement, I will inforce my claim legally. How will you like the publicity of such a trial."

"It would kill me."

There was anguish in her tone. I knew how she was wringing those helpless little hands together. I could fancy the despair in those brown eyes; the piteous quiver round the sweet mouth. How I longed to spring to her side, and offer her, then and there, the support of one true heart. But I must be prudent. She might not be prepared for such a declaration, or ready to forgive me for listening to her secret. I could not run such a risk to my own chances of success as it would be to speak then. So I was silent.

"I am resolved, Mrs. Winchester. You have, for once, a firm man to deal with. You can make of me what you will—your bitter, uncompromising enemy, or a husband who would worship you."

"Not my husband—oh, never my husband!" I heard her gasp, as he moved away. I expected then a storm of sobs; but no sound came, and soon she got up and walked after him.

Going to the house by a roundabout way, I summoned Fred to my confidence, and told him all—my love for Maud Winchester, and the conversation I had heard, which unravelled the secret of her singular relations with Dr. Dinsmore.

"The coward!" he cried, as I concluded. "I will turn him out of my house to-night; the paltry, pitiful wretch!"

"Not so fast," I said, putting my hand on his arm. "You mustn't forget how I obtained the information, and that you cannot reveal my secret without my leave. I am not at all sure that turning the medical gentleman out of doors would be the best way to deal with him.

Digitized by Google

We must contrive some way to keep him from drawing her before the public in a breach of promise suit."

Fred considered a few moments, then he said:

"He is mean enough, but he would never do that. What he wants of her is her fortune. She is a fascinating little creature, and he may have had some sort of liking for her at first, but he does not love her now—if he did, he would never bully her in this dastardly way. She is rich; and that is what Dinsmore is after. Her first match was one made by her friends, and a very unhappy one it was. Poor little thing, she ought to have a chance at happiness now. I hope you can win her, Charlie; I would ask nothing better for either of you. I don't think there's any danger of Dinsmore suing her. It would be a sure loss of his professional and social position, and any damages he could get wouldn't pay him. Besides, if he should, you could shield her from anything unpleasant—just make no attempt to contest the suit and quietly pay the damages out of her fortune, if it is large enough."

"I don't care at all for the fortune," I cried, with the enthusiasm of an honest lover. "It is only herself I want. Let him take all the money, so he will peacefully give her to me."

"I am a married man of three years' standing," said Fred drily, "and though I love my wife as dearly as anyone can, I never yet found money any inconvenience. So we won't offer the fortune to him, unless he asks for it."

I had stretched myself on the grass at the foot of a clump of pines.

The next day I contrived to meet Mrs. Winchester for an instant in the drawing-room, when Dinsmore was off duty. I begged her to talk with me a few moments, for I had something of especial importance to say to her.

She looked at me in surprise, but answered me quietly.

"I will, if you will contrive the opportunity. You may have noticed that I have not many moments to myself."

Fate, or, rather, Fred, managed it for me after all, in a simple, straightforward manner, that was very refreshing. It was after our early tea, and he said carelessly:

"I have ordered the horses for a drive. For once we'll go in couples. I shall claim Miss Dinsmore—her society is more of a rarity to me than that of either of the other ladies. Doctor, you will drive my wife, if you please; and, Charlie, Mrs. Winchester will fall to your share."

I saw Anna Dinsmore bite her scornful lips with rage, and there was a white light of anger in the doctor's eyes; but he was too much of a man of the world to insult a lady, his hostess, by offering any objections. He bowed politely, and made a speech about Mr. Winkley's generosity, which might be taken for earnest or satire, according as the hearer understood, or did not understand the state of affairs.

Fred had taken care that I should have a fast horse and a fair start, and presently we were out of sight. A mile further on, I turned into a lonely, unfrequented road, with which I thought Dinsmore was not familar, and where, at any rate I could trust to Fred's engineering to prevent me from being followed.

Then I let the reins lie loosely over the horse's back—his pace slackened, and I could talk to my companion.

"Maud," I said, "forgive me if you think what I am about to say presumptuous, on so short an acquaintance; but I cannot go away from here and leave it unsaid. I love you with all the strength and fervour of a man's heart. The only thing I long for is the power to make you happy. Could you love me? Have you seen enough of me to know your own heart?"

There was encouragement in the swift blush that dyed her cheek; but tears filled her eyes, and she said, in faltering tones:

"You would not have asked me what you have, Mr. Cothwaite, if you knew just how I am situated."

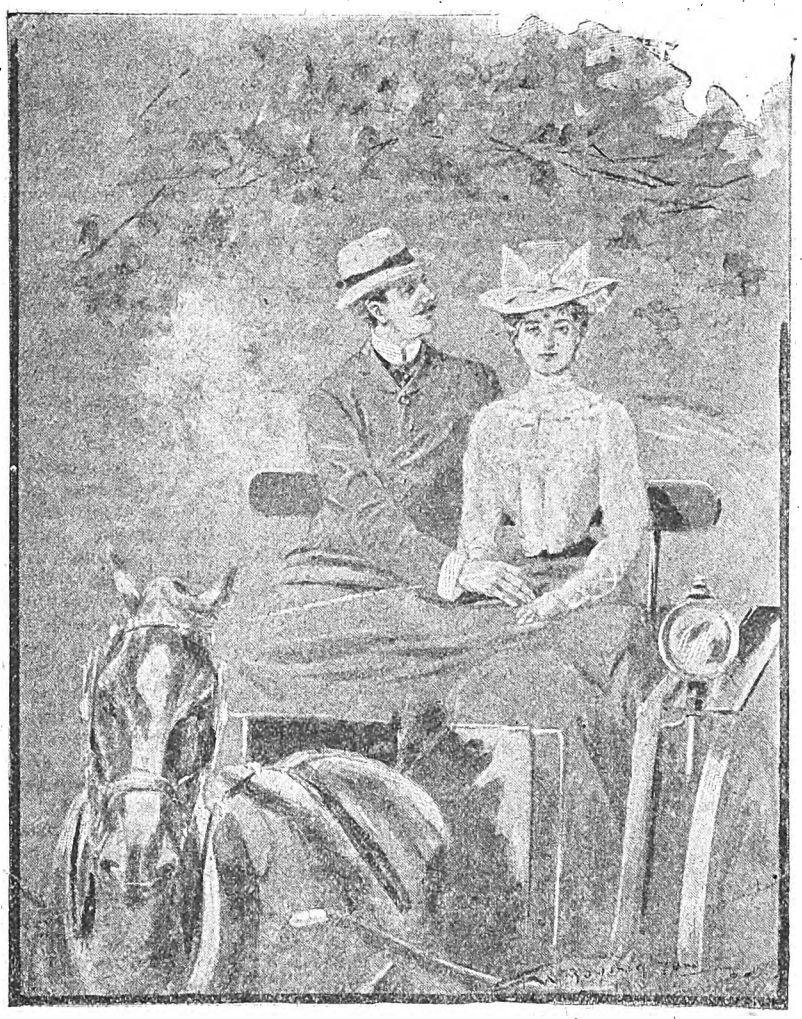
"No matter now for the situation, only tell me quickly, before anyone interrupts us, do you think you could ever love me?"

"I do love you—oh, too well!—it was because I saw you and loved you that I knew I could never marry Dr. Dinsmore. But perhaps you will not care for my love when you know all."

The dear, honourable little thing—unwilling to let herself be happy for a moment until she had told me her whole painful secret! I took both her hands in mine—it was well that Fred had given me a safe horse, for I forgot him just then—I, but what is the use of giving you a stereotyped love scene? Let every young gentleman insert here what he would have done in my place. Ladies, if they can't trust to their own imaginations, will find the programme in any novel.

When I had taken from her dear lips my first kiss, I

Digitized by Google



I let the reins lie loosely over the horse's back.

told her that I did know all. I explained to her how I became possessed of my information, and then I told her my plan for relieving her from his persecutions. It was that we should be married the next day. Fred could easily make all the arrangements for us; and in the afternoon we could drive off by ourselves, and I would bring her home as Mrs. Cothwaite. Then, if he chose to sue her, let him bring his suit. I could manage it all for her, and in the safe shelter of a happy home, she would not so much mind it—at the worst, it would only be the loss of a few thousands, which we should never miss.

At first, I know, my proposition startled her by its suddenness. But I used all the eloquence of which I was master; and I think the longing to be delivered from the persecutions of Dr. Dinsmore, who had become to her a perfect nightmare, had yet more influence than my words.

At length I won her promise to be my wife before the next sunset. I thought I had never known what happiness was until then. Is there not a season in every man's life who has ever honestly and truly loved, when Elysium seems no fable?

We reached home soon after the rest of our party. It would not have done to excite any suspicion by late hours.

We found them all in the drawing-room — Dinsmore in a savage temper, as was evident in his sullen, lowering glance and restless motions; Miss Dinsmore trying to cover up his rudeness by extra brilliancy; and Fred and Vi apparently perfectly at ease. Maud avoided all conversation by saying that she believed her ride had given her a headache, and presently retiring.

I talked gaily until everyone was ready to say good-night; and then I spent half-an-hour with Fred in my own room, settling all the arrangements for the morrow.

Next morning, Mrs. Winchester made her appearance at breakfast in the sunniest of moods. A lovely bloom was on her cheek, and a bright light in her eye. She was gracious even to Dr. Dinsmore.

I longed so for a few fond words—a whisper of the love of which my heart was so full — but her look told me to have faith in her. I controlled my impatience, and waited.

After luncheon, Fred asked Dinsmore to drive. He had something which he particulary wished to discuss with him. Dinsmore could not decently refuse. A second time he was a martyr to his politeness.

A few moments afterwards another equipage came to the door, and at the same time my Maud came downstairs.

In an hour from that time she was my wife, and we drove back to Willow Lodge. I introduced Mrs. Cothwaite to Dr. Dinsmore, and then I handed him my card.

"That will be my wife's address in case you wish to send her notice of your suit in court."

His face turned crimson. Rascal as he was, I couldn't help pitying him. He said, hesitatingly:

"As a lover, Mr. Cothwaite, you should know that a man in love says many things to carry his point which he does not exactly mean. Your wife is safe from any persecutions of mine."

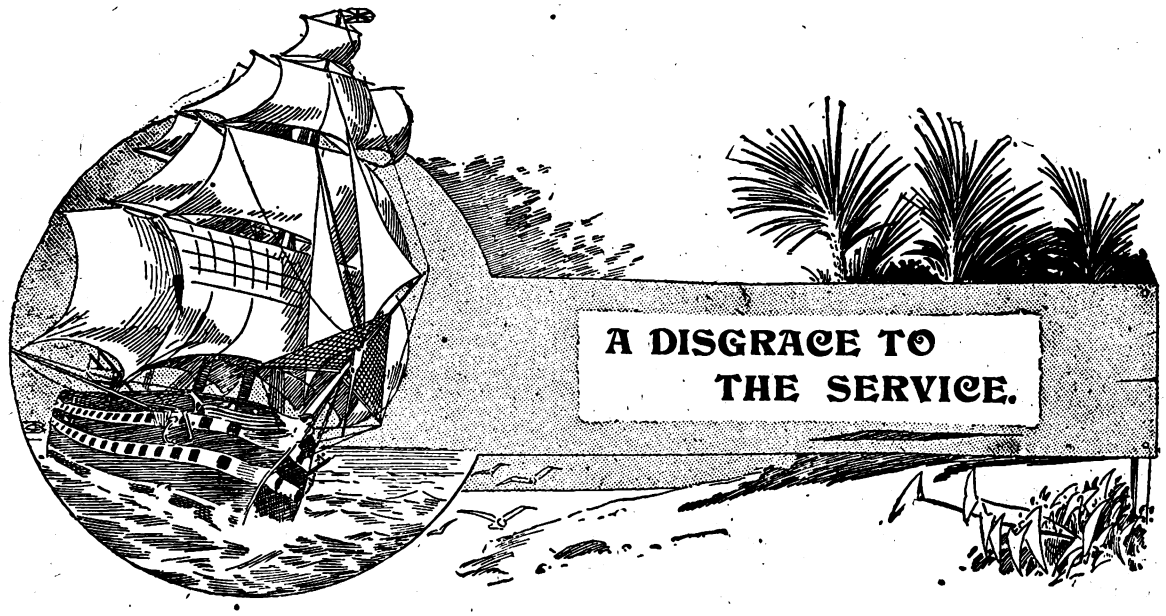
The next morning he and his sister left Willow Lodge. They left behind them two happy hearts.

It is five years since, and we have never wearied of each other, I and my Maud.

So Kate had her pearls, and the widow won me.

R. H.

Digitized by Google



A DISGRACE TO THE SERVICE.

DENNIS CLARKE stood up in the dock and faced the magistrate with a sullen, defiant air. He had been brought up three days previously in the same place charged with being a deserter.

His old comrades were so ashamed at the time of Dennis Clarke's connection with the regiment that they would not have thanked anybody for drawing attention to it. But to return to our story.

The deserter had been remanded, on his first appearance, to await an escort, or to see what was the decision of the military authorities concerning him. The commanding officer had replied to the communication from the civil authorities acquainting them with his decision respecting the deserter, and Dennis Clarke now took his place in the dock to hear that decision.

As the magistrate looked at the deserter an involuntary look of scorn crossed his face, and his lip curled with contempt.

"Private Clarke," he said, "or rather Dennis Clarke, for even the name of Private is too honourable an appellation for you, I have this morning to acquaint you with your commanding officer's decision, and unless you are utterly shameless surely his letter will raise a blush for your lost manhood. Listen what he says of you. After recounting some of your escapades and delinquencies he goes on to say that he does not consider it worth while sending an escort to take you back again, as he has come to the conclusion that you will never be anything but a disgrace to the service, and he therefore leaves you for the civil authorities to deal with."

As the disgraced soldier heard this strong condemnation of himself he gave a start of anger, which, however, immediately gave place to a contemptuous, half-triumphant smile as the magistrate again addressed him.

"If you have one spark of manhood left, if you are in the least worthy of the name of Englishman, go away, and in civil life endeavour to regain the character you have lost in military life. Had the words of your colonel's letter been used with reference to me I don't think I should have ever been able to look my fellowmen in the face again. However, you are young, and may still do something to wipe out the stain now placed upon you, though I am afraid, as far as your old comrades are concerned, you will always be remembered as the man who was dismissed as a disgrace to his regiment and the service. Now go, and for Heaven's sake rouse yourself and show some sign of manliness."

The ex-soldier stepped from the dock with an air of indifference, real or assumed. The decision of his commanding officer had come as a great surprise to him, and yet it had in a manner pleased him.

His military career, thus ignominiously terminated, had been begun badly. He had not enlisted from a love of the service, nor was it owing to the glamour of the smart uniform. In his previous civilian days Dennis Clarke had been very badly afflicted with a very common complaint, viz., laziness, and so long as he could get hold of sufficient money to buy beer, someone else could provide food and shelter.

His parents, with whom he at that time lived, had stood it as long as they could, but eventually his father had risen in anger against him, and with many bitter words had driven him out of doors, telling him that if he would not work neither should he eat, at least, not at his expense.

It was at this juncture that he fell in with a recruiting sergeant, and as he was a strong, healthy fellow, the sergeant painted his picture of the soldier's life in his most glowing colours. Plenty of food, very little work, good clothes, pocket money in abundance—this was the bait dangled before the eyes of Dennis Clarke, and as it appeared to coincide very nicely with his own views of life, he swallowed it.

He was soon disillusioned, however. It is quite true that the life of a soldier has its advantages, but those advantages are only to be gained by the workers in the ranks, not the shirkers, and so Dennis Clarke found out. With disillusion came the resolve to get out of it. There was no question of purchasing his discharge. He could never raise money enough for that. Accordingly he deserted, but was caught and taken back for punishment. After that followed a period chiefly spent in either the guard-room, the cells, or on fatigue drill, and then he cleared out again.

Digitized by Google

For the second time the truant son of Mars was restored to the fold from which he had strayed, but at the earliest opportunity he was off again. He was not clever enough, however, to escape detection, and consequently he was soon laid by the heels, but at last his object was accomplished. He was free of the Army, for they did not think him worth the trouble of fetching back.

The pint of bitter which Dennis Clarke purchased to celebrate his restoration to freedom and civilian life did not have quite the relish he expected it to have. He was tolerably thick-skinned, but the manner of his dismissal and the magistrate's words rankled somewhat. As he sat in the tap-room of the public-house to which he had adjourned on leaving the police court, he became cognisant of the fact that he was the subject of a discussion which to say the least of it was embarrassing to him, and so with the object of disarming criticism he invited his neighbour to have a drink with him.

"Nay, mate," replied the man, "I like a drop o' beer as well as any man, but aw'd rayther pay for m' own than sup wi' a chap as isn't worth fetchin' back to his barracks."

This expression of sentiment met with the approval of the remainder of those present, as was very evident from the chorus of "Hear, hear," which followed it, and this was supplemented by a further expression from another of the crowd.

"If it 'ad bin me as 'ad bin cal'ed a disgrace to t' service aw should be ashamed to show m' face among men. Keep th' drinks for th' own sooart if tha' can find any mooar on 'em."

Dennis Clarke strode out of the house with an oath. Thick-skinned as he was, this was more than he could stand. These blunt northern miners were too free in their expressions of opinion for him, and he began to wish himself back in barracks. He comforted himself with the reflection, however, that out of the town where this had occurred he would not be likely to suffer from that kind of thing.

Of course these men had been in court and heard the magistrate's remarks. In fact he remembered that the man who had spoken first had been the defendant in a "drunk and disorderly" case which had come on before his own affair. But then in the eyes of these men getting drunk was not a very heinous crime, although it sometimes entailed unpleasant consequences in the shape of fines or an occasional night in a police cell. They were accustomed to working hard and taking their lives in their hands when they went down the mine, and in their eyes laziness and cowardice were two very serious crimes.

When he got outside the house the ex-soldier decided he would make tracks for home, some forty miles away. It was hardly likely that they would know anything about the circumstances of his dismissal there. He spent that night on the road and arrived at his native place the following morning.

The news had travelled before him. When he opened the door of his father's house and walked in he was greeted with an expression which was considerably more forcible than polite. This was followed by the order to get out.

"What dost mean by comin' here to disgrace me?" roared the angry father. "Aw don't know how tha' can dare to show tha face here. Look at this," and he handed his son a copy of that morning's paper. There under the heading of "Police Intelligence" he saw an account of the affair.

When he had finished reading he threw down the paper and slunk out of the house like a whipped cur, followed by a parting injunction from his father not to come back there any more.

As he walked down the street a boy yelled "deserter." He turned round furiously and collared the offender with the intention of cuffing him; but ere he could effect his purpose he heard a loud guffaw from a group of his acquaintances at the street corner.

"See him," said one, "that's just his mark. He can tackle little lads nicely."

"Notice the charge he made," shouted another derisively. "That beat the Lancers at Omdurman."

"Have they pensioned yer off?" yelled a third. "Let's have a look at yer medals."

This was more than he could stand. He fairly turned tail and bolted down the street, followed by roars of laughter from his tormentors. Not till he was far away did he stop, and the place of his birth knew him no more.

* * * * *

It was the evening of that disastrous day at Colenso, where our men tried so gallantly to save the guns. When the request for volunteers to regain possession of the guns which had been abandoned had been made, among those who stepped forward was a gunner of the Royal Artillery, known to his comrades as "Surly." His name on the regimental records was Charles Johnson, but owing to his unsociability he had the above-mentioned name bestowed upon him.

So far as the performance of his duties was concerned he left nothing to be desired. His work was always well done, and had it not been for his tendency to give way to drink occasionally he would doubtless have had his stripe before this.

This was the man who had now volunteered to help to save the guns, and his comrades were surprised. It was not his offer that surprised them, it was his appearance. His eyes fairly sparkled with excitement, and he

Digitized by Google

looked as pleased as a young girl going with the best of company to a picnic on an ideal summer's day.

"Look at Surly," they whispered. "Does he think he will stand a chance of the Cross?"

The band of volunteers started from the donga where they had been taking shelter from the enemy's fire. It was a veritable valley of death into which they were plunging, but each man set his teeth and went forward. Man after man fell, horse after horse was shot, but still they persisted in their efforts until it was absolutely necessary to retire.

Among those who were badly wounded was Surly, who had got a shot through the leg and another had penetrated his lungs. He was conveyed to a place of safety. The officer who had directed their operations approached him, and, bending over him, tried to cheer the man who was evidently mortally wounded.

"It was a splendid effort, my man."

The dying gunner's eyes lighted up on hearing these words.

"Can I 'ave a word or two with you, sir?" he asked.

"Certainly, my man. What is it?"

"I want to confess, sir."

"I'm afraid there isn't a priest of your Church available," replied the officer, mistaking the man's meaning.

"No, not that, sir. I've enlisted under a false name. I was dismissed from the Army because the colonel said I was a disgrace to the service."

"That you are not," warmly exclaimed the officer.

"Will you tell the colonel and the boys that, sir, and then I can die content."

"If I can do anything to clear your name I will most certainly do it."

Slowly and painfully the dying man told the story of his dismissal, giving the officer his real name, the name of the place he came from, and all the necessary details.

The end of the story was told with great difficulty, and very soon after its close the eventful career ended. He was buried that night with full military honours. The story had been retold by the officer, and soon went round. The much discussed Surly was the hero of the moment.

Some time after the officer was invalided home. True to his promise to the man who had given his life to clear his name, at the earliest opportunity he took steps to get the matter made public. He called upon the officers of Dennis Clarke's old regiment, and also upon the magistrate who had lectured the deserter.

This worthy was much moved by the recital, and on taking his seat on the bench the following day, before commencing the ordinary business, he addressed the representatives of the Press. Telling them the story he requested them to make it public, and when he would have gone on with the other business of the Court he was interrupted by a burst of cheering from the public, which, it must be confessed, he was not very severe in suppressing.

John Clarke is a very old man now, but he treasures very highly two newspaper cuttings. The first is the one with which we are acquainted already, and the second is a cutting from the same paper of a later date.

Thus did Dennis Clarke retrieve his character, and though once dismissed as a disgrace to the service, he finally rested among the honoured dead, and the people of his native town speak with pride of the man who died, ostensibly to save the guns at Colenso, but really to prove his manhood.

JOHN HENRY PEAT.

ALL THE LATEST PARTICULARS ABOUT THE GREAT TEN-POUND NOTE SCHEME.

18 Ten-Pound Notes Already Claimed. 50 More Still Wandering About the Country.

IN order that ladies may have an extra opportunity of sharing in this great *Pearson's Weekly* scheme,

FIVE TEN-POUND LADIES

have been dispatched all over the country, each of whom will deliver up the Sealed Envelope to the lady who fulfills the conditions mentioned in *Pearson's Weekly*. No gentlemen need apply.

For those who may be too modest, or who cannot easily leave their homes to ask men in the street the momentous question, the Editor of *Pearson's Weekly* has prepared a dainty little card with the words: "Have You Got that Ten-Pound Note?" printed in scarlet upon it. All you have to do is to

PLACE THIS CARD IN YOUR WINDOW,

and if one of the Ten-Pounders happens to see it he will at once call, and upon your producing a copy of the current number of *Pearson's Weekly* he will hand you a Sealed Envelope entitling you to the sum of £10.

Address a halfpenny post-card to the Ten-Pound Card Department, Pearson's Buildings, Henrietta Street, London, W.C., and you will receive one of these cards under cover and post free.

The latest song, "Have You Got That Ten-Pound Note?" is being sung every night by Mr. R G. Knowles in various London music-halls with great success.

Copies of this song will be ready on October 8th, and may be obtained at 1s. 6d. each. The tune will shortly be heard on all the piano organs in the streets.

A sketch, entitled, "Have You Got That Ten-Pound Note?" was produced on September 21st at the Royal Theatre of Varieties and at Collins's Music-hall with a powerful cast. Everybody interested in this Ten-Pound scheme should see this screamingly funny piece.

Full particulars of the scheme will be found each week in *Pearson's Weekly*, and fresh developments appear in the *Daily Express* every day.

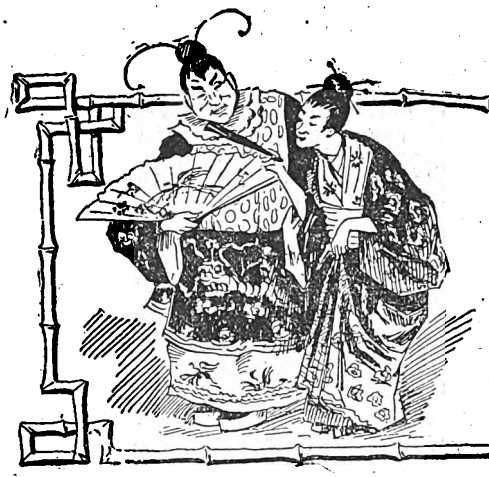
The following are the names and addresses of the winners of Ten-Pound Notes up to the time of going to press:

H. E. Baker, 4 Beaconsfield Road, Magdalen Road, Norwich; John Lotan, 23 St. Anne's Chambers, Ludgate Hill, London, E.C.; Charles Lee, 1 Agnes Terrace, St. Mary's Avenue, Southend; Charles Wright, 30 Oxford Gardens, North Kensington; Robert Gautier, 132 Clarence Road, Wimbledon; W. W. Tonkin, 5 Grove Road, Brixton, S.W.; E. G. Baldock, 68 Portland Street, Lincoln; Arthur Wellings, 12 The Forgate, Worcester; A. Bowman, 413 City Road, London, E.C.; John Roe, Hatfield Road Board School, St. Albans; R J. Martyn, 4 Albert Road, Morice Town, Devonport; Mr. W. H. Hole, Stationmaster, Teignmouth; Archibald Brown, Market Place, Carluke; J. D. Southall, 38 Rosebery Gardens, Crouch End; W. Cotton, Coxbridge, West Pennard, Glastonbury; W. H. Wayne, 19 Hurstfinch Road, St. Helens; May Grammer, 154 Elgin Avenue, Maida Vale; Albert J. Page, Sawbridgeworth, Herts.

The original Sealed Envelopes by which claims have been made can be seen at the following places:

Mr. John Lotan's, Ludgate Hill Station; Mr. H. E. Baker's, offices of *Eastern Daily Press*, Norwich; Inspector Lee's, Cooper Brothers, Cliff Town Road, Southend; Mr. C. Wright's, Crown Hotel, Southampton; Mr. W. W. Tonkin's, Lang Sims, 437 Brixton Road, London, S.W.; Mr. E. G. Baldock's, Clifford Thomas, 202 High Street, Lincoln; Mr. Arthur Wellings', Mr. Large, The Forgate, Worcester; Mr. A. Bowman's, 413 City Road, E.C.; Mr. John Roe's, Mr. W. H. Richardson, 5 High Street, St. Albans; Miss May Grammer's, Mr. Burge, chemist, 123 Shirland Road, Paddington.

Digitized by Google



Mr. Bowser's Tribulations.

XXVI.—He Turns to Root Beer as a Family Tonic.

"You may have observed," said Mr. Bowser as he left the dinner table the other evening—"you may have observed, Mrs. Bowser, that for the last three or four days I have not eaten enough to keep a chicken alive?"

"I hadn't observed any falling off in your appetite," she replied as she wondered what new fad had got hold of him.

"Probably not. There are wives who never observe anything until their husbands are ready to be buried. The fact remains, however, that I have lost my appetite and have such a weak and languid feeling that I can scarcely move about. If something is not done I shall have to keep to my bed."

"Well, why don't you go to a doctor?"

"I have lost all faith in doctors. They would feel my pulse, look at my tongue and order me to take a voyage round the world, so that I might not die on their hands. No; I shall not go to the doctor."

"Then what will you do?" asked Mrs. Bowser, with considerable solicitude.

"Doctor myself. Knowing what ails me, as I do, and having a remedy at hand, I shall be my own physician and hope to be all right in a couple of weeks. In talking my case over with Brown to-day he recommended something which he has tried himself with the grandest results."

"Five kinds of roots, and four kinds of barks."

"You—you are going to dose yourself again!" she exclaimed in despairing tones as she turned away.

"Dose! Dose! I wish you would be a little more choice in your language. I have lost my appetite. I have found something to restore it. Do you call that dose? It makes no difference whether you do or not, however. I shall prepare the remedy, and take it according to directions. Tell the cook that I shall want to use the range for half-an-hour or so."

"What is your remedy?" asked Mrs. Bowser.

"Something as simple as it is efficacious. In the old days what did our grandfathers and grandmothers do when they lost their appetites?"

"I never heard that they lost them."

"There are several things you never heard of, and I am always willing to post you on what you don't know. When our progenitors lost their appetites, they turned to roots and barks and made tonics. I have followed their example. Here is a package of powdered roots and barks—five kinds of roots and four kinds of barks. I propose to make four gallons of what you may call root beer and take it as an invigorater."

"Very well," replied Mrs. Bowser as she started upstairs. "But if anything happens I want you to remember that I had nothing to do with it."

"Nothing will happen—that is, nothing will happen except that my appetite will be restored and my life move on again as before."

The cook vacated the kitchen at his approach. There were directions on the package as to how to prepare the root beer, and Mr. Bowser followed them as far as placing a cauldron over the stove with four gallons of water in it.

Then it occurred to him that the decoction ought to have a twang to it to tempt the lethargic appetite. There was mustard in the pantry, and he dropped a liberal quantity into the water. There was ginger also, and after a little thought he decided to add some of that.

"In that way I'll kill two birds with one stone," he said to himself. "I'll have root beer and ginger ale out of the same bottle."

He was watching the boiling when the cook came down for something. She was a woman of thirty, with a domestic look, and it struck Mr. Bowser that she must know more or less about the tonics of our forefathers. He

Digitized by Google

told her of the mixture and asked if she could think of anything to add.

"I've seen my brother make root beer," she replied, "and I think he put in about a dozen different things. They say you can't get too much in it."

"No; I don't believe you can," he mused. "The roots and barks are all right for a foundation, but the stuff wants spicing up into an elixir. I'll make something that the kings of old would have howled for."

He found lemons and squeezed in a couple. He found nutmegs and grated up one. There was cinnamon, and he threw in a liberal quantity. The last thing he got hold of was a bottle of extract of vanilla. He didn't intend to use over half the contents, but when all went in he thought a high vanilla flavour might be the best, after all.

When the mixture had been given a good boil, it was removed and carried out into the back yard to cool. A jugful was taken out and placed in cold water for immediate use, and while it was cooling Mr. Bowser sat down and felt that he had struck a good thing.

The smell from that cauldron wasn't half bad. As he sat watching it half a dozen cats appeared on the back fences and sniffed and yowled.

"They smell it, and know a good thing."

"They smell it and know a good thing!" he chuckled. "If I have any to spare I'll leave it out here. I suppose cats lose their appetites, same as human beings, and I shan't begrudge 'em a pint or so."

Half-an-hour later he went upstairs with jug and tumbler. There was joy in his heart and a smile on his face as he sat down and said:

"My dear Mrs. Bowser, if you want the spring of youth which Ponce de Leon looked for in vain just quaff a glass of this. If it don't knock five years off your age, I'm a goat."

"Thanks, but I don't care for any," she replied.

"All right—more left for me. Ah! but that is good—that is delicious! Wine a hundred years old is not in it with root beer. I'll get up in the morning with an appetite like a horse. I suppose about three glasses is enough for a first experiment? Do you know, I believe there'd be £2,000 a year profit in making this beer and selling it by the barrel?"

Mr. Bowser went down and drove the cats away and brought in the cauldron and half-an-hour later the family went to bed. He went round patting himself on the waistcoat and telling how the tonic had gone to the right spot, and Mrs. Bowser finally got the idea that he might have struck a good thing. She had just fallen asleep, when that idea was dispelled. Mr. Bowser suddenly uttered a groan like a horse stricken down in the prime of life, and next moment he sat up in bed and exclaimed:

"Great snakes! But how I do suffer!"

"What's the matter?" asked Mrs. Bowser, as she jumped out of bed.

"My stomach! I'm awfully ill, and pains shoot through me. Phew! Ouch! I'm a dead man!"

"It's that appetite restorer. Probably it was intended to act this way. Just lie quiet and let it get a good hold."

But Mr. Bowser couldn't. In five minutes he was being twisted into a dozen strange shapes by colicky pains, and his nausea made him perspire like a 'bus-horse on a hot day. Mrs. Bowser had not said half she wanted to about appetite restorers, but she lost no time in sending for the familly physician.

When he arrived, he found a very sick man, and it was a long two hours before the pains eased a little and gave him a chance to inquire what had brought them on.

With tears in his eyes Mr. Bowser owned up to the roots and barks and vanilla and nutmeg and other things, and the doctor made no reply to him. He turned to Mrs. Bowser instead and said:

"I will try and find the fool killer's address, and the next time you have to wire get him instead of me and tell him to bring his biggest clubs along!"

M. QUAD.

Next Week: "HIS NATURAL PHILOSOPHY DIDN'T WORK TILL HE CALLED IN A TRAMP."

Digitized by Google

CLAYTON'S LOT.

It was the beginning of the short but beautiful Indian summer. The down town portion of New York City did not, however, seem much the better for it, save that it was cooler, and existence not one long gasping misery.

Up in Central Park things showed more to advantage, the lovely tints of the foliage, with all the other sure and certain signs of the "fall," making one to forget awhile the sordid money-grubbing, life-at-high-pressure of Wall Street and its neighbourhood.

But it is with this very same part of the city that we have now to do.

A big liner from Liverpool had just arrived at Pier 101, North River. The pier shed was crowded with passengers, luggage, cargo, and all the thousand-and-one odds and ends, human and otherwise, that go to make up a trans-atlantic disembarkation. Bustle, noise, and danger to life and limb reigned supreme.

The place, a long ramshackle wooden erection was dirty to filthiness, the deck rotten, and full of holes and pitfalls. This, added to its crowded condition and an all pervading odour, very far from sweet, forbade lingering, except for purely business purposes.

Evidently, the gentleman standing by a big pile of trunks, was of the same opinion. He was unmistakably an Englishman, and, as unmistakably, a military man. His well-set-up figure, carefully trimmed and trained moustache, together with his quick manner and air of command, told of the parade ground and orderly room.

It could not be said that his face was altogether a pleasant one, the knit brows, and compressed lips indicating only too plainly, a bad temper, and its twin brother, a selfish, arrogant disposition.

Ever since his landing had he been assailed by touts innumerable, but perfectly impervious to their blandishments, was seemingly waiting for some one.

"Name, Howarth?"

"Yes, that's my name," replied the newly-arrived.

"Guess this is for you, then," said the other, a man of the ordinary "Northern" type, clean-cut, keen, and quite up-to-date in appearance, handing Sydney Howarth a letter.

Hastily opening it, the latter found it to run thus:

5002 Broadway.

Dear Sir,—We have made every possible enquiry *re* your matter, but, we are sorry to say, without result. All we can find out is that Captain Hugh Clayton was last heard of, two years ago, at Felix City, on the extreme border of Western Texas. At that point the scent failed utterly, and we can only suggest that you should yourself follow the forest route from Felix towards the West, as it is certainly known that Captain Clayton contemplated taking up a "lot" of forest land, and clearing it. If you will call upon us we shall be pleased to give you any information that may help you. As we know that you are a stranger to New York we would recommend the Everett House, Madison Square, as a comfortable abiding-place during your stay in this city.

We are, Dear Sir,
Yours truly,
Stephen P. Maturin & Co.

To
Sydney Howarth Esq.

It may be as well, perhaps, to detail here a few facts explanatory in some measure, of the presence in New York of Sydney Howarth at this time.

Three years before he had fallen madly in love with Phyllis Forbes, the queen-beauty of the London season. At balls, garden-parties, and functions innumerable had he met her and worshipped. That was all, however, for encouragement, beyond the merest and simplest friendliness, he received none.

For some time he wondered if her affections were elsewhere engaged, but could discover nothing. It was chance alone that brought about a revealing of the secret. A conversation with a brother officer, in the course of which the lady's name was mentioned, cleared up the mystery.

Hugh Clayton, one of those impulsively-transparent, open-hearted men, who, somehow, are nearly always handicapped, in one way or another, in life's race, had saved Phyllis Forbes' life on a certain occasion at the risk of his own. The girl had never forgotten, nor had he. It was a notable instance of mutual love at first sight.

Phyllis, as has been said, was very fair, a maid among maids; she was also the only child of wealthy parents, who coveted for her enhanced social distinction in the shape of a "good" marriage. But parental breath in this case was but wasted. The die was cast. Fate had spun the web, and it must be worn, if only as a shroud.

Hugh Clayton was poor, desperately poor. Moreover, he was of no "family" whatever. With a mere annual hundred or two to supplement his pay, his position, from a matrimonial point of view, was the reverse of desirable. To Phyllis this was as nothing. Was not her hero good, true and brave of soul? What more was necessary to happiness, to the ideal realisation of a love confessed?

Only that morning had the question been answered in no uncertain fashion. Clayton, incapable of deception, or underhand dealing of any kind, had asked of Sir Henry Forbes the hand of his daughter, only to be unequivocally, and even rudely refused. No reason was given. None, indeed, was needed. Clayton divined it without prompting. Still, in a manly, straightforward way he declined to accept as final his dismissal from Sir Henry's lips.

Phyllis was of age, and his duty in seeking parental consent done, he, Hugh Clayton, would immediately throw up his commission and depart for the Western hemisphere, there to seek a fortune for her who had dowered him with her love.

Guileless, simple-minded, and, as such natures usually are, a trifle indiscreet, did Clayton now pour his tale into the unreceptive ear of his "friend" Howarth.

For they had been friends, in a way, these two men, though as unlike as light and darkness. One thing only did the lover refrain from alluding to, viz.,

Digitized by Google

that act of his, which had led to the crowning of his life. The truly modest man is ever reticent with regard to self-glorification.

Every word of the other's confidence cut into Howarth's soul like a whip of steel. He could only listen in dumb despair. That this penniless plebeian should be preferred to him, Sydney Howarth, a rich man, a man akin to the bluest blood in England was beyond conceiving.

"Now, look here, Howarth, old fellow," Clayton was saying, "you and I have been the best of chums, and as this is my last opportunity I want to exact a promise from you."

"Well, what is it?" replied his companion moodily.

"Nothing very hard of performance," said Clayton, a little surprised at the other's strange manner, "I have told you my—our story; well, you know the Forbes'; visit often at the house; just promise me that you will guard my Phyllis from any danger which may threaten her. Be a brother to her, for my sake. She is prepared to accept your good offices. We have talked it over, and I shall leave England happier, and with the less regret in that I know your sterling loyalty and true friendship both for her and for me."

Howarth gave the required promise, and a few days later Clayton sailed away towards the golden Hope Land, if not light-heartedly, at least comforted.

Two letters, and two only had been received from him by Phyllis; and then, blank silence. Tortured by suspense and loving anxiety, Phyllis at length appealed to Howarth to do her the one service which could alone satisfy the longing of her spirit. To go and seek for his lost friend, for her lost love.

To Howarth, tempted almost to the verge, did this proposal come with an almost cruel force. And yet, how could he deny her?

She was visibly suffering. Her cheeks were pale, her eyes were dim. He would go; and in a way, he had his reward.

He departed, bearing with him a loving letter for the man he sought, and in his ears the echo of a woman's grateful words.

The end of the day, upon the edge of a mighty forest in the Far West. Stretching away into indefinite distance, the vast expanse of leafy shade seemed like to an enchanted domain, entrance into which was fraught with mysterious uncertainty and danger.

In this region twilight is not, night descending with an almost startling suddenness.

Halted indecisively, just where the swelling prairie melts into the forest shadow was a man mounted upon a mustang of the locally tough, workable sort.

The reins lay loose on the animal's neck, as the rider sat straining his eyes in the endeavour to pierce the apparently impenetrable darkness. He carried the bare necessaries of a traveller in the wilds; at his back being slung a Winchester.

Sydney Howarth was no coward in one sense of the term, but it must be confessed that the outlook created within him a certain feeling of apprehension.

Gathering up the reins, he urged his tired beast forward into the semi-gloom.

Two hours' riding under such difficulties as are unknown to travellers in this country, and then darkness that might be felt. No warning, in a moment almost, a thick, heavy pall was about and around him, an he were a dead man. It was horrible!—terrifying!

Scarce five minutes before he had fancied he could faintly descry a cleared space ahead through the dense growth of maples and pines. If he kept on in the same direction, moving neither to the right hand nor to the left he might perchance come to it yet.

"Steady, old chap!" for the animal suddenly swerved, becoming restive. Its ears fell back, while it trembled and sweated, as with intense fear.

Howarth, mistrusting the brute, and quite conscious that a crisis was at hand, slid him down from the saddle, making the bridle fast to a sapling, with which his feeling fingers came in contact.

"A light! Not a light for a kingdom's crown!—for Ophirs of virgin gold!" Not a match even could he find in pocket or saddle-bag. He must have left them at his last camp.

Nothing for it now but hands and knees.

Groping on the ground, wounding himself grievously with the snags and other obstructions which beset his path, he is inclined almost to give up in despair.

Half-an-hour; it seemed to him an age, and he felt sweep over him a sense of change. The air appeared warmer, while he could swear that a faint glow as of smouldering, living embers, was close to him.

He reached out his hand; it came in contact with heat!

"There must be life somewhere near!" he shouted, the feeling of hope in the midst of this appalling desolation was so wondrously inspiring.

Bringing his breath to bear upon what he now knew to be the live cinders of a but lately blazing fire, he blew and fanned with a judicious energy born of a desperate purpose.

A tiny, flickering flame wakes into life, and grows—and grows——

He leaped to his feet. This was no wood, no tree-cannopied aisle!

A shanty! A log dwelling! and there behind him the open doorway through which he must have unwittingly crept into the interior.

It was now that the great temptation of Sydney Howarth's life was to be offered him.

As the fire, fed by his trembling hand, burned brighter he saw that he was not alone.

In a deep sleep, stretched upon a blanket upon the ground the other side the fire, was a man. One arm was doubled under him, the other was thrown across his face, hiding his features.

Presently the sleeper moved, restlessly changing his position. As his face turned toward the fire Howarth knew him.

A cold sickly sweat broke out upon his already heated forehead.

"Pray Heaven he would not wake!"

But as the prayer whisperingly passed his lips, the other's eyes opened and fastened themselves upon him. Neither for the moment spoke; each just gazed at each with that same dazed, irresponsible look of fascination, that passes between so many examples of the animal world.

Then a dim perception of the truth dawned upon the awakening mind of the owner of the hut.

Raising himself upon his elbow he said quietly:

"Why, Howarth, is this a surprise visit? From whence in the name of all that is unexpected, did you spring?"

"Spring from, that's good!" returned Howarth, laughing hysterically. "Do you take me for a jack-in-the-box? I'm here on my own business—no particular object. And you?"

"Oh, when it is daylight, you will see quite a little

Digitized by Google

cleared domain. Although a wild western anchorite, I am lord of this Manor. But tell me, Howarth, of Phyllis! When did you last see her? Was she well? and—and—well, there, man, you know what I would say!"

By this time Howarth had collected his thoughts, and pulled himself together. He had always detested Hugh Clayton, not alone because of his successful rivalry in the affections of Phyllis Forbes, but also because that such natures as his own cannot breathe freely in the presence of a single-minded, upright spirit. As he looked now at the other, that mean soul of his shrunk to even meaner proportions, and the last state of his envying hatred was worse than the first. He had not yet determined upon his course of action. Wild possibili ies suggested themselves to his mind, but only in a formless, disjointed way.

"Forgive me, Howarth!" again said Hugh, smiling at his own lack of attention to his visitor. "Forgive me for being so inhospitable, and so slow to welcome you to my mansion. The fact is I have had a hard day's grind, and was tired as a dog."

Outwardly courteous, Howarth deprecated any trouble on the part of his host. Then it was that the thing he had hardly dared to listen to took shape and form. He saw a clear stage; Clayton out of the way, and nothing between himself and the de-ire of his eyes.

No feeling of compunction or of pity came in any way to soften the deadliness of that which had now become a definite resolve.

Clayton had moved to procure for his unlooked-for guest some slight refreshment, and to seek a better light.

The instant he turned a report rang out, and Clayton, clutching his left elbow with his right hand, staggered back, nearly falling upon the now blazing fire. 'Spite the pain, for the bullet had shattered the bone, he faced Howarth, unable at first to speak from sheer astonishment.

Then, somehow, it all became clear to him. The man before him, not pretending even to hide the still smoking revolver, must ever have been his enemy. Little things which aforetime had no significance, now loomed large, as damnatory evidence of a sleuth-like cruel purpose.

"You scoundrel! Try to murder me under my own roof! The man I so trusted to seek my life! Ah!"

His quickness saved his life. Stooping down and seizing a blazing pine knot he hurled it with all his remaining strength at the other's hand, raised to repeat the shot. The aim was true, and the weapon fell into the flames, as it did so exploding harmlessly.

Baulked in his first attempt, Howarth, throwing all considerations to the winds, endeavoured by a dexterous ruse to get a grip of his antagonist. But he should have known from experience of Clayton as an old athlete that he would in all probability meet with more than his match.

It was a trick learnt many years before at the university in the school of a certain famous gymnastic professor. Successful then it was no less successful now.

A twist of the left leg, a casting the whole weight of the body forward, and Howarth lay upon his back, Clayton bestriding him; his eyes open, and completely at the mercy of the man he had so basely designed to murder.

"Now, listen to me," said Hugh, sternly, when his adversary, slowly opening his eyes, gave signs of returning consciousness. "I intend binding your hands and feet, and leaving you here for two days, in order that you may have leisure to chew the cud of your evil soul. At the end of that time I shall send a messenger to set you free. You will not be left to starve, richly as you deserve it; food will be placed within your reach. For me, I go to Phyllis. I should release you at once, but that I know now your treacherous heart, and that you would leave no stone unturned to wreck our lives. I forgive you for Phyllis' sake."

* * * * *

There is very little more to tell, but that little has about it the joy-chime of wedding-bells.

How Hugh sought and found his faithful love in the old Kentish garden he knew so well; how they there renewed their troth, and how they now live to make the lives of those about them happy as their own is, known to all within sight and sound of their home.

Nothing more was ever heard of Sydney Howarth. Whether he eventually perished, as is not unlikely, in some disreputable western brawl is not exactly known, but that his end would be peace, would be contrary to our experience of man's equity and of Heaven's justice.

Ralph Enderby.

AS OTHERS SEE US

"Hooker's Superior Jams," meets the gaze of all the river traffic below London Bridge. This stirring legend is inscribed on the blackened wall of Hooker's colossal factory. Its giant neighbours are soaps, syrups, patent disinfectants and sheep dips. But none rival Hooker's in number of workers or commercial success.

The success of Hooker, a young man, had been phenomenal. He had made half a million out of the factory and was still going strong. His pride was the jam works. There were two opinions regarding Hooker. Those who believed in a community in factories, denounced him as an unscrupulous capitalist. Others, whose ideal was commercial progress, glorified him as the apostle of energy.

The ladies wondered why he still remained a bachelor and could only account for it by reflecting that jam and sentiment did not go well together.

One day Hooker discovered that he had a vein of sentiment.

When making a mammoth deal there was offered him a bill for £3,000 accepted by a certain Major Devant, V.C.

The hero, he knew, was in a terribly impecunious state. Hooker sank the smart man of business in the philanthropist and took the worthless asset.

His first impulse was to send it anonymously to the Major as a present "From an Admirer," his second to make the soldier's acquaintance and hand it to him over a friendly cigar.

He acted on the second impulse. The Major lived up the river near Putney and his grounds ran down to the

Digitized by Google

river. On a hot, August afternoon Hooker approached the Devant's from the water on his steam launch.

It was a large, comfortable-looking house with a gay flower-bed in front. The scenery around was almost pastoral, no factories desecrated the foreshore, the grass was a natural colour, and the trees dipped into the river. He was looking anxiously for a landing-place when a young girl stepped out from the shade of the trees.

"Is this Major Devant's residence?" asked Hooker.

She replied in the affirmative. Her tone was very sweet and her face pretty and refined. In her light summer dress she made a fair picture on the bank. Hooker gazed into her blue, lustrous eyes with a sudden, strange thrill.

"Can I land?" he asked.

She smilingly pointed to a spot and Hooker came ashore. He introduced himself to the Major by the name of Rogers. Had Hooker searched the whole world over he could not have found a man more the opposite of himself than Devant V.C.

Devant was a man to let things glide. He owned it. After a quarter of an hour's conversation, all Quixotism on the part of Hooker vanished. The Major's sole hope was his daughter.

"If she marries well," said the Major, "I'm saved. If not, the workhouse is my doom."

Hooker looked towards the window and saw the slim figure of the girl in her white gossamer attire standing by the river bank. His heart hardened. He determined not to part with that bill for the present.

"Is it any use of my calling again?" he asked.

The Major blandly intimated that he could call as often as he liked. He could come to dinner if it suited him. Something might drop from the clouds.

"Good-day," said Hooker shortly.

On his return to the launch he looked eagerly for Miss Devant, but she had disappeared. Hooker did call again. He called often. The Major had evidently acquainted his daughter with the object of the visits, for, to Hooker's intense exasperation, Susan Devant treated him with forced courtesy.

One stifling hot night, he persuaded the Major and his daughter to take a trip in the launch. They went down the river towards the jam factory. When they were abreast of Hooker's the Major indicated it with a wave of his cigar.

"Hooker!" he murmured, "the jam fiend."

Hooker looked at Susan. She was dreamily contemplating the many smoking chimney stacks. When they passed the factory the scenery opened out to the worst advantage. The tide was low and dirty river craft lay moored on either side, here and there clusters of houses burst into view, as if they had risen out of the mud or got inextricably stuck in it.

It was an appalling vista of mud. The eye strayed to paraffin reservoirs, floating hospitals, and awful "flats," from which rose the skeleton frames of guiding lights. When they reached Barking, the atmosphere grew as if everything around had reached the last stage of decomposition.

"Phoo!" cried the Major in disgust.

Hooker desperately put the launch about.

"This is the world," cried the Major, "as Hooker would have it! Morally that man is a criminal. He lives out of the life blood of his species. He is the cause of misery in many a home. Drives the workers to early graves and sends flowers for their coffins to advertise his jam. He is a curse."

"Ever met him?" he exclaimed wildly.

"Never," said the Major, "thank Heaven!"

"Do you know Hooker, Mr. Rogers?" asked Susan curiously.

"I know," cried Hooker, goaded to defence, "that he is a good son and that he respects his sisters and other men's sisters."

"The last," answered Susan gently, "is a good trait."

All were glad when they again reached the pleasant house up the river. Hooker parted from them at the landing stage. He did not feel equal to entering the house and said he would call the next day.

When he came, he had decided to make it his last visit. He would give the Major his bill and free himself from the spell of Susan Devant. Their lives had been too diverse to create sympathy between them.

He was crossing the lawn when his gaze strayed to Susan's favourite seat beneath the trees. On the seat lay the last book she had been reading. He walked over and took it up.

It was a magazine, and was open at an article headed "Interview with John Hooker, the Jam Merchant."

It was embellished with numerous illustrations. Hooker at six; Hooker at twenty-five (just when the great inspiration for making jam struck him); Hooker in a yachting cap and Hooker in his shirt-sleeves. He gazed at the leaves dazed.

He was still gazing at them when he felt a light touch on his arm. He turned and beheld Susan Devant. The rose tint of a blush was on her cheeks.

"Well, Mr. Rogers," she said, "what have you to say for yourself?"

"Nothing," he answered. Then he bitterly quoted the Major. "I live on the life-blood of my species."

Susan looked at him earnestly.

"There is an account in this magazine," she said, "of a man's early struggles and his indomitable perseverance. Is all that true?"

"I began life," Hooker said slowly, "as a factory hand."

Susan turned away her head.

He saw only her delicate profile. A profound peace was in the summer air.

The sole sound which broke the silence was the throbbing of a paddle-wheel on the river.

"Why did you come here as Rogers?" she cried passionately, "I hate false pretences."

He explained.

"Now I will go," he said, "I don't think you will care to see me here again."

"Why?" she asked lowly.

"Because," he said, "I should ask you to be my wife. I loved you the first time I saw you, and day by day my love has been strengthening. Of course," he added hurriedly, "you have been unconscious of this."

Susan gave him a quick, merry glance.

"Of course," she repeated.

Hooker looked at her bewildered. He took a hasty step to her side. In a happy dream he clasped her in his arms and kissed her lips.

"You are my life," he cried ardently.

The Major was waiting for them on the threshold of the house. Hooker handed him the magazine with his counterfeit presentment.

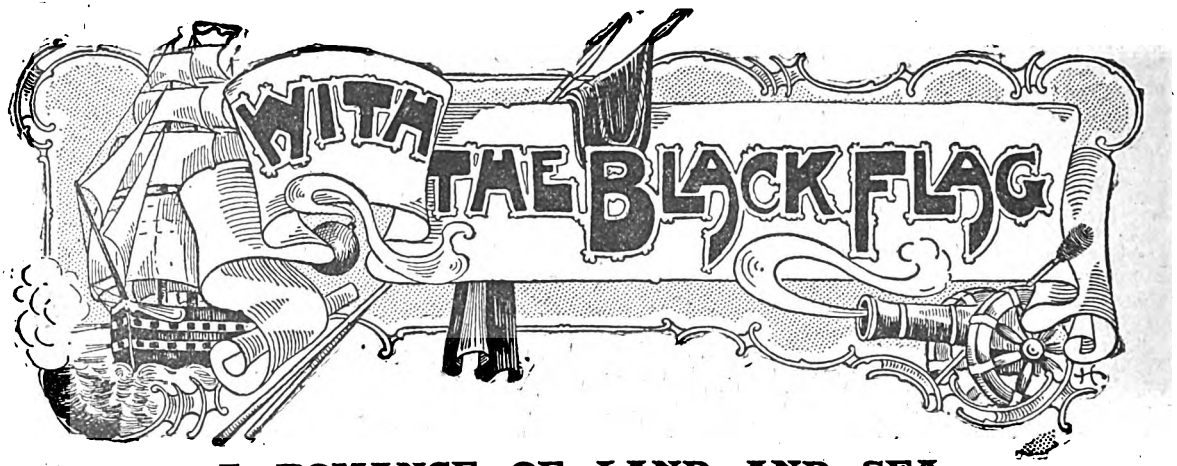
"Have you any objection to me as a son-in-law?" he asked.

The Major was quick-witted. He grasped the situation.

"Not the slightest," he answered warmly, "to-morrow I'll come and look over the jam works."

C. King.

Digitized by Google



A ROMANCE OF LAND AND SEA.

By William Westall.

Author of "With the Red Eagle," "The Phantom City," "Nigel Fortescue," etc., etc.

PRINCIPAL CHARACTERS.

Major Wyvenhoe, commander of an expedition which went out from England to help the Venezuelans in their struggle for liberty. He is intrusted with dispatches for delivery to Bolivar, the Supreme Chief.

Captain Cautley, who is in charge of the ship which took the expedition out.

John Ready, the servant of Wyvenhoe.

General Arismendez, ex-Governor of Pampatar and Vice-President of the Venezuelan Republic. He received Wyvenhoe and Cautley on their arrival in Venezuela.

Dons Iago Santleo, and Antonio Bonanza, two Venezuelans who accompany Wyvenhoe when he takes the dispatches to Bolivar.

CHAPTER XV.

The First Fight With the Enemy.

No further reference was made—at that time—either to Urdenetta or Arismendez. Having said my say and made my complaint I let the subject drop and Don Simon was as suave and smiling as if he had dismissed it from his mind, though I suspected that he would bear me a grudge for the frankness with which I had denounced his "particular friend" and praised his political rival, for I perceived that he so regarded Arismendez, and was jealous of him.

Yet I had nothing either to regret or fear, I was not dependent on the Supreme Chief for my means of existence and I doubted either honour or reward was to be gained in his service. On the other hand I had no intention of going back, the country interested me, of adventure and sport I was likely to have more than enough, and I was desirous of seeing how these ragged, undisciplined and ill-armed Venezuelans would behave before the enemy. So I resolved that albeit I would neither toady Bolivar nor trust him I would use every fair means of keeping on good terms with him.

"You don't think much of our army," he remarked as if he had divined my thoughts. "Nobody fresh from Europe does, and mine is not a European army, but our soldiers are no less brave and devoted than your British troops, as ere long you will see. They have overcome again and again the bravest troops of Spain. On the plains the royal cavalry has not a chance with our llaneros, they either flee on the first contact or go down like corn before the reapers."

"I have heard wonderful things of General Paez and his llaneros, and I never saw troops march better or look hardier than your infantry," I returned giving them all the praise I honestly could.

"Yes, they are indeed splendid marchers," said Bolivar with a gratified smile, "and as hardy as they look. It is a hundred miles from San Fernando to Calabozo and we shall do it in four days. I mean to surprise General Morillo and if we beat him I shall march on Caraccas and finish the war by taking the capital. I suppose people in England know that this is a war of extermination?"

"I think it is generally known that neither side gives quarter, and that the victors put the enemy's wounded to death, though some are slow to believe it. I was till I arrived at Margarita."

"And it creates a bad impression, naturally. But what can you do? I have set my face against the practice from the first and besought the Spaniards again and again to agree to an exchange of prisoners. More I cannot do; they kill their prisoners, and if we were to spare ours my men would tear me in pieces. Morillo will hold no communication with us whatever; he fires on flags of truce, even when they are carried by priests or children. Yet on the first opportunity I shall make another attempt to open negotiations and if you are present, as I hope you may be, you will be able, when you write home, or return thither, to testify that the fault does not lie with us, nor ever has done. The entire responsibility rests with the royalists."

Bolivar spoke warmly and appeared to be in earnest, and I congratulated him on his resolve to make yet another effort to terminate a system of warfare which was a disgrace to civilisation.

We encamped for the night at the edge of a wood where there were water and fuel, and shortly after the halt had been sounded I received a visit from Don Antonio who brought me an invitation, which I gladly accepted, from several of the British officers who were serving in the patriot army to join them at supper and share their bivouac.

Bonanza was in high spirits. General Paez had appointed him one of his aides.

"Paez is the best general we have with us; some people say he is the only one," he observed, "and always gives his fellows their fill of fighting. You saw how the chief treated me?"

"Yes, and I felt sorry."

Digitized by Google

"Oh, it does not matter in the least. He treated me exactly as I expected. Bolivar never forgives, as you will find out if you incur his enmity."

The officers were Captains Sherwood, McMullin, and Grant, who hailed respectively from England, Ireland, and Scotland, all good fellows and eager for news from home, of which I was able to give them the latest, though it was so long since I left London.

In reply to my inquiries as to how they liked the Venezuelan service, they answered with one accord, and some very emphatic oaths, that they did not like it, and averred that they had been induced to engage under false pretences.

"I have not had a peso of pay since I joined, hang me if I have," said McMullin.

"Nor I," echoed the others.

"And when a man is dependent on his pay and has no means of getting remittances from his people owing to the disturbed state of the country, it is beastly hard lines. Gad, I am nearly as ragged as my men, and see no prospect either of replenishing my wardrobe or fingering any more cash, unless we take Caraccas and Bolivar allows us a day's plundering."

"Small chance of that," put in Sherwood. "We are more likely to be taken to Caraccas and shot on the Plaza to grace Morillo's triumph."

"Anyhow, he shall out General Morillo, that's certain."

"I doubt it. Morillo is the best general in the Spanish service, and though Don Simon is not without capacity for war, he makes frightful mistakes, and has lost more battles than he has won."

"True. But we shall out-general him all the same. We have twelve generals with the colours at this moment and I doubt whether Morillo has more than three. Just think of it. Twelve generals for a force of less than five thousand men, and every one of them with a staff as big as Boney's when he was at the head of the grand army. Cruel brutes they are, too, slaughter all their prisoners, set the Zambos at them with their machetes and think it fine sport."

"Not so bad as that, I hope, Captain McMullin; and nobody is more anxious to put an end to the system than General Bolivar," I said.

"I have no doubt he is now. All the same, it was he and the patriots who began it."

"Are you sure about that? They all protest that the Spaniards began it."

"That's what the patriots would have us believe; but Grant knows more about it than I do, he will tell you."

"Well, I would not say which were the first to murder their prisoners, because I cannot be quite sure," said the Scotsman cautiously, "but there is no question that the insurgents were the first to make it a war of extermination. In 1813, several of Bolivar's officers issued a manifesto proclaiming war to the death against all European Spaniards, not, however, without great provocation, for the royalist generals and troops had committed frightful atrocities. But I almost think they were outvied by Don Simon, who, in 1813, being then dictator, had all the European Spaniards to the number of 1,253, then residing at La Guayra, put to death, merchants, professional men and such like, not a soldier or a prisoner of war amongst them.

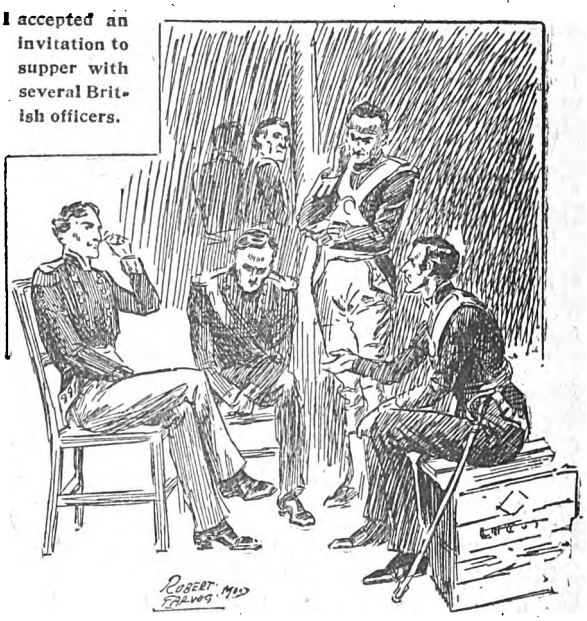
"The slaughter continued for three days, and those of the victims who were too old or too infirm to walk were carried to the place of execution in arm-chairs. In the same year the insurgent government decreed the confiscation of every sort of property belonging to Spanish royalists, and offered commissions for heads, whether of soldiers or civilians. The private who produced twenty was made ensign, a lieutenant's commission could be bought for thirty, a captain's for fifty—without regard to age or sex, mind you, a head was a head to whomsoever it had belonged. There have been awful things done in this war, perfectly awful, but I think that takes the cake."

"So it is not true that the responsibility rests solely with the Spaniards and that Bolivar would be glad to put in with the Spaniards, and has set his face against the killing of prisoners from the first."

"Of course it is not. What I have told you is historical fact and cannot be contradicted. All the same I make no doubt that he would be glad to put an end to the practice, partly because it creates a bad impression in Europe, more, perhaps, because he has found that it does not pay. Two thirds of the royalist forces being conscripted Creoles the majority of the victims on both sides are natives. The Spaniards suffer the least, and if the war goes on much longer and the system of slaughtering prisoners is continued, the Venezuelans will be like Kilkenny cats, there will be nothing left of them but their tails."

"Bolivar is a mean, mendacious ruffian," quoth McMullin bitterly. "Whenever I make application for my back pay which now amounts to more than £300, he smiles and smirks and promises an immediate settlement or a substantial sum on account, but never a copper has come my way yet."

"Why don't you send in your papers?" I asked.



"Chuck it up, you mane? I'd like to see you do it. A resignation is not valid unless formally accepted by the president, that is Bolivar, who values British officers too much to let 'em go, if they are good for anything, and if you take French leave you forfeit all your back pay and are liable to be tried by court-martial for desertion. Besides, how would you get away without money and passports, and all the ports in possession of the Spaniards? Bedad, if I had known before I 'listed as much as I do now, not all the king's horses and all the king's men would have dragged me to this terrible country."

"I think we are all with you there, McMullin; but the mischief is done and there is no good in grumbling, except now and then to relieve our feelings. We must just grin and abide, and do our duty and hope for the best," said Sherwood, "and for goodness sake let us talk about something more cheerful; you will be giving Major Wyvenhoe the jumps."

At any rate, they had given me cause for disquieting thoughts. I had reckoned on being able to leave the Venezuelan service whenever I wished, and resolved that if I could not retain my position with honour, I would resign forthwith.

But if what these gentlemen had said was true, as

Digitized by Google

I reported myself to the general and asked for his orders.

to which I had no doubt, I might not be allowed to resign, and pending the acceptance of my resignation I should be bound to obey the orders, not of Bolivar only, but of whichsoever of his cut-throat officers he might set over me, under pain of being tried by court-martial; and escape, technically desertion, would be difficult, perhaps impossible.

I should need horses, mules, supplies, boats, boatmen and an escort, which could not easily be obtained without my intention to leave becoming known. Moreover, I had not too much money and the journey to Trinidad would be costly.

When I left Angostura, General Arismendez requested me, on the plea of the treasury being empty, to defray the expenses of the journey out of my own resources and gave me an order on Don Simon for whatever sum I might have to lay out. After what I had just heard I thought it probable that I should have to lie out of it for a long while, and selling a draft on London or my agents at Port of Spain was out of the question.

In these circumstances I concluded that I could not do better than take my new friends into council, and after apologising for troubling them with my private concerns, I laid the facts before them and asked their advice.

"Grant is the best of us at giving advice, and it is a job he rather likes," said McMullin. "Besides, he has the oldest head. Speak, travelled thane."

"Well, one thing is sure, you will get nothing but promises out of the Supreme Chief, and I would not advise you to press him. It would be of no use and he hates being pestered. Above all, keep on good terms with him, which, as he seems well disposed towards you, should not be difficult. You need not tell any palpable lies, but if you could just say that he excels Washington as a statesman and Napoleon as a general he would take you to his heart, and might even settle your little bill. But say nothing about resigning, that would put his back up at once. If you decide to quit, ask for a month's leave of absence to go to Angostura and don't stop till you get to Trinidad. Not yet, though, he would maybe smell a rat and refuse your request."

"Very good advice. I could not give better myself," observed McMullin approvingly, "only Bolivar has been so often told by sycophants and flatterers that he is a sort of Washington and Bonaparte rolled into one, that something fresh would be more likely to fetch him. Could you not compare him to Alexander the Great or Julius Cæsar? The Julius Cæsar of South America would make a fine sounding phrase. You may laugh, but he would take it in. I am told the thicker you lay it on, the better he is pleased."

After the laughter provoked by this sally had subsided, I inquired what punishment the war code in Venezuela awarded to disobedience and desertion.

"Arrest, degradation or death, according to the gravity of the offence," said Sherwood. "But the code has really very little to do with it, the findings of courts-martial being dictated beforehand by Bolivar or the commanding general."

"Anyhow it was so in General Piar's case," observed Grant. "The court-martial had orders to find him guilty and sentence him to death, and the court-martial did as it was told."

"What was his crime?"

"He was accused of plotting to supplant the Supreme Chief, which meant that the Supreme Chief was jealous of him, as he is of everybody who is abler or more successful than himself, but there are some men with whom he dare not meddle. Paez, for instance, who tells Bolivar his mind very freely and never hesitates to disobey his orders when he thinks they are foolish, as they often are. The evidence against Piar was of the flimsiest description, all hearsay and malevolent gossip. I know because I heard it. Don't you fall out with Don Simon, Major Wyvenhoe. Rub him the right way, even though you have to butter him up a bit, and you seem to be middling well off. Take care to let him know it, it will increase his respect for you."

This ended our talk about Bolivar, and after a while we rolled our cobijas round us and slept until we were roused by the sounding of the reveille.

When we had breakfasted by the light of our camp fire, for it was still dark, I reported myself to the general and asked for his orders.

"I have none for you at present, but I shall be pleased if you will ride with my staff and favour me with your company during the day," he answered graciously, on which I thanked him for his courtesy and said that I felt highly honoured by his invitation. For I had resolved, as Captain Grant put it, to rub Don Simon the right way, even though I had to butter him up a bit, so far as I might be able to do so without loss of self-respect.

We rode side by side a great part of the day and I took an early opportunity of mentioning the outlay I had incurred, and produced Arismendez' order for its repayment.

"Make out your account and hand it to my second secretary, Captain Mendola, who will give it immediate attention," said the Supreme Chief with the confident air of a man of large means.

"The amount is so small that I am almost ashamed of asking for it and should not do so if I could cash a draft on my bankers at London or my agents at Port-of-Spain," quoth I as though money were no object to me.

"So you are not like some of these gentlemen, dependent on your pay?"

"Not exactly. If I were dependent on my pay I should not have made the Republic a present, through Don Luiz Mendez, of £500."

"You did that? You gave us, actually gave us, £500?"

"Yes, there was some question of my buying bonds to that amount in consideration of receiving a commission; but I said what is £500? Accept it as a gift."

"What generosity. The Republic is greatly indebted to you, Major Wyvenhoe, and I am deeply touched to know

Digitized by Google

that English gentlemen in your position should not only risk their lives in the cause of liberty and independence, but help it liberally with their purses. You must be rich?"

"I suppose I may consider myself pretty well off, but people with no more than a hundred and twenty-five pesetas a year are not accounted rich in England."

"*Por Dios*, but they are in South America. And you are, no doubt, of a good family."

"Well, the Wyvenhoes are one of the oldest families in our part of the country. An ancestor of mine fought at Crecy, another at Poictiers; their banners and harness are still in the hall of Wyvenhoe Court, and are amongst my most cherished possessions."

"Your house of course. I should like to show you my hacienda, or rather, what was mine, for the Spaniards have confiscated it. But if we are successful in this campaign, I shall resume possession, and be delighted to place it at your disposal."

This meant that in the event in question I should receive an invitation to his place in the country, which, together with his manner, showed that my bounce (though I had said naught untrue) was producing the effect predicted to Captain Grant, and I had presently an opportunity of acting further on his advice, without telling a "lee," which I turned to good account.

"Is the cause of South American independence still viewed favourably in England? Do the papers say much about us?" asked Don Simon.

"I think most people regard it as the cause of liberty and humanity and you have many enthusiastic supporters. Shortly before leaving London I read in a leading paper an article which described the patriots as people rightly struggling to be free, and said that if General Bolivar succeeded in overcoming the Spaniards and founding a free nation in South America, he would win higher and more enduring fame than that of mere conquerors such as Napoleon Bonaparte, Cortez, or Pizzaro, and be regarded by posterity as one of the greatest soldier-patriots of this or any other age."

"And that really appeared in an English newspaper?" exclaimed Bolivar eagerly, and, for the first time, looking me full in the face.

"It really did," quoth I. "I can give you the approximate date, and if you would like to have a copy of the paper in which it appeared, I have no doubt Don Luiz Mendez would easily obtain one."

"I should indeed like to have a copy, and Don Luiz shall be written to on the subject. I am greatly beholden to you for the suggestion," said the chief as he made a note of the paper and the date. "I think you said you would like to negotiate a draft on London?"

"Or on my agent at Port-of-Spain."

"For how much?"

I named a sum which I thought would be enough for my purpose. It had been a mistake to ask for too little and a still greater to ask too much.

"So in the event of your being able to sell a draft on Port-of-Spain for a thousand dollars you would not press for an immediate settlement of your claim on the government?"

"I should not need it, Señor General, therefore should neither ask for nor expect it."

"What an obliging gentleman you are, to be sure. I wish there were more like you. Well, I think we can arrange this draft for you. We can use it as a remittance on Port-of-Spain where we have occasionally to purchase supplies, and some of the merchants there are so narrow-minded and suspicious as to insist on payment before delivery. I shall tell Captain Mendola to do what you want. But pray keep all this entirely to yourself. You have no idea how my officers, and contractors, and others, clamour for cash, and if it became known that there was anything in the chest, I should have to run away and poor Mendola would be torn in pieces."

I had no difficulty in arranging matters with this gentleman, and took the proceeds of my draft in gold as being more portable and easily concealed than silver. So I was provided, as I thought, for all contingencies and should be able, with a little management and manœuvring, to leave the country whenever it might please me, though as before long appeared, I was counting without my host.

On the fourth morning after leaving San Fernando we were within a short march of Calabozo, which lies on the edge of the great plain to which it gives its name, but the men having marched fast and far, and, as during the heat of the day, more intense on the llanos than in the forests or on the coast, rapid movement was impossible, Bolivar wisely decided to give his troops a rest and look for Morillo in the morning.

This was done, our march being so timed as to bring us by sunrise to a wood about a league from the town where we halted for breakfast, and awaited the report of the mounted scouts whom Bolivar had sent ahead to reconnoitre. These presently returned to say that a regiment of cavalry had just marched out of Calabozo and were moving towards a mission which could be descried in the distance, probably on a foraging expedition.

On this Bolivar and his staff mounted and rode out of the wood, yet neither in such fashion nor so far as to put the Spaniards on their guard or frighten them back to Calabozo.

Several generals beset the chief, attesting their right and demanding his permission to charge the Godos. Paez regarded them with a smile of contempt, as well he might, their men being no better than a badly mounted, worse armed rabble, utterly unable to cope with the enemy on anything like even terms.

"I shall lead my llaneros to the attack, Don Simon, they are quite ready," he observed quietly to the chief.

"Of course, Don Ramon, it is your right," returned Bolivar, "but wait a few minutes, I think they are going to pass to the right of those trees, and we must if possible, intercept their retreat to Calabozo."

"And that really appeared in an English newspaper?" exclaimed Bolivar, looking me full in the face.

Digitized by Google

"Sedeno's fellows will do for that, there won't be many of the Godos to intercept after we have done with them."

General Ramon Paez was a man of singularly prepossessing appearance; about five feet seven inches high, stout of body, with a plump round face, a fair skin, save where it was bronzed by the sun, dark eyes and red lips and cheeks. He wore an indigo blue jacket, short cotton breeches, and silver spurs, also a cocked hat with a silver cockade and an ordinary cavalry sword. A youth who rode by his side carried his lance, a formidable weapon fully twelve feet long.

I asked Bolivar's leave to take part in the charge.

"No," he answered graciously, albeit decisively, "I cannot let an aide-de-camp whom I value risk his life in a skirmish, as though he were a common llanero. I must put you to a better use than that, Major Wyvenhoe."

After a refusal so handsomely expressed it had been both bad policy and bad taste to repeat my request. Fortunately, I should be near enough to see whatever might pass, and the next best thing to riding in a charge is seeing one. In some respects the latter is the better part, war being essentially a game of which onlookers see the most.

"Now," said the chief when he thought the time had come.

Paez, grimly smiling, took his lance from the boy who carried it, waved the black bannerol as a signal to his *guardia de honor*, and dashed at their head into the open plain. With him went Don Iago who, as he passed me, gave a shout of delight and saluted with his lance.

The main body rode right through the Spaniards.

After ordering Sedeno to skirt the wood with his ragged regiment of carbineers and cut off the Spaniards' retreat, Bolivar, accompanied by his staff, followed Paez and his llaneros.

The country we were in, a part of the llanos of Caraccas, was slightly undulating, covered with short, brown grass, free from forest, yet dotted with small woods and groups of trees and bounded to the north by the Cordillera of the Caribbean Sea.

If Paez had reckoned on taking the Spaniards unawares he was soon undeceived, for several minutes before he could reach them they were drawn up in a line, with their carbines unslung and ready for use.

"The Queen's Hussars, a crack regiment," observed Bolivar, as we pulled up to watch the first action, the first I had seen between soldiers of the old world and the new.

The odds seemed to be in favour of the former, the Spaniards being well mounted and equipped, and splendid in new uniforms; and the celerity and precision with which they wheeled and formed in line on the first alarm, showed that they were well trained and led, whereas the llaneros were a horde of wild horsemen with very little discipline, and, except their lances, no weapons worth mentioning.

But these they handled with the ease and dexterity which comes only of long practice; every man had a lasso, they rode like centaurs, and were entirely unencumbered with kit.

Moreover, I thought it boded ill for the hussars that instead of boldly meeting their enemy, who did not greatly outnumber them, they were going to await his onset and trust more to their carbines than cold steel, for, in my opinion and in that of many more experienced soldiers than myself, the only weapons to which a cavalryman should look for victory are lances and swords.

Meanwhile, the llaneros were advancing in open order at a walk, no doubt to save their horses, and not until the Spanish colonel gave the order to fire, did Paez give the signal to charge. The volley emptied several saddles and killed several horses, but, unchecked even for a moment, the main body rode right through the Spaniards, then wheeling, rode through them a second time. On which they broke and scattered over the plain, only however, to be lanced or lassoed by their pursuers.

The greater part tried to gain a small clump of trees where those who had not been overtaken and slain by the llaneros were encountered and killed by the carbineers, many of them in cold blood and while praying for quarter. Of the entire regiment, numbering some six hundred men, not one was left alive.

When we of the head-quarter staff reached the spot the carbineers and some of the llaneros were despoiling the dead and exchanging their rags for the blue and white uniforms of the unfortunate Husares de la Reyna.

By this time the garrison of Calabozo having heard the firing had taken the alarm, and Morillo presently sent out three or four regiments of infantry and a regiment of cavalry with four field-pieces as if to offer battle, though it was probably no more than a feint to induce Bolivar to deploy and show his strength. Be that as it might the challenge was refused and after some futile skirmishing between the llaneros and the cavalry, who showed no disposition to engage seriously, the royalists withdrew into the town.

"I shall summon them to surrender and offer them leave to bury their dead," exclaimed the chief as though struck by a sudden thought. "Whom shall we send? Captain Bonanza, you are just the man, afraid of nothing and always fortunate."

This to Don Antonio, who had just ridden up with General Paez.

"At your disposal, Señor General," he answered saluting.

"Why do you want to summon Morillo?" demanded Paez bluntly. "You know he won't surrender—he would be a fool if he did—and that he always fires on flags of truce. Why send two men—your herald cannot go without a bugler—on an errand from which it is hardly possible they can return alive, merely that the Godos may have another opportunity of showing their contempt for us?"

"I have my reasons, Don Ramon, and as the summons to surrender will be accompanied by an offer of leave to bury his dead I hope Morillo may make an exception. However, if Captain Bonanza is afraid——"

"Be good enough to give me your orders, Señor General, and you shall see whether I am afraid," broke in Don Antonio impetuously.

Digitized by Google

"Buena, take a bugler and a white flag, ride to the gate there, ask to see General Morillo, say that the Supreme Chief summons him to surrender and gives him leave to bury his dead. That is all."

"It shall be done as you desire, Señor General. Where are the bugle and white flag?"

These were found and Bonanza rode away and went boldly up to the gate, and was engaged in conversation with somebody whom we supposed to be Morillo when several muskets were fired from the walls, on which the herald's horse went down, pinning the rider to the ground and the bugler galloped back, yet so badly hurt withal that he no sooner reached us than he fell dead, almost at Don Simon's feet.

In the meantime Bonanza had been dragged through the gate whether dead or alive it was impossible to know, but we knew that if he still lived Morillo would quickly make an end of him.

"You seem sorry, Major Wyvenhoe," observed Bolivar with one of his inscrutable side glances.

"It would make anybody sorry, aye, and more than sorry, to see the lives of two brave men uselessly sacrificed," I answered as calmly as I might.

"Not uselessly. You know now that what I have told you is true; you have seen for yourself and can assure your friends in England, of your own knowledge, that the stories they have heard of Spanish atrocities are not exaggerated."

"Excuse me, Don Simon, but I don't see how that mends the matter. There was no need to confirm statements which I did not doubt by sending to certain death one of my friends who was also one of your best and bravest officers."

I knew that as touching my own interest, perhaps even as touching my safety I had spoken unwisely, but I could not have said less and it was all I could do to refrain from giving full rein to my indignation and saying what would in all probability have insured my immediate arrest.

(To be continued.)

FROM JEST TO EARNEST.

THERE was a timid knock on the door of my office the other day, and, in response to my loud summons to come in, there entered the most forlorn-looking man I have ever set my eyes on. He had a scared, hunted look on his face, and kept glancing back over his shoulders, as if he expected to see a detective appear to arrest him at any moment. He dropped into a chair with a sigh of relief, and said:

"You're a lawyer, aren't you?"

I assented.

"Well, I just want to tell you my story, to relieve my mind, and perhaps you may be able to give me some advice.

"You see, last summer I was staying at the seaside, at one of those hotels where there is only one man to every twenty-six girls. The best of it was that the girls at this place were of the most entertaining sort, so, on the whole, I had a very agreeable time. They read to me, fanned me, sewed on my buttons, and did their best to make my time pass pleasantly; but, as you will see, I paid dearly for it in the end.

"One day I took six of the prettiest girls out for a little sail on the bay. Everything went smoothly for a time. The girls were adorably frisky, the lunch was good, and the chaperone went to sleep.

"We didn't notice how fast the hours went, and by the time we got back to the hotel the tide was so low that we stuck fast in the mud about a hundred yards from the beach. We had no small boat with us, and all our shouting brought no one to our aid. The water was too deep for the girls to wade ashore, so there seemed no way out of the difficulty except that I should carry the whole party to the beach, one by one, in my arms.

"I suggested this plan to the girls, and in fun said that in order to make such a proceeding perfectly proper I would formally propose to each girl and become engaged to her. They laughingly agreed, so I plumped down on my knees before each one in succession, chaperone included, and proposed, and was accepted in due form. Then I carried them ashore.

"Rather late in the morning, as I strolled downstairs into the hall, Brown, one of the three men staying at the hotel, came up to me and said:

"'Well, old man, I congratulate you. I know you can't be very sorry.'

"'Why, what's up?' said I in astonishment.

"'Read that, and you'll see,' said Brown, handing me a paper of the evening before.

"I took it from his hands, and read:

"'Mr. J. T. Chubb, one of the oldest and wealthiest business men of the city, died suddenly from apoplexy while at his breakfast on Thursday morning. . . The deceased has no near relatives, and his property, as there is no will, will go to his nephew, Mr. Thomas Cheever.'

"Good gracious! That was my rich old Uncle Jim. He was worth eighty thousand pounds at least. There had never been much love lost between us, and really I couldn't cry. Just think of it! I was a rich man. I wouldn't stay at that hotel another day. I would take the train straight for B——, and tell dear little Dora that we needn't wait any longer, that I was now a rich——

"'Good morning, dear. Did you sleep well after yesterday's excitement?'

"I jumped out of my chair as if shot. There was Miss B——, one of my sailing party, standing before me.

"'It was sad about your poor dear uncle, wasn't it? But then,' she said, blushing sweetly, 'I will try my best to console you.'

"I bolted for the stairs, but ran plump against little Miss L——, another of the sailing party.

"'Why, Tom,' she said—'I suppose I ought to call you Tom now'—looking bashfully down at her toes—'where are you going so fast? I was just about to hunt you up and tell you how sorry I was to hear of the death——'

"I tore away from her and fled to my room. This was horrible! Those girls had read the notice in that paper and they meant business. They were going to make me keep to my engagements. Just think of it—seven breach of promise suits on hand, including the chaperone's, and there was dear little Dora patiently waiting for me at B——.

"I thought of suicide, but was afraid to try it. I locked my door, and tried to sit down and make some plan of escape. It was useless—I couldn't think. The girls kept knocking at my door and sweetly asking after my health, suggested gruel and hot bottles. I became desperate. After nightfall I took what money I had, dropped out of the window, and walked to the station. Since then I have lived in constant terror."

Digitized by Google

Adventures in Search of Pearson's £10 Notes.

We devote, every week, two pages of *Short Stories* to pithy, humourous anecdotes similar to those which appear in these columns. A prize of £1 1s. will be sent to the reader who submits the best storyette this week, and a copy of "The Typ writer Girl," by Olive Pratt Rayner, to each of those whose attempts are used. The anecdotes may be either original or selected; in the latter case the source *must* be stated. The prize of One Guinea offered for the best Storyette in this competition has been won this week by Mr. J. H. Taylor, of 47 Woodchurch Road, Birkenhead. Attempts this week must deal with Stories about THE GENERAL ELECTION, and must reach the Storyette Editor, *Short Stories* Office, Henrietta Street, Strand, London, W.C., by Monday, October 8th. Post-cards only, please.

Sold Again.

I HAD been thinking seriously about that £10 note. It was just what I stood sadly in need of, and, somehow, I had a presentiment I should get it; so, seeing a man walk from the London train at Lime Street, Liverpool, and stare about as though a stranger, I did not hesitate. Here was my chance.

"Excuse me," said I, "but you are a stranger, I think?" and I brought out *Pearson's*.

He smiled a broad smile, and I knew I was right.

"Yes," he said; "just come from London."

"Well, have you got that Ten-Pound note?" said I, showing him the "page."

"Rather!" said he, and I fairly jumped for joy, as his hand went to his pocket, and he withdrew the coveted envelope.

"See here," he said; "I met *Pearson's* man in the train, and I've got it. Come and have a drink."

J. H. T.

A Disappointment.

I WAS reading *Short Stories* in the train the other day, when I noticed that the gentleman sitting opposite me had an envelope protruding out of his pocket.

Thinking that a £10 note from *Pearson's Weekly* might be inside that envelope, I showed him the scheme in *Short Stories* and asked if it was for me.

"Yes, it is," he exclaimed, and he gave it to me.

Imagine my surprise when I opened it and found a note inside which read:—

"Admit Bearer, No. 33 Padded Room, Bridgend Asylum."

E. R. P.

Might Have Been Awkward.

I RAN through to Glasgow last week on business and had not emerged from St. Enoch Square before a man accosted me with a *P.W.* in his hand.

"Have you got that £10?" he asked.

Just in fun, I replied:

"Oh, yes, but I need it myself."

Before I could stop him, he appealed to the crowd.

"He's got one of *Pearson's* £10 notes," he shouted, "and he won't give it up."

Two men stopped, produced a *P.W.* and queried:

"Have you got that £10 note?"

I have seen a man lynched in America and so I explained my position in a brace of shakes.

Happily, they were Scotsmen who could see the point of a joke, and I got off with the price of three whiskies and sodas.

I am now on the hunt myself.

J. T. M.

He Had the £10.

IT was on the race-course at Totnes, by the silvery Dart, and I had gone there in the hope that the *Pearson's* man at Plymouth would be up for the day.

After the first race I spotted a well-dressed stranger hurrying out of the stand inclosure. I tapped him on the shoulder, and with the magic page held out, said:

"Have you got that £10?"

He turned with a startled air and whispered:

"Hush! Did you see me pinch it?—well, here you are, go halves," and leaving a £5 note in my hand, he vanished in a flash.

G. V. K.

Mr. Bowser Hunts For That Ten-Pound Note.

"HAVE you seen this, my dear?" said Mr. Bowser airily, waving a copy of *Pearson's Weekly* he had in his hand.

"Yes," replied Mrs. Bowser, with a foreboding of evil.

"Well, there's a £10 note to be had for the asking from a certain man in this town, and I flatter myself that with my infallible system of mind-reading I can spot the person at once. I'll go and look for him now," and off he went.

Presently he met a man strolling aimlessly along.

"Here he is," muttered Bowser to himself, as he fumbled with his copy of *Pearson's Weekly*.

At the sight of the familiar cover the man gave a yell and bolted, with Bowser in hot pursuit, and the latter being in the better condition eventually ran the other to earth in a blind street.

"Got you!" exclaimed our hero, triumphantly, "are you a Ten Pounder?"

"No," screamed the man, "you're the ninety-ninth idiot who has asked me the same question to-day, and I'm mad! desperate! I know nothing of £10! I've a ten pound fist you can have—take it!" and poor Bowser got a blow on the nose that sent him sprawling among the fish bones and banana shucks in the gutter.

"Well," said Mrs. Bowser, on his arriving home bruised and battered, "did you find him?"

But Bowser scowled malevolently.

"Woman," he hissed, "this is your doing again. To-morrow I shall instruct my solicitor to institute the proceedings that shall expose your outrageous conduct in the Divorce Court."

Then he kicked the cat and marched off to bed.

E. C.

Digitized by Google

A Terrible Mistake.

THE other morning my little boy came running in home, and said:

"Oh, papa, *Pearson's* Ten-Pound Note man is coming down our street. Put the card in the window, quick!"

I asked him how he had gained this fortunate bit of news.

"Oh, he has been calling at several houses and shops, and they all say he is *Pearson's* man, but they have not got a *Pearson's Weekly*," replied my sharp offspring.

"All right, Johnny, you are indeed a cute and clever boy, and will yet make your father rich," I shouted, and then immediately displayed that magic card—which he who runs may read—in the front window.

I had scarcely done so, when a knock came at the door.

I opened the door wide, and excitedly murmured:

"Come inside, sir; take a seat one moment," and then rushed into my sitting-room to procure that precious *Pearson's Weekly*.

Immediately I showed it to him he remarked:

"You mistake me, sir; I am a County Court bailiff, and am here to take possession, and——"

No need to explain further. I had kept him out for weeks, but my boy, who was to bring me fortune, had brought me ruin. F. W. F.

Not Worth Ten Pounds.

A BROKEN-DOWN swell, with top hat which was no longer glossy, went into a common coffee-house in the vicinity of Peckham, and ordered a penny bloater and two slices of bread for his dinner.

"By gum!" said the proprietor, "what a swell! I shouldn't wonder if he's not one of those *Pearson's* Ten-Pound men. Anyhow, I'll tackle him."

"By-the-bye," said he as he placed the bloater in front of the swell smartly, "would you like to read *Pearson's* new scheme?"

"Yes," said the swell gruffly.

"Ah! now I suppose you don't happen to be one of those men with the £10?"

"Do I look like a man that's got £10?" roared the swell. "If I had do you think I should dine off a bloater?"

W. L.

Not the Right Pearson's Though.

PASSING through one of the principal streets in Coventry on a recent Saturday afternoon, I observed a large crowd which had assembled round a tobaacconist's shop.

Being inquisitive as to the cause of the gathering of this motley throng, I joined the concourse, and then noticed a huge poster that was displayed in the window, bearing the now well-known catch-phrase: "Have you got that Ten-Pound Note?" in large, bold type, while underneath the following amusing words were plainly written:

"'Pearson's' man is expected to call at this shop to-day. Wait for him! Watch for him! Wait inside and try our 2d. smokes."

The tobacconist was evidently doing a good trade. I entered the shop myself, made a purchase, and questioned the veracity of the announcement.

"Oh, yes, it is true," said the proprietor, "but," with a wink, "it is the man from Pearson's, the butcher opposite, who's expected." S. H.

"Have you got——"

LAST Friday afternoon I was strolling through Regent's Park perusing my *Pearson's*, and was most interested in the £10 note scheme. Shortly after, while musing on the possibilities of its capture and building castles in the air as to its disposal when caught, I observed a well-dressed stranger, walking some short distance away, who was eyeing me in a somewhat curious manner.

Instantly it flashed across my mind that perhaps he had the note, and, seeing the paper in my hand, felt a bit nervous that I was going to claim it.

For another quarter of an hour we walked on, and nearer together as we walked, and soon we were but a yard or two apart.

At last I plucked up courage—now or never. I put my hand into my pocket for my paper—and, look—yes—his hand had instinctively gone to his breast-pocket. My heart beat fast in eager anticipation.

At that critical moment we both simultaneously produced our respective copies, raised our respective hats, and both said in one voice:

"Have you got——" but could get no further for laughing. We had been suspecting each other all along.

Needless to say, we adjourned to drink to better luck next time. B. P.

The Man Who was Talked About.

A GENTLEMAN friend of ours has recently been away from home for about two years. During his absence he had his beard removed. On his return he paid us a visit, and met our little daughter, who was asked if she could remember him.

This she failed to do, so with a view to refreshing the child's memory I said:

"Surely you remember him! Try again. He is the gentleman of whom you have often heard us speak so much!"

With a smile of satisfaction the little one looked up and said:

"Then I think I know who it is, mamma."

Delighted to think that the ruse had been successful, I said:

"Who is the gentleman, then?"

"Pearson's Ten-Pound Note gentleman!" W. E.

IF YOU HAVE A RELATIVE—

who has passed away either at home in peace or abroad in war, send his photograph—which you probably cherish—and we will enlarge it to a beautiful India ink and crayon portrait, 15in. × 12in. mounted on plate sunk mount 24in. × 19in.

Relatives of soldiers at the front may obtain one of these enlargements for 6s.

Other photographs will be enlarged for 7s.

Full particulars appear in the current issue of

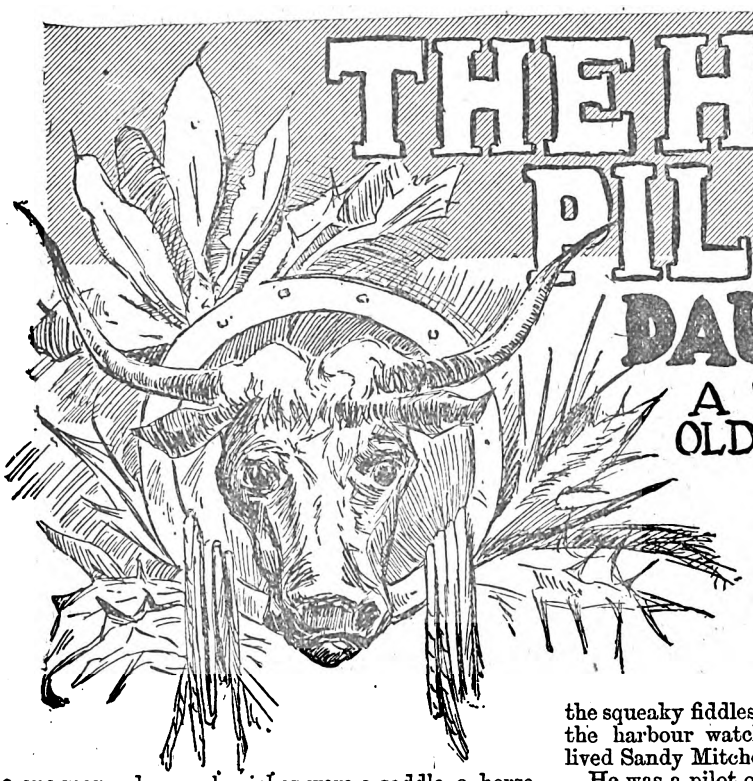
THE CURIOSITY SHOP.

A coupon from that paper must accompany each order.

A sample enlargement is on view at these offices. Below are other addresses where the enlargements may be seen:

Portsmouth.—A. B. Bennett, 408 Commercial Road, Landport.
Southsea.—L. Hillyer, 9 Green Road.
Glasgow.—William Love, 221 Argyle Street (opposite Central Station), and William Barr, 88 Sauchiehall Street.
Liverpool.—F. W. Edwards, 122 Pembroke Place, and Henry Jones (tobacconist), 184 Oakfield Road.
Blackpool.—Coppock (newsagent).
Newcastle-on-Tyne.—Messrs. T. and G. Allan, 18 and 20 Blackett Street.

Digitized by Google



THE HERD PILOT'S DAUGHTER.

A TALE OF THE OLD ABILENE TRAIL.

To one man, whose only riches were a saddle, a horse and health, was it given to revolutionise the cattle trade of half a continent.

Texas was raising its great herds almost without effort; animals were increasing by tens of thousands, and yellow-legginged cow-boys were riding across the plains, guarding and rounding up the immense droves, scarcely knowing whence their wages were to come.

For cattle were so low as to be almost a drug on the market; the only outlet for the herds of the South-west was by water from Galveston or shipping up the Mississippi, after a long drive to the river. A few herds were taken on a tedious journey across country to California, but the expense of the trip was too great to make it profitable.

The railway gangs were working westward to the Rockies. When they had gone 165 miles and were just past what was then the centre of the United States, something happened.

Joe McCoy, a young cattle-man, solved the problem of cattle-shipping. On his pony he rode south from the new station and induced a rancher to drive his herd north instead of east, and, just as the railway gang went west from Abilene, the thin, nervous faces, and long, branching horns of the first herd of Texas bulls came slowly above the southern horizon. The herd was loaded in a special train and went to Chicago.

The cattle station and the cattle trail were established. Over the dark brown ribbon of bare earth, 400 feet wide and 600 miles long, three million head of cattle plodded wearily in the next four years, and Abilene gloried in the title "the wickedest city in the world." McCoy was the Mayor, Bill Higham the City Marshal, and its street-lengths of saloons and dance halls were always awake.

Two policemen came up from St. Louis once, by order of the City Council, to "civilise the town." They marched down the street—and then marched back and took the train for home. Their experience, though short, is a story by itself.

Far out on the prairie to the south, out of sight of the glare of the saloons, and away from the sound of the squeaky fiddles, like a pilot who waits at the mouth of the harbour watching for the incoming ocean liners, lived Sandy Mitchell.

He was a pilot of the herds that came up across the long trail from the plains of Texas, and sought an entrance to the huge cattle yards that lined the railway.

The yards were connected by many gates and lanes, and it was no inconsiderable job to get a fresh herd of wild bulls into them properly.

Sandy knew what yards were occupied and how to reach those that were not, and seldom did the foreman in charge of a herd refuse to engage his services when he rode out to meet the travellers.

One day he came to town and rode home with a letter—the first he had ever received during the two years he had lived at the station. He looked at its cover curiously as he took it from the postmaster, but did not attempt to open it.

When he reached the cabin, he drank from the black bottle on the shelf, closed the one door and sat near the window. Then he tore open the envelope.

Long did he sit there after the letter had dropped from his hand to the floor. Over his ruddy cheeks spread an expression of pain and suffering. He drank from the bottle twice more and placed the letter in a little brass-nailed trunk in the corner, under the bed.

He went out to the stable.

"Well, Bess," he remarked, as if he were used to such conversations, "the end has come."

The wiry mare gazed at him as if she understood, and he patted her hip where a great W disfigured the roan hide. Other brands were burned on her shoulder—Bess was well identified.

"Sarah will be here to-morrow," he went on, "perhaps she is here now. And she says she is coming out to live with her old father—funny she should want to."

Bess said nothing and Sandy went back to the house and took another drink.

Digitized by Google

Then he took the bottle, a pack of cards with which he played solitaire, and a book on border ruffians, and went to the stable.

"These must be put out of the way, Bess. She was brought up to read the Bible, and I must not let her see these things."

He dug a hole at the corner and laid the articles therein.

"It's a sort of a corner-stone ceremony," he thought, and then, without covering the treasures, returned to the house.

That was a solemn evening for Sandy. Not a herd was in sight and there was nothing to do. He had serious thoughts of going to town and getting drunk—but he refrained, making several visits to the stable instead.

As a result he slept heavily and late. He was frightened when he rose and hurried in a scared manner as he prepared the breakfast and then set the cabin in order.

He blushed when a slender girl in a black dress alighted from the train two hours later and called him "papa." He did not know whether or no to kiss her, but she saved him the trouble of deciding by throwing her arms round his neck. The coming of the train was an important event, and the station platform was crowded. There was a little smiling at the scene.

"And we must go to the ranch," she declared. "I can ride hors back."

So they hired a pony from the livery stable and cantered away.

Sandy was taciturn; Sarah was talkative. She admired the cabin and its crude furniture, and cried a little over the faded photograph of a woman on the small shelf over Sandy's bed.

That night the father, rolled in his blanket, slept outside the cabin, and the next day he was off to meet a herd coming in.

As the cattle were rounded up near the cabin he rode over, and with him were the foreman of the Circle Bar Ranch and his chief assistant, Haddon. They sat on the ground and talked, and both young men thought they had never seen a sweeter visitor to the plains than Sandy's daughter.

Sandy was uneasy, and moved about as if he were anxious to go. But the young men stayed on. They had not seen a woman for eight months. It was worth something to them.

"And you have not seen the saloons?" said Lyman, the dandified foreman.

"No, and I do not want to," answered the girl. "There has been too much of that in our family. My brother died of——"

"The cattle's getting very uneasy," urged Sandy. He was thinking of the black bottle in the shed. He slipped away and threw some dirt in the hole.

He was a little longer than usual that morning in getting the herd to its quarters, and the loafers at the town chaffed him about it.

"Nervous about that gal out on your ranch, ain't ye, Sandy?" called one.

The pilot did not answer in words, but he leapt from his pony, and leaving Bess to her own sweet will made a lunge for the tormentor, laying him out flat on the dusty street. The crowd cheered. There were no further remarks about Sandy's nervousness.

It was dark when he reached the cabin, and after he put Bess in the shed he stood for some time looking longingly at the little hole in the corner. Then with set features he threw in a little more dirt and went into the house.

Sarah had spent her girlhood with relatives, and had seen much of the advantages of that halcyon land, "away in the East." She could sing and play the piano and paint a little. Sandy had but small store of interest to offer her. He said something of this as they ate the supper of bread and tinned meat.

"But don't you see that all this country is new to me?" was her reply. "I will ride a pony and help drive the cattle and have ever such a good time."

Sandy smiled at the picture of a being in skirts coming near a herd of Texas cattle.

There was a knock at the door, and in came Lyman.

"Thought you might be lonely," he explained with a laugh. "I'm not used to making society calls."

"Nor am I used to receiving them," said Sarah.

But Lyman got on very well. He told her of his feats of daring on the ranches and did not seem to notice the looks of incredulity that overspread Sandy's face. He arranged to go riding with her the following morning and to take her to the town, the Drovers' cottage, and all the sights.

Haddon called the next evening and was as bashful as Lyman had been loquacious. He had no deeds of daring to relate and no strange stories to tell.

Sandy watched the rivalry for several days and often went out to the shed and gazed at the "corner-stone," as he continued to call his buried treasures. Once he tried to give the girl a hint.

"Haddon's a very fine fellow," he began in a blundering way.

"But he hasn't done the brave things that the foreman has," replied Sarah.

"Well, I heard the men saying that he stayed out two days and nights to save a lot of calves from dying—didn't have a mite to eat nor nothing to drink all the time."

"Mr. Lyman says he is terribly slow."

"Don't you be too sure about what Lyman says—he has a lot of bounce."

The girl blushed as she turned away. Sandy saw the reddening cheek—and went to the shed to commune with Bess.

But the days went by without Sarah coming to a decision as to the merits of her lovers. The cowboys of town talked of the rivalry, and one even took a direct interest in the matter and came nearer being knocked down than he ever did in his life when he jokingly spoke of it to Haddon.

One day the boys of the Circle Bar rode off to the south and two waved their wide-brimmed white hats as they went past the cabin of Sandy Mitchell. A red apron was fluttering in response, but neither could tell for whom it was signalled.

Sandy had built an additional room to the cabin and lived a more civilised life than he did while alone, but he grew thinner and more nervous every day. He spent long hours with Bess in the shed and had worn a smooth and hard rim round the "corner-stone."

The winter was trying him and the spring found the old man much the worse for his new life. His daughter was faithful to him and took good care of the cabin, but there was no sympathy between them.

He feared her and her opinions without knowing why he did so. He would sit and watch her stealthily as if he were afraid that she would turn on him—and then go out and look at the little mound in the shed.

Sarah went now and then with the young people of the

Digitized by Google

With a wave of her hand, she started for the town.

town to a dance or a party. She made friends by her wit and her music.

The old herder could not understand it all, but it pleased him, and he watched her with pride—the touching pride of a father who has lacked advantages himself, and sees them in his offspring with a semi-self-importance that glorifies them as being somehow a later development of his own intellect.

So the summer passed, and it was as long for the two men down among the cactus lands of Western Texas as for the girl at the end of the trail. Lyman and Haddon had little to say to each other.

One day the time came when the foreman was in danger. He was swimming a turbulent stream and his horse lost its footing.

"Help, boys," he called, "I can't swim with all this toggery."

He was weighted with spurs and lariat. Haddon was on the bank; he stripped and plunged in to the rescue—but when it was over he did not stop to talk. He did not like Lyman, but that did not forbid the courtesy of the range.

Both anxiously awaited the trip over the trail to the shipping station.

Sandy helped three herds in one autumn day. The trail was becoming a great thoroughfare, and the dark brown caravans came, one after another, up from the south with bewildering rapidity. Men talked of a break in the cattle boom, but it did not come, and the ranchers seemed hurrying all the stock they could to market.

Sandy was weary that night. He ate little and then went to the shed. He stood beside Bess for a long time, and then, as if moved by an irresistible force, edged towards the corner of the shed.

"The buildin' did na stond," he muttered. "The corner-stane is na gude," the Scottish accent coming back to him after the long years.

He knelt, and furiously, feverishly, dug with his hands at the little mound. Deeper and deeper he went until he touched something hard.

His eyes glistened.

"Oh, Bess," he whispered, "happy times are comin' again."

Faster and faster he worked, and then with a burst of delight, the old man pulled from the hole a black bottle. Anxiously he held it up to the waning light. Yes, it was all there. He could remember just how much there had been when he put it away, and a horrible fear had come over him, that in some way it had vanished during his period of teetotalism.

He polished it on his blouse, he hugged it to his breast, he kissed it reverently—and then he took out the cork and lifted it to his lips.

A few times in a man's life there come experiences that set the nerves of delight tingling, that mark high lights in the perspective of the years, that linger in the memory.

To Sandy it was the unearthing of the "corner-stone." Long did the black bottle stay at his lips, and again and again was it lifted. The famished nature glowed with the old joy, and he forgot all the months of longing. He forgot Sarah, the herds, Bess—he lay on the hay stolid, unconscious—but satisfied.

It was usual for Sandy not to come home at night, and Sarah did not worry. But when in the morning she heard Bess whinny and went to the shed she saw that terrible bundle in the corner and gave a heartrending shriek. Then strength came to her and she dragged her father to the house.

It was a dark, gusty day, and the north-west wind roared over the prairies as if it had a grudge against the settlers. At noon the girl thought of something—her father's business. She must not allow it to be lost.

"I can do it as well as he," she thought, as she went to her room.

When she came out she was transformed into a semblance of a cowboy. A yellow coat covered the slender form and a white hat rested on the crown of her brown hair. Bess started a little as she entered the stable and threw the saddle on the pony's back. The coat and the white hat did not deceive the horse.

In a moment the twain were passing the cabin, and then became a spot in the far, grey distance. They went up the slope of the bluffs, along the southern edge of the bottom lands, and then farther on, arrived between the valleys of the Smoky Hill and the Arkansas.

Sure enough, away to the south was a long, dark caravan that the rider's instinct told her was a cattle herd. As she rode towards it the branching horns of the leaders became visible, and then the detached spots that she knew were the herders, guarding the line like sentinels.

Digitized by Google

"What should I do?" she asked.

There was little time to seek an answer. The herd was approaching and the men in charge were evidently eager to get the cattle in the yards. She cantered to the front, and then, just before getting in reach of the voice of the first cowboy, turned, and with a wave of her hand started for the town.

"Wish the old gentleman would come closer," thought Lyman; "I want to find out how the pretty Sarah is."

For a mile the cattle went quietly, following the lone leader—and then something happened.

Bess did not approve of the handling she was getting, and reared and plunged. To quiet her was impossible, and the girl in a moment of thoughtlessness leapt from the saddle to the prairie, thinking that there might be something amiss with the saddle.

Wilder grew the antics of the pony, and soon there was visible to the excited cowboys a picture of a yellow-coated, white-hatted figure, standing alone and of a pony racing away to the north. In the foreground was a rapidly massing herd of brown cattle, with heads all pointed in one direction—towards the lonely figure.

The Texas bull has a profound respect for one combination—the Man on Horseback. Woe to the horse or man alone. Together they are rulers, separated they are hunted and destroyed.

The stampede forming was intensified by the day and the weather. The cattle were nervous and excitable. The wind blew damp, cold and brisk from the north-west. Scurrying clouds were drifting overhead—it was the beginning of a furious storm.

Lyman felt rather than saw another man by his side.

"Why do the cattle act so?" asked Haddon.

For an answer the foreman pointed to the lonely figure ahead.

"Who—who is it?"

Haddon thought one of the herders had been thrown.

"Old Sandy—his horse was troublesome."

"Why didn't you ride to him?"

"And take chances on being ground under the hoofs of that herd?" Lyman laughed harshly.

"Then I will," starting forward.

"Don't be a fool, Haddon——"

But Haddon was gone, riding like the wind itself for the goal that stood out before him so distinctly in the gloomy vista of plain.

The herd was in motion now. The cattle had heads down and were pounding the hard earth with a sound like thunder. Rank after rank of them the rider passed and finally reached the foremost one, which was running with tremendous leaps for the proposed victim.

Like red-hot irons his spurs burnt his pony's flanks, and the tired little beast struggled harder and harder to win. Nearer and nearer came the end and closer and closer were the cattle. Side by side the herd and Haddon raced, and then he turned and crossed the course ahead of the hurrying horns.

The lonely figure ahead was ready for him and realised that not an instant was to be lost. Far over he leant in the saddle, the cattle breathing at his pony's very flanks, and reached out his strong right arm.

"The old man is likely to be heavy," flashed through his mind. and he braced himself for a severe strain.

But as the horse swept past and he encircled the beseeching form before him he lifted not a weight but a fairy-like creature that seemed a mere trifle in his grasp.

There was no time to be startled—the cattle were too close! Scarce had Sarah's feet left the ground when the sod on which she had stood was trampled by a score of hoofs.

On and on the pony bore its double burden, and when it halted, panting, as the herd rushed by, Haddon felt his burden grow limp and passive—Sarah had fainted.

"It was a long day's work getting that herd into the corrals without old Sandy," thought Haddon, as he started home with his charge.

But Sandy was coming. The fractious Bess had roused him when she ran to the cabin, and on her back, his white hair flying, he was *en route* to the herd.

Late that night Haddon and the foreman met for the first time since the stampede.

Lyman laughed.

"Much obliged," he sneered, "I'll congratulate her to-morrow."

"Coward!" exclaimed Haddon fiercely. "Go near her again and I will kill you."

Lyman did not believe him, and that accounted for the event of the next day—one of the first tragedies of the shipping station.

Lyman rode out to the cabin at noon and later in the day returned to town in bad humour. He had not been able to see the pilot's daughter. Towards evening she came to the town on Bess.

As she started for home Lyman rode to her side, and, despite her evident efforts to free herself from his company, remained as her companion.

Haddon stood in the door of the "Last Chance" saloon and, looking up, saw the couple. He leapt to his horse and raced after them. Lyman turned at the sound of hoofbeats and remembered Haddon's threat.

Digging his spurs into his pony, he flew from Sarah's side in a desperate attempt to escape the vengeance of his pursuer. With set face Haddon urged his pony to top speed, but as he dashed past the girl he had saved from the herd, a voice reached his ears and caused him to pull up and allow Lyman to get away.

But Lyman migrated to another part of the continent and was never seen by either of them afterwards.

Five years later, while I was doing business in Las Vegas, I saw Sarah with Haddon by her side, and I knew that I had to address her as "Mrs. Haddon." Sandy had passed away with the cattle boom, but he died happy in the knowledge that the better man had won his daughter.

F. C. ARNOLD.

NOW ON SALE.

No. 4 of

"The Curiosity Shop."

The Illustrated Companion to "PEARSON'S WEEKLY."

ONE PENNY WEEKLY.

THE CURIOSITY SHOP contains: Absolutely new and fresh articles. Bright and originally-conceived pictures. Strong and well-seasoned fiction. Nothing that you can get anywhere else.

Unlike all other curiosity shops, the contents of this one are changed every week, and you can buy every article and picture in the shop for one penny.

Digitized by Google

An Operation in the Dark.

ONCE, just before I entered as a medical student, I was seized with a desire to test the so-called science of astrology and see whether it could tell me much about the future.

The result did not give me any satisfaction, for it was of so little weight that I had clean forgotten the whole of the horoscope except two clauses; the one was that I was destined never to have much luck in life, for the planets were in a most unfavourable position at the time of my birth, and the other was to the effect that there would come a crisis, but exactly how that crisis was going to end was not disclosed.

The first of these clauses was remembered because it seemed very true. I had been decidedly unfortunate all through my short career; when I was born my parents were wealthy, but within two years all the money had gone and the crash had hastened the death of my mother.

Three years ago my father died and I was left to the care of an uncle who had not been on good terms with my father, and did not much like the burden placed upon him.

I will not dwell upon these troubles, but will content myself with saying that my path always seemed blocked.

As a medical student I had to struggle hard to keep myself going, and more than once I was on the point of giving up.

Then there came a great success; I thought that the tide was turning, but that success created an enemy who was destined to bar my path later on.

I was fond of medical science and studied hard when a prize was offered, and it became pretty clear that the struggle for that prize lay between James Madden and myself. As I have said, I won it.

When the result was made known I involuntarily turned towards Madden, and the sight of his face remained with me for many a day.

"I'll make you pay for this, if I have to wait years for it!"

These were the words with which he greeted me when we were alone. I was startled at first, and then smiled; I supposed that I had wounded his vanity by beating him, but that he would soon forget it. Moreover, our ways were not likely to be the same; his people were well-to-do and could afford to buy him a practice in a fashionable part of London, whereas I intended to settle down in some quiet town.

I lost sight of Madden for some time after we took our degrees. I went to a rising sea-side town, the inhabitants called it a town, although it was little more than a village—and became assistant to an elderly medical gentleman; that was the best I could do, although I tried hard to get a better start. I was disappointed at not being able to offer something better to Alice, but the brave girl was willing to accept and to look forward to my ultimate success.

At the end of three years I made an arrangement with my chief, who wished to retire, to buy his practice and pay him by instalments; this was clearly the best course for me to adopt, as it would have cost me much money to work up a practice for myself, and I hadn't got the money.

The town was increasing in size and popularity, and I began to think that I was on the high road to a moderate fortune. Then my enemy found me out, and one morning I was electrified to discover that Dr. James Madden had installed himself in the same street—which was the principal one of the town—as a rival candidate for public favour.

I do not say that Madden was unskilful, but I believe that he practised more as a method of passing the time and in order to enjoy the position in society which is accorded to a doctor. Why had he come down here? Was it to "pay me out"?

There was this difference between Madden and myself—he obtained the favour of the people by his manner, which was that of a dashing man of the world, whereas I was grave and somewhat retiring in disposition, and relied on the quality of my work. People like men of his temperament, and as his knowledge was sufficient to enable him to deal with ordinary cases, he naturally had the preference. He had not been there long before I found my connection was decreasing, slowly but in a disquieting degree. However, as the town was expanding very rapidly, there was a chance of holding my own, on the whole.

I was not the man to keep important matters from my wife, who took great interest in my progress; so I told her what I feared. But although she recognised the actual position, she encouraged me, and I sought relief in her society and in that of our little girl, which he ped me to persevere even when there could no longer be any doubt that I was steadily losing ground.

I soon came to the conclus on that Madden was purposely trying to ruin me, although I could not publicly bring such a charge against him.

I heard occasionally a remark which convinced me that he lost no opportunity of throwing out vague insinuations concerning my skill, and in public he took the opposite position to mine on every point. For instance, I am a firm believer in vaccination and this gave him an opening.

The anti-vaccination idea spread among the people of the town to such an extent that I at length deemed it my duty to utter a word of warning in public.

This was the beginning of a severe contest, and to my surprise, Madden—who had been just as much in favour of innoculation during our student days and who had never shown any other view—now publicly proclaimed himself an anti-vaccinator.

People believed that his declaration was the honest expression of his opinions, and I refrained from pointing out that he had formerly held the contrary view, because his obvious retort would have been that he had changed his mind as the result of experience.

The struggle was a bitter one and it ended in my defeat and the triumph of Madden. He opposed me in every way and I began to feel that I was discredited.

My wife's health failed and she went away to a less bracing locality—to die.

For three years longer I struggled on, but during the last of those three years I lived on the money I had saved, for my practice was virtually gone.

Digitized by Google

I could not help laying this trouble at the door of my successful enemy; I grew bitter at the thought of the misfortunes which had beset me and at the upsetting of the plans I had formed for the education of my child, and I began to brood over thought of revenge. Was it fair that I should suffer in this way? If he had done evil to me, was I not justified in trying to retaliate? Was it wrong to fight him with his own weapons?

Want of employment, as we all know, affords the best opportunity for the creation and development of evil designs, and my case was no exception to the rule. Now and then the conversation of my little girl—I cannot call it childish prattle, for she was older than her years—stemmed the tide of evil thoughts and checked my desire for revenge, but some fresh move on the part of my enemy would destroy this influence for good which flowed from my child and once more I would be plotting his downfall.

The memory of the inward struggle between good and evil will always be vivid, so intense was it. Just at the time when evil had conquered, apparently for ever, the opportunity for which I was seeking came to me in the most unexpected fashion.

It was about eleven o'clock at night; the maid and my daughter were in bed and I sitting in my consulting room, brooding over the final details of a scheme which I was now prepared to carry out at all hazards. I started from my chair at the sound of a ring from the electric door bell.

I went to the door myself and opened it, and then I had a second and far greater surprise. Before me stood Dr. Madden!

"Barnard, I want you to cut this confounded abscess for me. I can't stand it any longer!"

What could it mean? I looked at him, unable to credit my ears with having heard aright.

He stepped inside the hall and I could see that his coat was thrown over his shoulders, not put on in the proper manner, and that he held a lancet in his right hand.

"Which is your room?" he asked in a tone which indicated that he was suffering intense pain. "It's paining me awfully and I must have it lanced. I thought I could wait till the morning, but I can't."

This last sentence annoyed me; I knew that he went to a doctor in an adjoining town rather than come to me.

I was about to retort to this effect, when he spoke again.

"Don't lose any time, there's a good fellow. We haven't been the best of friends, but you must do this for me. Is this your room?"

Then, in a dreamy kind of way, I found myself entering the room with him and listening to his explanation.

"This abscess has been forming for some time under the left arm. Dr. Cox intended to lance it for me when he returned. He thought it would be about mature by then, but he won't be back for two days and it is paining dreadfully. It has been so bad this evening that I made up my mind to lance it myself, but just as I was about to do so my nerves failed me. You will see that there is great danger of cutting one of the many large and small arteries that gather in the arm-pit. It's almost certain that you will cut one, but you can staunch it and that would not be so easy for me to do myself."

By this time he was seated in the chair and had arranged himself for the operation. I took the lancet from him and a pad of wool, and then prepared for my task.

I HAVE A HORROR OF IT.

Of course, I can't say how it is with you, but, as for me, I have a horror of the sensation called faintness. I would rather suffer a good stiff pain for a whole day than feel faint for half an hour. And so would most people, I imagine. Drop in on me some day, and I'll explain the philosophy of it.

One day—it was at Bridgend, she says—Mrs. Jones, who lives at Bridge Street in a queerly-named place called Tonypandy, near Pontypridd, South Wales, was suddenly seized with a fainting spell, and thought she was going to die then and there, right out of hand.

It was like drowning, you know; settling into the deep, dark water, and being strangled. Some folks say drowning is a pleasant way to die, but I am content to take their word for it.

Well, this wasn't the first of Mrs. Jones' fainting bouts—not by many. She had them often, and lived in terror of them, as a man lives in terror of an enemy who he knows is sworn to kill him on sight.

Before these sinking spells came on her the lady had not been well. She had for some time been low and ailing—just as a lot of good women are, without understanding exactly what is the matter. She had lost her appetite, as she might have lost a shilling; it was gone somehow, and she could tell you no more.

But she couldn't eat—that is, not properly and heartily; she could merely pick and mince at things, and very small benefit came from that. Besides, there was pain in the stomach and chest to follow, and the knowledge of this scarcely tended to make food the more welcome to her.

She says her strength went out of her as damp takes the starch out of linen; and we may well believe it. For, no food no life; that is the law, and no human power can make it any different, and this woman ate only a bird's rations, most of that going stale in her stomach, and manufacturing poisons which went into her blood, causing those frightful faintings she tells us about.

Under those circumstances you would have appealed to the doctors, and reached out right and left after medicines to set you right again. This Mrs. Jones did; but bad luck attended all her anxious experiments until her husband, Mr. Thomas Jones, who is a wholesale butcher and a sensible man, told his wife he thought Mother Seigel's Syrup was the thing for her. He had tried it, and it cured him, and why not her?

Now, it was in the Spring of 1897 that the lady fell ill, and in July, 1898, she began using the Syrup—fifteen months or so between whiles. On April 11th, 1899, she wrote thus: —"After taking Mother Seigel's Syrup a few weeks I was completely cured. It was wonderful. No pain after eating, the faintness all gone, and my strength back again. And so I have kept from that day to this."

Digitized by Google

My hand was steady enough despite the excitement under which I was labouring. I asked myself whether this was some new and suddenly devised trick for throwing discredit upon my skill in surgery or whether his coming to me was really due to his sufferings.

In any case I must go on; if I refused, I should be blamed and scorned by the whole community for allowing professional jealousy to get the better of me.

I inserted the point of the lancet to make the cut, but at that psychological moment the electric light went out and we were left in utter darkness.

It may have been due to this sudden extinction of the light or to some other more ordinary cause, but in lancing the abscess at that very moment I also cut a blood vessel. I heard the blood dripping and I felt it on the fingers of my left hand.

Prompt action was necessary; I groped for the pad, but I must have knocked it off the table for I could not feel it.

I had no gas in the room, nor even a candle or matches. I have always been enthusiastic about the electric light and when the company was floated in our town I took up some shares and advocated the adoption of the new illuminant by word and deed—even to the extent of having the gas cut off.

In this critical moment I realised what that meant; I did not even know where to find a candle or a match. I am not a smoker, or I should probably have had some wax vestas in my pocket.

Then there came to me the dreadful thought that my enemy was now at my mercy and that I could remove him from my path for good and all. He would soon bleed to such an extent that it would be well-nigh, if not entirely, impossible to save his life. I could do this with every chance of my share in the work not being found out. With diabolical clearness the details flashed through my mind.

He had intended to operate upon himself; he had brought his own lancet with him. I could swear that he had begun the operation in his own house, had cut the vessel himself and, knowing that he was unable to sew up the artery himself, he had made his way to me to help him. The fact that he had brought his lancet with him would help to prove that he had left the place hurriedly and in great anxiety, and his coming to me would confirm the statement.

But few details were wanting to make the evidence complete, and these I could easily supply. His clothes were stained, and I had only to sprinkle a little blood here and there from my room out in the street and across to his own door; I could easily enter his house with his own key and complete the trail of blood marks, and also take his coat back. I could find the pad and dip it into the blood so as to be able to say that he had endeavoured to staunch the wound. At that time of night there would be nobody about to observe me. The failure of the light at the main could be proved, and this would account for the delay in assisting him.

It takes a long while to write this down, but it all occurred in a few seconds. Madden was one of those men who could operate on others without a tremor, but was a coward where he himself was concerned.

"For Heaven's sake, Barnard, make haste and get a light," he cried. And I afterwards found out that he compressed the spot with his right-hand fingers in order to lessen the flow.

"I must get some matches and a candle," I replied excitedly.

It was my intention to waste time and leave him to his fate. I pretended to grope for the pad in order to give it to him, all the while simulating the greatest anxiety. I lost quite a minute, perhaps more, in this way and then I stood erect with the intention of leaving the room.

I had made but one step forward when the door opened, admitting a streak of light, and my little Alice entered with a lighted candle.

The sight of the child's sweet face, and the thoughts which it brought to my mind, saved me from becoming a murderer.

I thought of my wife and pictured the horror she would feel—if the spirits of the departed are capable of such sentiments; and I imagined what my child would think if the facts ever came into her knowledge in after life. What would it mean to her to be burdened with the knowledge that her father had killed a fellow creature?

"Heaven bless you!" I gasped with a great sob, as I snatched the candle from her hand.

Madden was safe, for it took but a brief space to sew up the artery. Then I sent the little girl to bed and I went home with him, for he was weak.

When I returned I found my little maid still awake; what she had witnessed had been rather too much for her childish nerves and I had to give her an opiate. But before I did this, I asked her how it was that she came downstairs with a lighted candle.

It had been our custom to let her have a light in her room until we grown-ups went to bed. She had awakened from her first sleep and had heard the ring at the door and the noise of footsteps in the hall. She had watched the little electric fairy lamp and had seen it go out; and, remembering a similar occasion when the current had failed, she had connected this in her old-fashioned way with the visitor, and had at once jumped out of bed, lighted the candle in my room—which adjoined hers—and had come downstairs with it for me.

That proved to be the crisis mentioned by the astrologer.

I dreaded calling on Madden, but when I did so I found him quite changed in his manner towards me. He seemed to be impressed with the idea that I had done my very utmost for him at the critical moment when the light failed, and he was strangely moved by the anxiety which he supposed I had shown on his account.

"I tell you frankly, Barnard," he said, "that I had no right to expect it after what I have done against you. But I will do all in my power from this very moment to make up for the past."

I learnt that by wresting the prize from him, I had deprived him of the favour of an eminent medical man whose daughter he had hoped to marry. It would have been a brilliant match for him, and being of a vindictive nature, he had vented his spite upon me.

When the local paper appeared two days later, it contained an account of the operation and I was spoken of in the highest terms. I knew this was published at the instigation of Madden, for the journal had never gone out of its way to praise me. Madden had faced death and the experience was not pleasant; it had changed his mode of conduct and made him anxious to repair the evil he had wrought. My practice began to increase; Madden recommended people to me, because—so he told them—he was too busy, and fortune smiled upon me once more. She has favoured me ever since.

George Knight.

Digitized by Google

Have You Eczema?

or any form of Skin Disease? If you have, do go to your Chemist or Store, or send stamps or P.O. for 1/3 to the Antexema Co., 83 Castle Road, London, N.W., for a bottle of "ANTEXEMA." It gives immediate relief directly it is applied, and soon cures even the most obstinate cases. A Booklet on Skin Troubles is enclosed with each bottle.

All orders are sent securely packed, free from observation.

POST FREE THREE STAMPS

A Treatise on the Modern and Successful Treatment of Nervous Diseases and Exhaustion, by local absorption.

Fully up to the advanced ideas on the subject.

THE MARSTON CO.,
59 and 60 Chancery Lane, London, W.C.

ALL FAT PEOPLE

can safely Reduce Weight and cure Corpulency permanently by taking TRILENE TABLETS (Regd.) for a few weeks. They are small, agreeable, harmless, and never fail to IMPROVE both HEALTH and FIGURE without Change of Diet. An English Countess writes: "*Your Trilene Tablets act admirably.*"

Send 2s. 6d. to THE TRILENE CO., Sole Proprietors, 66 Finsbury Pavement, London.

SAMPLES OF TESTIMONIALS.

Princess Liechtenstein writes from Landsberg, Austria: "Pray send your excellent tablets directly." Mr. Canham, 87 Alexandra Road, Norwich: "Tablets cured my wife of extreme stoutness; it has never returned." Mrs. H. Cox, 28 Watnall Road, Hucknall Torkard, writes: "The Tablets reduced me 1½ stone." Mrs. S. Alexander, 102 Dixon Street, New Swindon, says: "They reduced me 2st., and I am cured." Mrs. Darnley-Smith, of Landscove Vicarage, Ashburton, says: "Tablets have reduced me very much." Mrs. Crossley, of Rose Hill, Torver, Comston, says: "I weigh much less and can breathe so much easier; I am delighted."

DO YOU KNOW

that with every copy of THIS WEEK'S

HOME NOTES

A Paper Pattern of a

GIRL'S PRETTY FROCK

is

GIVEN AWAY?

HOME NOTES is the best and daintiest of ladies' weeklies. Order a copy at once.

ONE PENNY.

THE MOST NUTRITIOUS.

EPPS'S

GRATEFUL—COMFORTING.

COCOA

BREAKFAST—SUPPER.

VARICOCELE.

Every man suffering from Varicocele and the allied troubles, should send for treatise, describing their Causes, Symptoms, Results, and Successful and Painless Treatment without surgical operation or the use of cumbersome trusses and electrical appliances. Will be sent sealed, post free, three stamps.

S. S. MURRAY,
7 Southampton Row, London, W.C.

TOO STOUT

I was for years; by chance I came across a simple home remedy that reduced me from 17st. to 10st. 12lb., and I will willingly send particulars free to any sufferer enclosing stamp. Mrs. L. E. FELL, 195 Oxford Street, London, W.

2/9 CHALLENGE TO THE WORLD—OUR WARRANTED TIMEKEEPER, 2/9

With a guarantee to keep correct time for three years, will be sent to any address on receipt of P.O. or stamps value 2/9 and three stamps extra for postage. To every purchaser during this month we give with it ABSOLUTELY FREE a strong Mexican SILVER CHAIN. All we ask of you is to show them to your friends, as by doing so you advertise our business. GENEVA WATCH IMPORTERS, 148 Old Street, London, E.C.

THE ONLY EFFICACIOUS SUBSTITUTE FOR COD LIVER OIL.

DEVONSHIRE CREAM

(Really Genuine.) In Patent Air-tight Tins.

¼-lb., 1/4; 1-lb., 2/4; 2-lb., 4/-, including Tin and Postage.

Mrs. Conyers,
MORCHARD BISHOP, DEVON.

"WORTH A GUINEA A BOX."

BEECHAM'S PILLS

FOR ALL

BILIOUS & NERVOUS DISORDERS,
Sick Headache, Constipation, Wind and Pains in Stomach, Impaired Digestion, Disordered Liver, and Female Ailments.

SALE OVER SIX MILLION BOXES YEARLY.

In Boxes, 1s. 1½d. and 2s. 9d. each, with full directions.

Prepared only by the Proprietor,

THOMAS BEECHAM, St. Helens, Lancashire.

Sold by all Druggists and Patent Medicine Dealers everywhere.

THE
BEST OF ALL BEVERAGES
AND THE
CHEAPEST.

GOOD! IT'S

MASON'S

Extract of Herbs

8 Gallons Prime Beer for 6d.

Sample Free for 9 Stamps.

AGENTS WANTED EVERYWHERE.

NEWBALL & MASON,
NOTTINGHAM.

Digitized by Google

THE BRAIN GYMNASIUM.

In these competitions a prize of £2 will be awarded each week to the competitor whose attempt we receive giving the correct solutions of all the puzzles. If more than one is absolutely correct the prize of £2 will be given to the first correct attempt dealt with.

If no lists of absolutely correct solutions are sent in the first prize will be awarded to the competitor whose attempt is first dealt with showing the fewest mistakes.

Each week we shall award in addition to the above, either ten of our silver plated pencil-cases or ten popular novels, to be distributed amongst the competitors whose attempts are absolutely correct and have failed to win the first prize, or, if no complete lists of correct solutions are received, to those whose attempts show the fewest mistakes.

Write all your solutions on one sheet of paper, putting the number against each. Post the batch in an envelope marked "Brain Gymnasium," to reach the Editor, Short Stories, 18 Henrietta Street, Covent Garden, W.C., by first post on Monday, October 15th, 1900.

Readers are invited to submit puzzles, acrostics, conundrums, word-squares, etc., for publication on this page. A penknife will be given to each reader whose attempts are used All attempts must be vouched for as original, and, of course, it is distinctly understood that the sender of a puzzle must neither compete in the competition nor divulge to anyone the solution. Any reader found infringing this rule will be severely dealt with.

No. 229.

Form a square word from equivalents of the following:

More than one; a portion of land; a mineral; a hole.

No. 230.

What English noun, being of masculine gender and plural number, becomes, by adding an "s," singular in number and feminine in gender?

No. 231.

Re-arrange the following letters to form a well-known proverb:

A B C D EEEEEE G HH III L NNN O R SSSS TTTT W.

No. 232.

The initials and finals of equivalents of the following, when read downwards, will give the names of two distinguished British Generals:

A Boer accomplishment; above; graceful; a textile fabric; a disease; impetuous.

No. 233.

A word of FIVE letters I am;
Come, puzzle me out if you can.
My FIRST and my LAST are alike, I declare;
My SECOND and FOURTH are also a pair.
Read backwards and forwards, I'm always the same,
Behead and curtail me, and then I'm a name.
The rest I shall leave to architectural friends,
Who oft take my WHOLE to accomplish their ends.

No. 234.

I'm a comfort to infants when nursed on the knee;
A dog I become when a dog follows me.
I sometimes take wing, and a bird I'm then found;
When I come close to land, I'm a large tract of ground.

RESULT OF BRAIN GYMNASIUM.

Nos. 211 to 216.

The first prize of £2 has been awarded this week to the Rev. G. P. Horne, of Newby Wispe, Northallerton, Yorks, whose solution was the first correct one dealt with.

A copy of "Calumnies," by E. M. Davy, has been sent to each of the following:

T. H. Howard, Holderness, E.
A. F. Cox, King's Heath, near Birmingham.
A. Roger, Cadogan Street, Glasgow.
W. E. Jackson, Chipping Norton.
F. G. Homer, Moseley near Birmingham.
H. Cammack, Everton.
G. Pescud, Fairfoot Road, Bow, E.
W. Stockwell Hillfield Avenue, Hornsey, N.
W. Weighell, Abbey Wood, Kent.
C. Stephens, Fratton, Portsmouth.

SOLUTION OF "COMPOSITE FACES" COMPETITION.

The forehead is that of ..... ALMA TADEMA.
The right eye is that of ..... LORD SALISBURY.
The left eye is that of ..... LADY RANDOLPH CHURCHILL.
The nose is that of ..... CARDINAL VAUGHAN.
The mouth is that of ..... DR. PARKER.
The whiskers are those of SIR EDWARD CLARKE.
The ear is that of ..... LORD ROBERTS.

An Interesting Book.

CONSULT THE ORACLE;

or,

HOW TO READ THE FUTURE.

Crown 8vo. Price, 1s. Post Free, 1s. 3d.

Some of the Chapters are:

Chap. I.—The Meaning of your Dreams.
Chap. III.—Omens, Charms, and Spells for Lovers.
Chap. VII.—Judging Character by the Hands and Fingers.
Chap. XV.—Married Life Begun as it Should Be.
Chap. XXIV.—Table-Turning.
Chap. XXVIII.—Mystery and Danger of Mesmerism.
Chap. XXXIII.—Things Seen by Second-Sight.
Chap. XXXIX.—Looks showing your Character.

C. ARTHUR PEARSON LTD., Henrietta Street, W.C.

SHORT STORIES ADVERTISEMENT RATES.

Single column, per inch, per insertion	...	...					£0 10 0
Double " " "	...	...					1 0 0
Full page inside, facing page of matter, either white paper or 2nd or 3rd page of cover, or back page, per insertion	...	...	...	...			10 0 0
Half-page " " "	...	...	...	...			5 0 0
Quarter-page " " "	...	...	...	...			2 10 0
Eighth-page " " "	...	...	...	...			1 5 0
Front page, whole " "	...	...	...	...			12 10 0
" half " "	...	...	...	...			6 5 0

All spaces above one-eighth of a page are charged at per page rate.

Series discount: 5 per cent. for 13, 10 per cent. for 26, 15 per cent. for 52 insertions.

Black blocks are charged 25 per cent. extra. All advertisements are subject to approval. All copy must be sent in by Noon on Tuesday, Oct. 9th, if intended for the issue on sale Oct. 23rd and dated October 27th. The Proprietors reserve the right to hold over or suspend the insertion of any advertisement without prejudice to other insertions on order. All communications should be addressed to the Advertisement Manager, "Pearson's Weekly" Offices, Henrietta Street, London, W.C.

Printed and published by C. Arthur Pearson Limited, Pearson's Buildings, Henrietta Street, London, W.C.

Digitized by Google

BIG PRIZE SCHEME

For MARCH, 1901.

25,602 PRIZES, value £10,000

LIST OF PRIZES:

1 Cash Prize £50	£50 0
1 Cash Prize, £40	40 0
10 Handsome Pianos, in walnut, £40 each	400 0
5 Cash Prizes, £25 each ...	125 0
10 Gents' Bicycles, Freewheels, £17 17s.	178 10
10 Ladies' Bicycles, Free-wheels, £17 17s.	178 10
10 Cash Prizes, £10 each ...	100 0
20 Jones's Sewing Machines, £8 each	160 0
20 Cash Prizes, £5 each ...	100 0
50 Rolled Gold Lever Watches, £2 10s. each	125 0
100 Cash Prizes, £2 each ...	200 0
50 Dinner Services (56 pieces), £2 each	100 0
50 Folding Bed Chairs, £2 each	100 0
50 Ladies' Travelling Trunks, £2 each	100 0
200 Cash Prizes, £1 each ...	200 0
200 Ladies' Leather Hatboxes, £1 each	200 0
100 Basket Arm Chairs, upholstered, £1	100 0
400 pairs Blankets, 15s. per pair	300 0
200 ½-doz Electro-plated Forks, large, 15s. per ½-doz. ...	150 0
200 ½-doz. Electro-plated Forks, small, 15s. per ½-doz. ...	£150 0
500 Ladies' Umbrellas, 15/- ea.	375 0
500 Gents' Umbrellas, 15s. each	375 0
400 Best Electro-plated Teapots, 15s. each	300 0
400 Handsome Meat Carvers, with Steel in Case, 15s. set	300 0
1000 Cash Prizes, 10s. each ...	500 0
1000 pairs Bed Sheets, 10s. each	500 0
1000 White Linen Table Cloths, 10s. each	500 0
1000 Ladies' Umbrellas, 7/6 each	375 0
1000 Ladies' Leather Purses, 7/6 each	375 0
200 ½-doz. Table Knives, 7/6 per ½-doz.	75 0
200 ½-doz. Dessert do., 7/6 per ½-doz.	75 0
2000 Ladies' Dress Lengths, Navy Blue Serge, 7/6 each...	750 0
2000 Cash Prizes of 5s. each ...	500 0
4715 Ladies' Leather Handbags, 4s. each	943 0
4000 ½-doz. Fine Linen Cambric Handkerchiefs, 2/6 per ½-doz.	500 0
4000 Handsome Work-boxes, 2/6 each	500 0
25,602	**£10,000 0**

CONDITIONS OF COMPETITION.

Every tablet of **Watson's Matchless Cleanser** is enclosed in a Wrapper, with signature up the centre of same. Save the WHOLE Wrapper (tops of Wrappers will be disqualified), and send, postage or carriage paid, to **Joseph Watson & Sons Limited, Whitehall Soap Works, Leeds,** not later than MARCH 31ST, 1901. Each package will be counted as one lot; separate entries must be sent under separate covers. If any parcel arrives, postage or carriage not being fully paid, such parcel will be refused. Be careful to see that the full postage is paid. Each parcel sent in must contain the full name and address of sender, and number of Wrappers sent in must be marked on the same paper. On outside of parcel write leribly **"Prize Competition."** The prizes will be awarded in the above order to the senders of the highest numbers of Wrappers. A list, giving result of the Competition, will be sent with each prize when it is sent out. Every wrapper must have first contained soap. No employee of Joseph Watson & Sons Limited will be eligible. All prizes will be despatched about April 25th.

WATSON'S MATCHLESS CLEANSER

The Best Soap for all purposes, still holds the lead. Quality perfect. Is the Housewife's Friend. It saves her health, her strength, her wealth; washes her clothes with ease and leaves them sweet and pure, and will not injure the most delicate fabric. **It has the largest sale of 1-lb. tablets in the world.** Sold by all Grocers, Oilmen, &c., throughout the United Kingdom. Buy it. Prove it and secure a Prize.

UNDER ROYAL PATRONAGE.

OLD PEOPLE LIKE IT

for its wonderful power to *invigorate decayed hair*, and induce an entirely new growth when that is possible.

MIDDLE-AGED PEOPLE LIKE IT,

because it *prevents them from getting bald*, keeps dandriff, away, and makes the hair grow thick and strong.

YOUNG LADIES LIKE IT

As a dressing, because it gives the hair a *beautiful glossy lustre*, ensures a *luxuriant growth*, and enables them to dress it and keep it in any style that may be desired.

CHILDREN LIKE IT,

Because it keeps the hair and scalp cool and clean, *allays irritation*, and keeps the hair in whatever position desired.

KOKO for the HAIR is a tonic, cleansing, invigorating preparation, it eradicates scurf and dandriff, prevents hair from falling or turning grey, promotes growth, contains no dye or greasy substance, is the most cleanly of all hair preparations and invariably gives satisfaction.

THEY ALL LIKE IT,

Because it is as *pure as crystal*, perfectly colourless, contains no poisonous substance, no sugar of lead, sulphur, nitrate of silver, or grease, and does not soil or colour *the scalp, face, or the most delicate fabric in clothing.*

1/-, 2/6, and 4/6, of all Chemists, Hairdressers, &c., everywhere.

NOW READY.

'BESIEGED WITH B.-P.'

A Complete Record of the Siege and Relief of Mafeking.

BY

J. EMERSON NEILLY.

War Correspondent of the "Pall Mall Gazette" in Mafeking.

Crown 8vo, price 1s. net; post free, 1s. 3d.

At all Bookstalls and Booksellers, and of

C. ARTHUR PEARSON Ltd., Henrietta St., W.C.

A Magnificent Complexion Assured

BY THE FREE USE OF

LILLIE POWDER.

Its subtle MEDICINAL PROPERTIES Nourish, Heal and Soothe the delicate nerves of the skin, and bring Health and Beauty to all. Unsurpassed for all ailments of the skin. See testimonials.

Prepared from the original recipe invented by Mrs. Langtry, under the strict supervision of Her Majesty's Perruquier, Mr. W. Clarkson.

Order it of your Chemist, and be sure and refuse all substitutes, as they may be injurious. SEND FOR IT AT ONCE as you value the health of your skin.

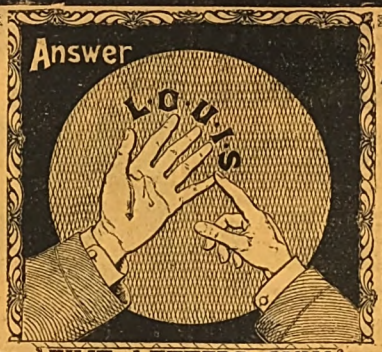
THREE TINTS: White, Flesh-colour, & Cream.

PRICE ONE SHILLING.

Digitized by Google

HOW DO YOU SPELL

VELVETEEN?



FIVE LETTERS ONLY.

Don't Forget this when you buy.

EVERY YARD IS STAMPED

L-O-U-I-S.

"OROCO" TABLE MATS.

10 *for* ONE SHILLING *Post Free.*

Consisting of 6 Plate, 2 Meat Dish, and 2 Vegetable Dish Sizes.
AN ELEGANT TABLE DECORATION.
A PERFECT PROTECTION FROM HOT DISHES AND PLATES.

"OROCO" MANUFACTURING CO., WIGAN.

DON'T HAVE CORNS

BUNIONS or ENLARGED TOE JOINTS, when a packet of

THOMPSON'S CELEBRATED CORN PLASTER

will cure you. It is thin as silk, and removes the pain at once. Post free, 14 stamps, from the Proprietor. Beware of imitations.

LADIES should take DR. SIMPSON'S ARSENICAL PEARLS. They secure a beautiful clear complexion, free from Blotch, Pimples and Roughness. Post free, 2/9 and 4/6 only, from M. F. THOMPSON'S Homœopathic Chemist, 17 Gordon Street, Glasgow.

Ask for Thompson's Pamphlet, "The Woman Beautiful."

THE "GEO. R. SIMS" HAIR RENEWER "TATCHO"

"While you wait"

LARGE TRIAL BOTTLES TO-DAY. 1s. 6d.

Sent Post Free in plain package, twenty one stamps.

MRS. BROWN POTTER, whose beautiful hair is the envy of her sex, writes:

"I Use only 'TATCHO.'"

If your hair is falling or failing, you have your remedy. Don't hesitate. Use "TATCHO." The result will surprise you and will be intensely gratifying. It is sold in bottles by Chemists and Hairdressers all over the world, 2/9 and 5/-, or may be had direct in plain sealed package, post free, 2/11 and 5/3. Address:
The Geo. R. Sims Co., 81c Great Queen St., London, W.C.

Reckitt's PARIS Blue.

The Best is the Cheapest.

Digitized by Google

FRESH FACTS ABOUT THE £10 NOTE SCHEME. *See page 463.*

SHORT STORIES

A WEEKLY MAGAZINE FOR HOME AND TRAIN

No. 615. FOR WEEK ENDING OCTOBER 13TH, 1900. [ONE PENNY.

ANOTHER SEAMAN AND

DR TIBBLES' Vi-Cocoa

"There is nothing like Vi-Cocoa."

Mr. P. MORRIS, Mess 81, H.M.S. ROYAL ADELAIDE, Chatham Depot:

"I am pleased to say that I have found out for myself that Dr. Tibbles' Vi-Cocoa is the best that I have yet tasted. I get Service cocoa every morning, but I prefer Vi-Cocoa. It is far more nourishing and refreshing, and I can certainly say that if anyone gives it a fair trial I am certain they will be satisfied and say that there is nothing like Vi-Cocoa.

"If you wish to make use of this letter you are at liberty to do so."

"UNDOUBTED PURITY AND STRENGTH."—*Medical Magazine.*
"IN THE FRONT RANK OF REALLY VALUABLE FOODS."—*Lancet.*

DR TIBBLES' Vi-Cocoa

FAVOURED BY THE HOMES AND HOSPITALS OF GREAT BRITAIN.

Dainty Sample Tin Free to any Address.

Address—Dr. TIBBLES' VI-COCOA Ltd., 60 Bunhill Row, London, E.C.

DAINTY SAMPLE FREE.

Advertisements should be sent to "Short Stories" Advertisement Department, Henrietta Street, London, W.C.

Digitized by Google

BIG PRIZE SCHEME

For MARCH, 1901.

25,602 PRIZES, value £10,000

LIST OF PRIZES:

1	Cash Prize £50	£50	0
1	Cash Prize, £40	40	0
10	Handsome Pianos, in walnut, £40 each	400	0
5	Cash Prizes, £25 each ...	125	0
10	Gents' Bicycles, Freewheels, £17 17s.	178	10
10	Ladies' Bicycles, Free-wheels, £17 17s.	178	10
10	Cash Prizes, £10 each ...	100	0
20	Jones's Sewing Machines, £8 each	160	0
20	Cash Prizes, £5 each ...	100	0
50	Rolled Gold Lever Watches, £2 10s. each	125	0
100	Cash Prizes, £2 each ...	200	0
50	Dinner Services (56 pieces), £2 each	100	0
50	Folding Bed Chairs, £2 each	100	0
50	Ladies' Travelling Trunks, £2 each	100	0
200	Cash Prizes, £1 each ...	200	0
200	Ladies' Leather Hatboxes, £1 each	200	0
100	Basket Arm Chairs, upholstered, £1	100	0
400	pairs Blankets, 15s. per pair	300	0
200	½-doz. Electro-plated Forks, large, 15s. per ½ doz. ...	150	0
200	½-doz. Electro-plated Forks, small, 15s. per ½-doz. ...	£150	0
500	Ladies' Umbrellas, 15/- ea.	375	0
500	Gents' Umbrellas, 15s. each	375	0
400	Best Electro-plated Teapots, 15s. each	300	0
400	Handsome Meat Carvers, with Steel in Case, 15s. set	300	0
1000	Cash Prizes, 10s. each ...	500	0
1000	pairs Bed Sheets 10s. each	500	0
1000	White Linen Table Cloths, 10s. each	500	0
1000	Ladies' Umbrellas, 7/6 each	375	0
1000	Ladies' Leather Purses, 7/6 each	375	0
200	½-doz. Table Knives, 7/6 per ½-doz.	75	0
200	½-doz. Dessert do., 7/6 per ½-doz.	75	0
2000	Ladies' Dress Lengths, Navy Blue Serge, 7/6 each...	750	0
2000	Cash Prizes of 5s each ...	500	0
4715	Ladies' Leather Handbags, 4s. each	943	0
4000	½-doz. Fine Linen Cambric Handkerchiefs, 2/6 per ½-doz.	500	0
4000	Handsome Work-boxes, 2/6 each	500	0
25,602		**£10,000**	**0**

CONDITIONS OF COMPETITION.

Every tablet of **Watson's Matchless Cleanser** is enclosed in a Wrapper, with signature up the centre of same. Save the WHOLE Wrapper (tops of Wrappers will be disqualified), and send, postage or carriage paid, to **Joseph Watson & Sons Limited, Whitehall Soap Works, Leeds,** not later than MARCH 31ST, 1901. Each package will be counted as one lot; separate entries must be sent under separate covers. If any parcel arrives, postage or carriage not being fully paid, such parcel will be refused. Be careful to see that the full postage is paid. Each parcel sent in must contain the full name and address of sender, and number of Wrappers sent in must be marked on the same paper. On outside of parcel write legibly "**Prize Competition.**" The prizes will be awarded in the above order to the senders of the highest numbers of Wrappers. A list, giving result of the Competition, will be sent with each prize when it is sent out. Every wrapper must have first contained soap. No employee of Joseph Watson & Sons Limited will be eligible. All prizes will be despatched about April 25th.

WATSON'S MATCHLESS CLEANSER

The Best Soap for all purposes, still holds the lead. Quality perfect. Is the Housewife's Friend. It saves her health, her strength, her wealth; washes her clothes with ease and leaves them sweet and pure, and will not injure the most delicate fabric. **It has the largest sale of 1-lb. tablets in the world.** Sold by all Grocers, Oilmen, &c., throughout the United Kingdom. Buy it. Prove it and secure a Prize

FREE

QUAKER OATS COOKER

OUR OFFER, READ IT

2-Pint Cooker Free.	For **25** white squares like this from front of **2**-lb. packet.
2-Pint Cooker Free.	For **50** white squares like this from front of **1**-lb. packet.
3-Pint Cooker Free.	For **40** white squares like this from front of **2**-lb. packet.
3-pint Cooker Free.	For **75** white squares like this from front of **1**-lb. packet.

Required number of White Squares must be sent in at one time.

On receipt by us, POSTAGE PAID, of required number of WHITE SQUARES, or price mentioned below, before Sept. 1, 1901, a Quaker Oats Cooker will be sent at once, carriage paid, to any address in Great Britain or Ireland.

If you want the Cooker at once, and have not the required number of WHITE SQUARES, send 2/- for 2-pint size, or 2/6 for 3-pint size. **The amount you pay will be refunded immediately** correct number of WHITE SQUARES is sent us, postage paid, if received by us before Sept. 1st, 1901. Write your address plainly and mention this Paper.

ADDRESS: DEPT W 3

QUAKER OATS, LTD., EASTCHEAP, LONDON, E.C.

QUAKER OATS, sold in 1-lb. and 2-lb. Packets only.

Beware of substitution. Quaker name and Quaker Figure on every Packet.

ALL FAT PEOPLE

can safely, **Reduce Weight and cure Corpulency permanently** by taking **TRILENE TABLETS** (Regd.) for a few weeks. They are small, agreeable, harmless, and never fail to **IMPROVE** both **HEALTH** and **FIGURE** without Change of Diet. An English Countess writes: "*Your Trilene Tablets act admirably.*"

Send 2s. 6d. to **THE TRILENE CO.**, Sole Proprietors, **66 Finsbury Pavement, London.**

SAMPLES OF TESTIMONIALS.

Princess Liechtenstein writes from Landsberg, Austria: "Pray send your excellent tablets directly." Mr. Canham, 97 Alexandra Road, Norwich: "Tablets cured my wife of extreme stoutness; it has never returned." Mrs. H. Cox, 28 Watnall Road, Hucknall Torkard, writes: "The Tablets reduced me 1½ stone." Mrs. S. Alexander, 102 Dixon Street, New Swindon, says: "They reduced me 2lb., and I am cured." Mrs. Darnley-Smith, of Landscove Vicarage, Ashburton, says: "Tablets have reduced me very much." Mrs. Crossley, of Rose Hill, Torver, Comston, says: "I weigh much less and can breathe so much easier; I am delighted."

Don't Cough-use

They at once check the Cough and remove the cause.

The Unrivalled

One Lozenge alone relieves.
Sold everywhere, Tins 13½d. each.

Keating's Lozenges

FREE. FREE

Our £2 10s. Real Silver Watch (with chain), or **A Real Gold Ring** Set with REAL DIAMONDS and other stones.

SEND NO MONEY.

NO MONEY REQUIRED. WE TRUST YOU.

We give you your choice of either of these handsome presents for selling NINE articles of Jewellery at 1/6 each. (Regular price 2/6).

We do not want your money.

Just send us a stamped addressed envelope and say that you will either sell the jewellery or return it to us if you fail to sell it. On receiving your letter we will at once post you the jewellery.

When sold, send us the 13/6 you have received for same, and we will at once send you ABSOLUTELY FREE our £2 10s. Real Silver Watch with Chain, or the Gold Ring, whichever you desire.

A WRITTEN GUARANTEE for TEN years sent with each watch.

You can sell our Jewellery in a few minutes at 1/6 each article. We have thousands of testimonials as to the quality and value both of our Jewellery and Presents.

Send no money. Write to-day.

BRITISH PREMIUM SYNDICATE (Dept. 5).
282 CENTRAL CHAMBERS, GLASGOW.

ESTABLISHED 1851.

BIRKBECK BANK

Southampton Buildings, Chancery Lane, London.

2% on CURRENT ACCOUNTS, on the minimum monthly balances when not drawn below £100.

The BIRKBECK ALMANACK, with full particulars, post free.

FRANCIS RAVENSCROFT, *Manager*.

NEW AUTOMATIC KNITTER.

FOR HOME WORK.

"The machine that knitted the hosiery and comforts for the troops in Africa."—See what *The Times* said.

Knits Socks (a pair in 35 min.), Stockings, Fancy Goods, &c. Easily learned. Lessons Free.

Cash, here, and Work Terms from "Sorres" dept.; 67 Southwark St., S.E.; 55 Oxford St., W.; 192 Upper St., London, N.; 105 Nicolson St., Edinburgh; 58 Union St., Glasgow; 151 Stephen's Green, Dublin; 62 Great Hampton St., Birmingham; 31 Stokes Croft, Bristol.

HOLLOWAY'S PILLS & OINTMENT.

PRE-EMINENT FOR 60 YEARS.

Digitized by Google

SHORT STORIES

No. 615.] [ONE PENNY.

For the Week Ending Oct. 13th, 1900.

A Horsey Woman:

OR,

Man's Honour.

"RITA, this is good of you."

"I had to go into the village, so I said I'd take in the station on the way back and pick you up. Jump in, the mare won't stand with her head turned homewards."

Hollis did so, and as they dashed off, the small tiger hung on behind, and clambered on as best he could.

"I expect you're awfully cold," the girl said, pressing her feet against the foot-board and gripping the reins hard. "It's an east wind, and that always makes Trilby unmanageable. I've had ever such work with her this afternoon. Hold on," as they swung round the corner. "Tom, see Captain Hollis's bag doesn't fall off."

"Let me take the reins," said the Captain. "Your wrists must ache, and I'm sure your hands are half frozen."

"Oh no, they're not, and she's fifty times worse with anyone else handling her. We shall just be in time to dress. How's your mother?"

"She's all right, thanks. Have you got a big party at the Hall?"

"About the same as usual. The Fiennes, Barclay-Helmonts, Major Downes and Jack Whitehead. Miss St. John comes to-morrow, so you'll be all right," and she laughed a little.

"Nonsense," she replied frankly when he demurred. "Muriel St. John's a very nice girl and she has a sensible little income. You'll have to marry some day, and you couldn't do better. I'm going to help her bring it off."

"Then I shall drink to your complete discomfiture."

"Nonsense, what's the matter with her?"

"Nothing, only I have an old-fashioned fancy for choosing my own wife, if I have one, and I fail to see the necessity."

"Better for you. Keep you straight and save you from breaking other girls' hearts. Steady, Trilby, steady," as the mare pricked up her ears and swerved, "can't you see it's only a heap of stones?"

"I consider that I deserve another five years freedom at least. I was only thirty last Sunday," remarked her companion. "Let's marry Miss St. John to the Major."

All rights reserved.]

Digitized by Google

"Let me take the reins," said the Captain.

"When I left, the gallant Major was worshipping Chris in the billiard room. She looked a trifle bored certainly, but he's good for five thousand a year, and a Kerr-Seton cannot afford to snap her fingers at that. Certainly a Chris Kerr-Seton can't."

"And what about a 'Rita'?"

"Rita is not extravagant. She can do with two dresses a year if she's got two decent horses and a roof to sleep under."

"How's Phil?" was the seemingly irrelevant question.

"All right. He's on the Riviera."

"Is he coming home soon?"

"In a few weeks. There's Chris and the Major looking out for us. I really believe she is in earnest this time. Perhaps she's tired of flirting."

"Very likely. Hullo, how are you?" he called, saluting the pair. "Prepare for a fervent song of thanksgiving as soon as I'm out of this. My hands are stiff with hanging on, but I didn't want to damp your Easter. Why doesn't Rita drive kangaroos if she likes excitement and vigorous, unlooked for jerks?"

"You poor thing, how you must have suffered," laughed Chris, "Trilby wasn't out yesterday so I can imagine it was pretty bad. You're awfully late. I was just going up to dress without waiting any longer. Everyone else has gone ages ago."

"Do you give the Major a class to himself already," asked Hollis chaffingly. "The rest of the world and Major Downes, eh?"

"And Jack Hollis thrown in as an after-thought," was the bright retort. "Let go my hand, I must tear off to dress. First impressions go a long way you know, and he's never seen me in evening dress yet," wickedly, "I'm going to flash upon him suddenly in all my glory, and while he's still gasping for breath, precipitate the fatal moment."

"I shall be there to see the unqualified surrender."

"You'd better not," threateningly, as she flew off.

Rita meanwhile was looking at her horse's mouth, and Hollis joined her. "What's wrong?" he said, and it was noticeable that his voice and manner changed.

"I'm not sure, but she's got something the matter. Either it's toothache or inflammation. I must see Grange after dinner."

"Let me see him for you."

"You can come with me if you like, but I always attend to anything connected with Trilby myself."

When the gentlemen joined the ladies after dinner, he looked round quickly and was not surprised to find her absent. He had hardly expected her to wait for him, and made his way at once through a conservatory and across the lawn towards the stables. He found her in the harness room, deep in an earnest colloquy with the head groom.

She wore a long dark cloak over her evening dress, but little white slippers showed below it, and Hollis wished she would take better care of herself,

She turned slightly when he joined them, but finished what she was saying to the groom before she remarked to him:

"I shan't be able to use Trilby for a day or two, isn't it a nuisance? Grange thinks her mouth is very bad."

"Really?" he said commiseratingly, but at the same time breathing an inward thanksgiving. For Hollis spent most of his time with Rita when he was at the Hall, and he had vivid recollections of how Trilby engrossed nearly all her attention when they were out with her.

"You will take cold it those thin slippers," he said as they returned. "Did you know it had been snowing?"

"No, but I never take cold. It feels almost like freezing, doesn't it? What a nuisance if it spoils the hunting."

When they reached the conservatory he contrived to detain her a little among the flowers.

It was a bright moonlight night, and her face showed clear and white against the dark background.

Hollis had his back to the light, so he could look upon her beauty unrestrainedly. For Rita had always been beautiful to Jack Hollis, whatever she had been to others. He liked her small, clear-cut features, the neat bands of dark hair bound close to her shapely head and her quiet eyes. She was not at all fashionable or stylish, but in every detail she was aristocratic to her finger-tips, and she was the one woman in the world for Jack Hollis. Yet she had been engaged to his cousin Philip Brindley for three years.

"Don't you admire our chrysanthemums?" she remarked, turning her head slightly. "We have a new gardener; it is the finest show we've ever had. It seems quite strange without old Bilson," she added, "I should think he had been here ever since you first came."

"Yes, I shall quite miss him. We always had a chat. It must be ten years this Easter since that first visit of mine." Hollis changed his tone a little, and looked hard into her face. "Ten years is a long time," he added quietly,

Rita turned her eyes to his with interest. "Is it really as much as that?" she said. "How time does fly. And you have been every Easter since," musingly.

"Every single one."

"They have been very jolly."

"They have indeed. None of my visits here during

Digitized by Google

the year have quite the same charm as my anniversary Easter one. But it can't go on, that is the worst of it."

"Why not?" unguardedly, "you will always have the same welcome."

He bit his lip and contracted his forehead a little.

"There will be changes," he said.

She was silent, and a curious expression, half-regretful flitted across her eyes. A pause followed, then he said:

"Are you and Phil going to be married this year?"

"Yes. Most likely in May."

"So soon?" and his voice almost betrayed him.

"There is nothing to wait for."

He fidgeted half-nervously with his watch chain. She seemed to have grown a little paler, and to carefully hide her eyes from him.

She had always known that for some reason he did not approve of her *fiancé*.

"I had no idea the day was so near," he said at last, "I am sorry."

Her eyes grew a little strained.

"You don't understand, Phil," she remarked. "He always hides his best self."

"I think I do," he answered, "We were at Eton together, and afterwards at Sandhurst. I know he is a good fellow at heart, but——" he hesitated.

"Go on," she said.

"He is so weak."

"I know it but, I am strong. He has always relied very much upon me."

"That is just it. When a marriage is a really happy one, the woman relies upon the man. It is splendid for Phil to have you, but it is you I think about. I have always hoped to hear that you had changed your mind."

"You won't hear that," very quietly. "I have given him my promise. I shall stick to him now."

"But you gave it in a moment of extreme need and stress. It is not quite the same."

"A promise is always a promise."

"A true man would not have taken such an unfair advantage."

He spoke daringly, but he realised it might be the last chance, and braved her resentment. He knew so much better than she did, perhaps better than anyone, just how weak Philip Brindley was. A man of brilliant genius, spoilt by early success and adulation. He had often wanted to tell her, but a feeling of unfairness tied his tongue. If only he had not loved her himself. As it was he could only hint vaguely, and hoped that some unlooked for circumstance would break the engagement. And meanwhile he had been looking after Philip himself, and keeping him clear of bad companions at considerable cost of time and patience. But it was a long time before Rita ever heard of all he had done for her sake.

"It was not an unfair advantage," she replied to his charge, "I was a perfectly free agent."

She tried to speak firmly, but her heart seemed to rise up against her words as if to give them the lie. She remembered the darkened room and the mother's drawn, white face; the heavy atmosphere and the sick man's passionate intreaties. She had always been fond of him and looked after him; now that he was dying she could not turn from him and so his earnestness prevailed.

She had promised to be his wife if he got well.

"He did not mean it as such," Hollis continued, "I only know the news was a shock to everyone."

She made no sign, and he drew a step nearer.

"We are old friends, Rita, such old friends, you will forgive me a little plain-speaking, I know. Can you honestly assure me that your engagement has never been a disappointment to you? Are you certain you love Phil as well as you could love anyone?"

She shrank away with a half-appealing gesture, for his earnestness unnerved her.

Her face showed clear and white against the dark background.

Digitized by Google

"Look at me, Rita," he urged, "and assure me that I am wrong."

She raised her eyes bravely and opened her lips to speak. But the words died away unuttered; she looked at him helplessly for a moment and then turned with a quick movement to the door.

"I have promised to be Philip's wife," she said in a low voice. "I believe people call me horsey and masculine. I don't know whether they are right or not, but at least you can allow me a man's sense of honour."

* * * * *

On Easter Tuesday the Hall party attended a village concert, and afterwards prepared to walk home, preferring the moonlit loveliness of the night to the stuffy broughams. Jack contrived to walk with Rita, and as Chris passed them, she called, laughingly:

"Jack wants shaking or jumping on, or something, Rita. He's been a wet blanket all the evening. Give it him well, and don't let him off until he promises to propose to Muriel to-morrow."

She herself had become engaged to Major Downes the previous evening, and now that it was settled she felt very pleased and happy, and magnanimous to the world at large. Rita smiled, but said nothing, and she and Jack followed the rest of the gaily laughing throng. Only they were very quiet and very thoughtful, not at all like the others.

"I think it has been a success," Rita said at last, to break the constrained silence. "Everyone seems to have enjoyed it."

"I'm sure they have," he answered readily, "the programme did you great credit."

She laughed a little.

"You lie too easily, Jack," she said, "I know someone who looked and was insufferably bored."

"Well, I don't count myself," he replied. "I went because you asked me to, and I should do just the same again. The audience generally looked very placid and satisfied."

"You shouldn't have sat yourself down with only Mrs. Ingram for a neighbour."

"I found her rather amusing. She was very concerned because the Vicar's dear 'ead began to show so bald without his 'at on."

"There was an empty chair beside Muriel all the evening," she said, meaningly.

"I should have thought you would have been the last, Rita, to incite a man to profess for anyone what he did not feel," he said seriously.

"Do you think you could fall in love?" she asked.

"I don't think I ever shall," he replied evasively.

"I expect you haven't met the right woman yet," with a little smile.

He was silent for a few minutes, then he said in his usual calm way.

"Yes I have; I met her some years ago."

"Oh Jack," sympathetically.

"I don't know that she ever cared for me," he continued, "but she might have done later on, if not then. You see things went wrong. It does happen so, and then one has to make the best of it."

"I'm awfully sorry," in the same sympathetic voice. "Is it quite hopeless?"

"Quite. I went to her home to ask her, and the evening before I arrived she got engaged to someone else. If I had gone twenty-four hours earlier, it might have all altered the whole of her life and mine. Curious isn't it, how a trifle may make or mar anyone's life? I had intended to go two days earlier, and only waited to oblige a pal about something."

"But how strange, Jack—surely if she cared for you?"

"I don't suppose she did; she didn't really love the other man, and it would have given me a chance. Still, it might not have made any difference, and, anyhow, it's all over now. I only told you because of what you said about my marrying. She wasn't quite like other girls, you see, and I think she spoilt me for the rest."

He changed the subject then, and talked about the trip in the Mediterranean he and Will Fiennes were starting upon the next day; but Rita thought many times of what he had told her.

* * * * *

Jack was smoking in the conservatory the next morning, when Chris came upon him with rather an anxious expression.

"Have you seen Rita?" she asked, after glancing round to make sure they were alone.

"No, why? Is there anything the matter?"

"Phil has had an accident, but there's

Jack contrived to walk with Rita.

Digitized by Google

something else as well. She looks dreadfully worried."

"Where is she?"

"In the library alone. Pretend you want a book."

He found her sitting over the fire with a newspaper on her knee, but she was not even pretending to read it.

"What's wrong?" he asked.

Rita looked at him in surprise and was about to prevaricate, but something in his manner disarmed her, and she looked away to the fire, with the troubled expression deepening in her face. He waited for her to speak.

"I don't think I ought to worry you with it," she said at last, wearily.

"You would be doing me a good turn," he answered, "supposing I were able to help you in any way."

"And if not?"

"Let me try."

"It's about Phil."

He looked at her keenly.

"Yes?" he said questioningly.

"I'm afraid he's been wild again. He's had an accident, and though he doesn't exactly say so, I can guess it was through drinking. He writes very penitently and says I must give him up, because it is only what he deserves. I don't know what to do; I'm almost at my wits' end."

"Why don't you speak to your father about it?" he said, after a pause.

"Because he'd insist upon my breaking it off at once, and I'm not sure that I want to do that. Jack," suddenly, relaxing into an unusual show of warmth and earnestness, "I haven't done much in my life—it's such a poor tale at best—don't you think it would be worth something to keep Phil straight?"

"But supposing you fail?"

"I shouldn't when we were together always, I never have yet."

He got up and moved away restlessly.

"You can't possibly tell," he said. "It's a fearful risk. Personally I—I—no," hastily, "it's not for me to advise you. You must know what I think already."

She was silent.

"I will do anything I can to help you," he continued hurriedly, "if you are determined to let things go on as they are. Shall I look Phil up and see if I can make sure of anything?"

"Oh, would you?" eagerly. "It's an awful shame to let you, but I should be so glad to know definitely what is wrong."

"I can try and find out for you. Did you say he was at Monte Carlo?"

"Yes."

"Am I to give him any message?"

"Nothing special, but if he's very ill and wants me, let me know. I might be able to come out to him."

He turned to go, but his face was very white and set.

"You are a brick, Jack," she said gratefully. "I shan't worry nearly so much now."

He did not answer, but took out his watch.

"I must hurry," he said, "I haven't packed yet. I'll let you know all I can."

Half-an-hour later, a dog-cart bearing the two men to the station drove out at the park gates, but Rita was still sitting alone in the library, pretending to read.

At last she got up.

"No, I won't fail him now," she said resolutely, and went to get into her riding-habit for a solitary canter.

"I wonder who it was Jack cared for," she mused as she rode home. "I used to think it was Chris, but it couldn't have been."

Rita was sitting alone in the library.

Her eyes grew very wistful. She was thinking how she used to wish it might have been her.

* * * * *

"I am very glad. He wasn't half good enough for you," and Chris spoke with her usual decision.

There was no doubt she had quite made up her mind on the subject.

Rita said nothing, but stood looking fixedly at the letter in her hand. It stated clearly that her *fiancé* wished to break off their engagement.

The reasons were a trifle vague, but the purport was undeniable.

"Now you'll be able to marry Jack," Chris continued, coolly. "I know he's in love with you. I'm just as glad as ever I can be."

Rita did not heed her; she scarcely seemed to hear at all. Her face was deadly pale and a light of subdued anger burned in her eyes, but she still said nothing. Instead, she turned away.

She wanted to be alone to face the whole matter and make something of the confusion in her mind, where wounded pride struggled with a half formed sense of relief.

A week later came Jack's letter and one sentence ran:

"You were the woman I told you I had loved so hopelessly. I may tell you now, freely, thank Heaven for that, even though it may make no difference. I cannot remember the time when I knew you and did not love you, only Fate has seemed against me all along. But I have fresh hope now. I shall return home quickly, and when I get back we can perhaps start over again."

When she had read it she heaved a long sigh of gladness.

"If I had only known," she breathed, "but it will be all right now it will be all right now."

GERTRUDE PAGE.

Digitized by Google

A MIDNIGHT RIDE.

I CALLED upon Marston Moore one evening—it was in September, 1888—and quite to my surprise found him in deep dejection. He was a young physician of three or four years' practice, but without a care in the world that I had ever heard of. Certainly he had no occasion to worry about ordinary things, for his banking account was among the many thousands.

Nevertheless, he was despondent, and when I endeavoured to laugh him out of the condition he became only more morose. His manner was so brusque and his replies so monosyllabic that at last I took offence and rose to depart. It was then that he detained me.

"Pardon me, old chap," he said with more cordiality than he had yet manifested, "the fact is I'm in trouble. Somebody has got to help me out, and I don't know which way to turn. It is almost too much to ask of any friend."

I dropped back into my chair reassured, and after a moment of silence asked as gently as I could:

"How much is it, Marston?"

He looked up quickly, and there was a puzzled expression on his face; then he laughed, but it was a mirthless laugh after all.

"It isn't that," he said presently. "I wish it were. Do you think that I would have hesitated to apply to you if it were a question of money? No, that is the least of my worries. It is something of far more importance than that. It is—but I cannot put you to such a severe test of friendship, old fellow."

"Come, come," I exclaimed, my curiosity aroused, and also resenting the idea that he should consider any test of my friendship for him too great for me to stand. "If there is anything in the world that I can do for you, Marston, you well know that I will be only too glad to do it. Out with it now; what is the matter?"

"I cannot tell you all of the horrible story," he replied with marked hesitation. "If you are willing to go with me you will have to wait until we arrive before you hear all there is to tell."

"Arrive where?" I demanded.

"That also is out of my power to state," he responded, "for I do not yet know myself."

Then he sprang from his chair, and with rapid strides crossed and recrossed the room several times, at last pausing directly in front of me, with feet wide apart and hands thrust deep into his trousers' pockets. For a moment he regarded me with a gaze so intense that involuntarily I turned my eyes away. It was then that he continued:

"Look here, Ferguson," he said, "if you really mean that you will stand by me through this thing you will have to go into it blindly. It is not that I lack confidence in you that I do not tell—you know that, or should—it is because now I cannot be more explicit."

"All right, I'll go into it blindly, then," I said, trying to laugh and making a miserable failure of it. "You would do it for me if the positions were reversed."

"I am not so sure of that, knowing what I do," he half soliloquised. "It's a great deal to ask of any man, especially one's best friend. No, Ferguson, I do not think that I should accept your offer. I'll see the thing through alone, let the consequences be what they may."

"I'll be blowed if you will," I ejaculated, getting upon my feet also, and facing him where he stood. "If you are going into any danger where I can be of service, or where I can help see you through, I'm going to do it. I don't care a rap what it is. You needn't say another word, now or ever, if you don't want to, but go with you I will; and if you still refuse, so help me, I'll trump up some charge and have you arrested so that you cannot go yourself. Now, don't have any more words about it, but tell me at once what I am to do."

"You're a trump, too, Ferguson!" he exclaimed, seizing me by the hand and shaking it heartily, and I noticed that his eyes brightened perceptibly as he did so. "It is worth while having such a friend as you are in an extremity like this one, and I will take you at your word. All that I can now say is this: I must leave here to-night at midnight, and I have an appointment to keep beyond the city limits; but the exact location of the place where I am to meet the parties who expect me has not yet been fixed upon. In fact, I will not know about it until shortly before the time to start. We will have to go on horseback, and goodness alone knows when we will return, if we ever do. Are you still determined to accompany me?"

"More than ever."

"Very well. Meet me, then, at Turner's stables exactly at twelve o'clock to-night. I will have two good horses in readiness. See that you are well armed, Ferguson. A pair of 'forty-fours' may come in handy before we see the sun of another day—if we are fortunate enough ever to do so."

I clasped his hand silently, and in silence left him. I was greatly perturbed about the affair, for I could not even guess at the meaning of his strange words and manner. I had known Moore since my first year at college, and our friendship had never faltered since that time, now twelve years, nor had I ever known him to get into a serious scrape. Of the two, I was more prone to that sort of thing.

It was barely eight o'clock when I left Moore, so that I had four hours in which to make my preparations for the midnight ride. This I did, first by writing several letters and inclosing them in a big envelope, which I placed conspicuously on the mantel in my bedroom, marked: "To be opened and directions followed in case I have not returned at eight o'clock to-morrow evening." Then I dated it, so there might be no mistake. After that I dressed myself in my riding suit and boots, buckled my cartridge belt and revolvers round my body, and I was ready.

It was then only eleven o'clock, and I passed the

Digitized by Google

intervening time in writing more letters, for Moore's seriousness had impressed me strongly, and although I could not even conjecture what might happen, I was thoroughly imbued with the idea that the experiences of the night were not to be child's play. In that I was correct.

When the clock struck twelve I entered the stable. Moore was awaiting me, impatiently slashing his boots with his riding whip.

"You are a quarter of an hour late, Ferguson."

"It is exactly twelve," I responded in astonishment, producing my watch in proof of the statement. "I am here to the minute."

"Are you?" ironically. "I thought I said at a quarter to twelve."

"No, you said 'exactly at twelve.' Those are your own words."

"Well, never mind, you are here now, anyway," and he swung himself into the saddle, struck his horse a smart clip with the whip, and dashed into the darkness.

I was after him in a moment, but did not overtake him for some time, when he drew rein, and waited for me.

"We turn here," he said briefly, and led the way along the thoroughfare towards the river valley. I endeavoured to get near enough to converse with him, but for some reason I could not succeed. Either his horse was unusually fractious, or surreptitiously Moore kept him excited with the spur.

All the way to the river he kept a little ahead of me, and quite to one side, so that there was no opportunity for conversation. Down at the very bottom he halted, and for the first time seemed disposed to talk.

"We turn south here, Ferguson," he said, "and we will have to pick our way. It is rather dark, but I think I can find the place."

"Then you know now where you are going?" I asked.

"Yes. There is an old house a mile or so below here. I am going there. Are your pistols all right?"

"Yes," I replied.

"There is an old railway siding somewhere here. It has been abandoned for years, but if I can locate it we can follow along the top of it. It will be easier than forcing our way through the woods. Keep your eyes open now, and look out that you are not brushed off your horse by a low hanging branch; and above all, Ferguson, don't talk. Let us move along as silently as possible."

He led the way, and I followed, although as we dived deeper into the woods it soon became difficult to see him; but I knew that my horse would follow his unerringly, so I abandoned the effort to guide him.

It seemed to me that we travelled in that manner more than an hour, though I now know it was not so long by far; then we turned down the bank of the old siding, crossed a swampy stretch where the grass grew so high that it caught in my spurs, and presently began the ascent of a steep though short hill, and at the top emerged from the woods, but found ourselves at the margin of a wilderness of bushes that were not quite so high as our heads as we sat upon our horses.

Coming from the gloom of the woods behind us, the starlit sky—there was no moon—made it seem quite light. Before us, three or four hundred feet away, dark, gloomy, and forbidding, loomed the outlines of a house, and for some reason the aspect of the whole thing sent an involuntary shudder through me.

While I was intently regarding the house, Moore dismounted, and having unbuckled one side of the bridle rein and thus made a halter of it, he tied his horse to a tree.

"We will have to leave the horses here, Ferguson," he said. "What we have to do now must be done on foot. Tie your animal and follow me."

I acted as hastily as I could, but Moore was already several paces in advance. Still, I hastened to overtake him.

"Don't you think you had better post me a little now, Marston?" I managed to whisper, but the only reply I received was a sharp "Hist!" and somewhat offended I went on after that, silently and doggedly, resolved that I would not ask another question no matter what happened.

As we drew nearer to the house I saw that we were behind it. There was no sign of life visible. Indeed, from appearances, I decided that the place had been deserted a long time, perhaps years. Moore, however, seemed to know where he was going, and he led me by a detour round the house, so that we finally approached it from the front.

Just before we stepped from the concealment of the bushes to approach the door, I felt my friend's hand upon my arm, and heard him whisper, very low: "Follow me closely, and do exactly as I say. A great deal—our safety—may depend upon it." Then he went ahead.

We stepped upon the rickety porch as silently as we could, but despite our efforts it creaked dismally beneath our combined weight. Then, to my surprise, Moore, with the butt of one of his pistols, hammered loudly upon one of the panels of the door. After the silence that had preceded his act, it seemed to my strained senses as if the noise made by the knocking might have been heard a mile away.

Notwithstanding that fact, there was no immediate response, and presently Moore hammered again, this time louder than before, and the summons had to be repeated the third time before there was anything like a response. Then, from beyond the door, a masculine voice inquired:

"Who is there?"

"Marston Moore," replied my companion in a loud tone.

"Alone?" was the second query.

"No, accompanied by a friend."

There followed a moment of silence, and then the voice beyond the door said:

"Why didn't you come alone as you were told to do? There isn't any room for strangers here; you know that."

I thought I heard Moore swear under his breath, but I was not sure; and then, in a tone which there was no mistaking, he shouted:

"Open that door, Madgley, or I'll kick it in, and it won't be a difficult thing to do, either. Open it, and open it quick!"

There was another short interval of silence, and then, rather to my surprise, the door swung slowly back on its hinges, leaving a space of impenetrable blackness in its place. There was not a sign of a human being to be seen. The man who had spoken to us from behind the door had disappeared—or, rather, he did not appear at all.

Moore immediately passed through the aperture into the darkness, and disappeared, but a second later I heard his voice.

Digitized by Google

"Come on, Ferguson," he said; "it's all right."

I followed without hesitation, but I had scarcely passed the threshold when strong arms seized and pinioned me from behind, a blanket was thrown over my head, and before I could do anything to resist the attack, I was dragged to the floor, and by many hands held helpless while others bound me. Notwithstanding the struggle in which I was engaged I was conscious that there was another one near me, and I believed that Moore had been attacked in the same manner.

"Fools that we were," I thought, "to enter that dark corridor as we had done without first taking precautions to avoid exactly the thing that had happened."

I called aloud to Moore, but received no reply. Except for the deep breathing of the men near me the silence was absolute.

As soon as I was bound so that there was no chance for me to escape, my captors raised me from the floor and bore me away. I knew that they carried me to the second floor of the building, and presently I was taken into a large room where there was a fire, and in the dim light I could see that the men who had assaulted me were garbed in the livery of a secret society known as "white caps."

I realised that there would be little or no use in asking questions, and remained silent; neither did one of my captors utter a word. I looked round as well as I could for some sign of Moore, but he was not there, and if he was I could not see him.

They placed me upon my back on the floor, and the next instant a thick handkerchief of black silk was bandaged round my head, effectually blindfolding me. A moment later I heard them leave the room, and I knew that I was alone.

Nearly an hour passed before I again heard a sound, and then it was the stealthy tread of many feet passing near me, until it seemed to my strange sense of hearing as if I was in the centre of a group that had formed round me. Then I was startled by a voice saying:

"Mr. Albert Ferguson, you may thank yourself alone for the inconvenience to which we have been compelled to put you. We had reasons for desiring the presence of your companion, but we have nothing to do with your affairs. If you are willing to return as you came, and to pledge yourself to absolute secrecy regarding all that has happened to-night, there is no reason why we should detain you."

"Where is Moore?" I demanded. "Certainly, I am willing to do all you ask, but you must remember that I came here with Marston Moore. If I returned as I came, I return with him."

"In this case you will have to return without him," was the stern reply.

"Then I'll give you no pledge of secrecy, and you know that I would not keep it if I made one."

"This is a serious matter, Mr. Ferguson. You had better think twice before you decide. Our business with Moore is our own affair and his. He knew what he had to expect before he came here, and he know also just what dangers threatened you if he brought you with him. He acted the part of a coward in doing so, and if you will heed good advice you will have nothing more to do with him."

"What have you done with him?" was all the reply I made.

"We have done with him just exactly as we now propose to do with you, for I see that you are incorrigible. Pick him up, boys. It is a waste of breath to argue with him."

If I should attempt to describe the experiences through which I passed during the ensuing hour and a half, credulity would be taxed to the utmost, but it is certain that every ruse which the ingenuity of the human mind could conceive was forced upon me to induce me in some way to desert Moore or to deny him.

As the ceremony progressed—and before the proceedings had occupied above an hour I had decided that it was a ceremony of some kind—it dawned upon me, dimly at first, and then with the force of certainty, that I was undergoing some sort of initiation. What it was I could not determine. The real truth did not once occur to me.

At last, with the bandage still over my eyes, I heard these words:

"My friend"—and the voice startled me, for I fancied that I recognised it—"it is with unmixed pleasure that I announce the completion of your trials and suffering. You have been tried in the balance and have not been found wanting in the virtues which we require of all candidates. Whoever enters here must possess all the qualities which are expressed by the word 'friend,' which is the most abused and traduced word in our language.

"Throughout all the tests that have been applied to you you have been steadfast, loyal, and true. What more can one friend ask of another? You were willing, at the request of Mr. Moore, to go blindly into unknown dangers, content to await an explanation until he chose to grant one, and you have found here many who stand ready at any moment to perform the same service for you.

"And now, after some further initiation and instruction, you will have become a member of the most secret order in the world—and the most magnificent. Even its true name is never mentioned—never uttered aloud. Mr. Moore will remove the bandage from your eyes and cut the cords that bind you. After he has craved your pardon for the imposition he has practised upon you, you will be instructed in the mysteries of this sacred order."

That is all. I wish I might tell the rest, but I cannot.

Frederic Van Rensselaer Dey.

JUST PUBLISHED. CHEAP EDITION OF

A SPLENDID NOVEL,

The Invisible Man

By H. G. WELLS.

Author of "The Time Machine," "The War of the Worlds," etc.

Price 6d.

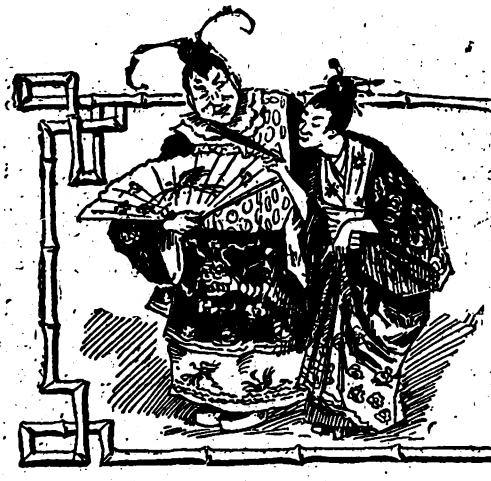
POSTAGE 2d. EXTRA.

"The humour is excellent, keen, and invigorating. . . . Mr. Wells' talent is unique of its kind."—*Daily Mail.*

AT ALL BOOKSTALLS AND BOOKSELLERS, and of

C. ARTHUR PEARSON LIMITED, Henrietta Street, W.C.

Digitized by Google



Mr. Bowser's Tribulations.

XXVII.—HIS NATURAL PHILOSOPHY DIDN'T WORK TILL HE CALLED IN A TRAMP.

THAT Mr. Bowser had something on his mind the other evening was plainly evident to Mrs. Bowser, and for an hour she was in doubt as to whether he had bought the patent rights of a washing machine or had taken a half interest in a patent hay fork. After dinner he condescended to explain.

"Mrs. Bowser," he began in a paternal way, "a woman is never expected to know much, and you never hear me complain of your ignorance, but there are some few things I wish you would post yourself about. I presume you have never given a thought to natural philosophy, and yet you would find it a most interesting study."

"I think I know a good deal about natural philosophy," she quietly replied.

"Then I have never discovered it. The other day I saw you poke the handle of the carpet-sweeper through a pane of glass. Natural philosophy should have taught you that when a stick of hard ash comes in contact with a window the pane must be shivered. A few nights ago it was so hot that you removed the blankets from our bed. Last night we had a cold wave, and I was nearly frozen. Natural philosophy should have taught you that the weather does not always remain the same. Do you follow me?"

"Yes. You put a table napkin in your pocket the other morning for a handkerchief, and as a natural philosophical result when you pulled it out on the crowded 'bus there was a general grin at your expense. I think I understand."

"And I think you don't," he exclaimed as he flushed up. "There's a heap of difference between absence of mind and natural philosophy, and I don't suppose you will ever be able to separate them. Perhaps, however, you know why we put ice into the top of the refrigerator instead of the bottom."

"Because cold air descends," she replied.

"That is correct, Mrs. Bowser, and I give you full credit. Perhaps you also know that hot air ascends and that the warmest place in this room at present is next the ceiling."

"Certainly."

"That is well, and we will proceed further. There sits the cat under the piano. If the front door should open and a dog came trotting in here, what would be the result? What does natural philosophy teach you would happen?"

"There would be no natural philosophy about it. The natural antagonism existing between the canine and feline races would result in a fight between the dog and the cat."

"It would be natural philosophy, Mrs. Bowser."

"I think it would be natural antagonism."

"There you go! I might have known your natural obstinacy would lead you to dispute me. Suppose I found the cat on the piano and gave her a cuff. In obeying the laws of natural philosophy where would she go to?"

"In obeying the laws of gravity she would reach the floor."

"What's gravity got to do with this question?" he shouted.

"Gravity has a lot to do. If it wasn't for the laws of gravity, the cat would fly up to the ceiling when you cuffed her."

"I deny it. In your ignorance and obstinacy you are determined to ridicule the question. Very well, Mrs. Bowser. It is useless to waste further time on you. I

He gave her a lift.

Digitized by Google

shall be much disappointed if I find that the cook is as ignorant as you are. I am going down to the kitchen. What will natural philosophy prompt the cat to do?"

"As she is probably hungry her natural instincts will prompt her to follow you and yeowl round until you give her some of that cold mutton."

Mr. Bowser paused in the door to glare at her and extend his right arm with dramatic gesture, but he was too cross to reply in words. The cat followed him down stairs from natural instincts, and natural philosophy should have proved to him that she was hungry for meat. It didn't, however. When he found her at his heels, he gave her a lift with the toe of his shoe, and as the law of gravitation brought her to the floor she made haste to hide under the sideboard. Proceeding to the kitchen, Mr. Bowser found the cook washing dishes, and he began:

"I desire to talk to you for a minute. You have in your hand a jug. If you knock it against the iron sink, it will be broken, but why will it be broken?"

"I lived in my last place seven years and never even broke a tea-cup," answered the girl in tones of defence.

"Very likely, but I want you to see the philosophy of things. Which is the harder, iron or crockery?"

"Is the missus complaining of my cooking, sir?"

"No, no. Your cooking is all right. Let us take another case. There is a kettle of boiling water on the stove. Let it boil for an hour, and you will find the quantity considerably less, but where has the water gone to?"

"And is this a house where a girl has to pay for boiling water?" asked the girl as she turned on him.

"No, of course not. Can't you understand that I am asking you questions in natural philosophy?"

"I never heard of it, sir."

"Well, why do you build a fire under your pots and kettles?"

"And are you going to complain that I use too much coal? I'm here on a week's trial, but if I've got to be found fault with by the man of the house I'll leave this very night. Why don't the missus come down if there is anything wrong?"

Mr. Bowser gave it up and left the kitchen. He had thought the cook would grasp his natural philosophy at once, but she appeared to be more dense than Mrs. Bowser. He didn't want to go up stairs at once and admit his failure and was hanging about the dining room for a minute, when the area bell rang, and he took it upon himself to answer it. There was a man at the door, and though taken somewhat aback, he asked for money for a night's lodging.

"Come in and I'll see about it," replied Mr. Bowser as he congratulated himself on finding someone who could understand him.

"I'm a hard-working man, sir," explained the caller as he took a seat, "but I'm out of a job and hungry and stony broke."

"In other words it's a case of natural philosophy," chuckled Mr. Bowser. "Having no work you have no money. Having no money, you cannot buy a dinner or a night's lodging."

"That's it exactly, sir. I never heard the case stated so beautifully in all my life."

"I'm glad you understand. Natural philosophy teaches us that we must consume a certain amount of food if we would maintain our health."

"It do, sir."

"You observe before you a table. It is barren of eatables just now, but what does natural philosophy teach us?"

"I'm a hard-working man, sir," explained the caller.

"That it will presently be covered with cold wittles for my benefit."

"Exactly, my man. You know more than my wife and the cook put together. You want sixpence to secure a bed. If you get sixpence——"

"I will get a bed."

"And if not?"

"I'll get the collar from a cop for wandering about the streets."

"Couldn't be better!" chuckled Mr. Bowser. "I'll go upstairs and get you a sixpence, and you shall have something to break your fast, and we will resume the conversation."

They didn't, however. When Mr. Bowser returned with the sixpence, the tramp was no longer in the dining-room, and the area door was open. Mrs. Bowser came down before his absence could be commented upon, and, pointing to the sideboard, she said:

"There are four pieces of silver gone off that board!"

"By thunder, it is so!" exclaimed Mr. Bowser.

"Where's your tramp?"

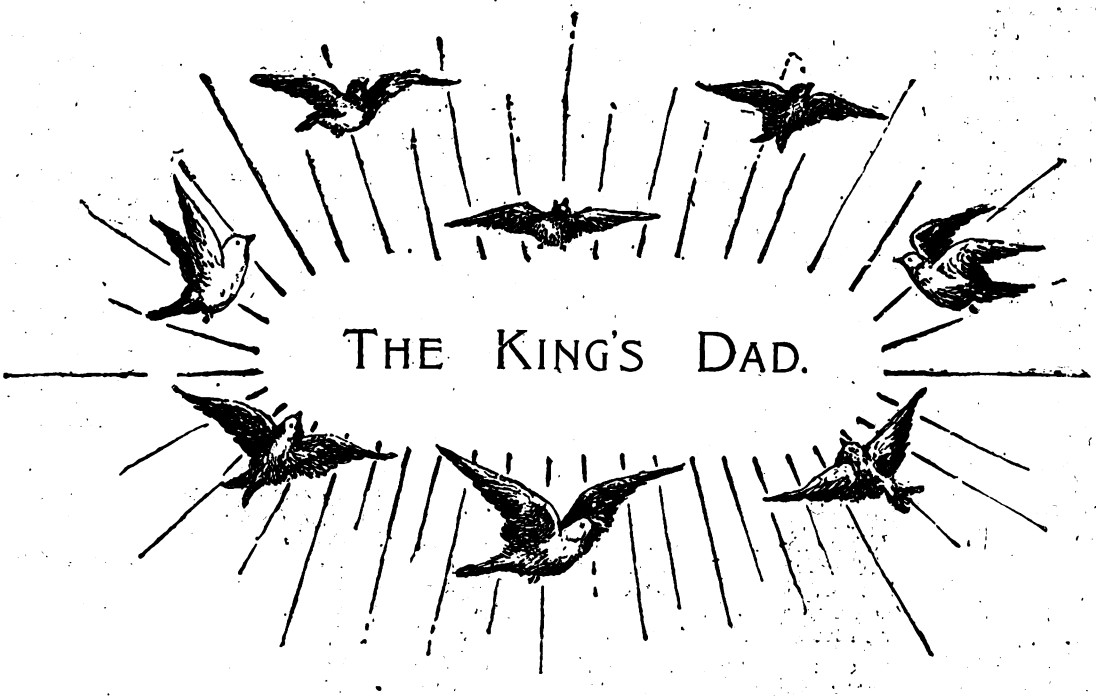
"G-gone."

"And the silver with him! I thought you wanted to teach me natural philosophy."

And all Mr. Bowser could do was to fall into a chair and stare helplessly at an old bandana handkerchief the tramp had left on the floor.

M. Quad.

Digitized by Google



THE KING'S DAD.

THE day was a fine one, and as I sat by the side of the "old man garrulous," and looked out over the sun-flecked river reach, up toward London and then down to the sea, I thought the lot of the old master mariner to be indeed cast in a pleasant place.

Belvedere, near Erith, seems an ideal spot for the day's decline of such as he. Breezy, open as it is, the silent highway is ever before him, with its moving panorama of departing and returning vessels.

This was my second visit to old Peter Mullins, ex-skipper of a trading schooner, and, in his younger days, a foremast hand on a small brig, cruising with the same object in the South Seas.

The old man was evidently nearing the end of life's voyage, and was as evidently desirous of unburdening his mind of something which appeared to trouble him.

Why he should have selected me as his father-confessor I hardly know, except, perhaps, that on the former occasion, I had constituted myself a good listener, a qualification nearly always with some people provocative of confidence.

I will, however, let him tell his story in his own way.

* * * * *

"Come closer, so as I can see ye, and so as ye can hear my voice. For sight's a-failing and breath is short with me now. But the spirit! the spirit's all right! Ay! if it wasn't for that old Pete Mullins would have foundered long ago.

"It was in the early sixties, nigh forty year ago, when I shipped as A.B. in the *Fortune*, brig.

"We were bound for Tahiti first, in the South Seas, and then for a general trading cruise among the Islands. It was a part of the world that was 'Greek' to me. My trips up to that time had been east; Mediterranean, through the Canal, and then to Bombay or Calcutta. But I suppose this was meant to be. Fate's a ticklish varmint, mate; she measures ye, fits ye, and whether ye like 'em or not ye've got to wear the duds.

"Well, we sailed, and all the way up Channel a dead head wind was our starting luck. But it soon changed when we got outside, and good weather was the word till we made the 'Islands.'

"We sighted the first of 'em just as the sun was setting. With the morning, the skipper decided, we being many miles from Tahiti, to commence commercial operations where we were.

"The *Fortune* was lying 'off and on' just outside the veriest paradise man's eyes ever were, or ever could be, set on.

"A coral-formed bulwark; inside it a waveless pool, or lagoon, completely surrounding the atoll. A fringe of cocoa-palm; a clump of the same in the centre of the island, just gave that touch of green to the picture that made it so lovely thereabouts. I was that excited to get ashore, that when the skipper ordered out a boat I managed to secure an oar.

"'Mind, boys,' shouted the old man after us, 'no sky-larking! The creatures' ways are kind'er unpleasant for them as plays a game with their heathen feelings!'

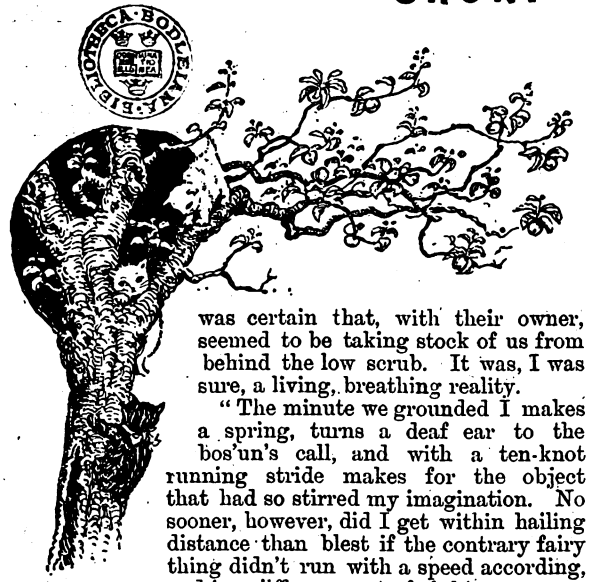
"'Aye, aye, sir!' sang out the bos'un, who was in charge of the expedition.

"But I just thought to myself that it were impossible for beings living in such a place to be anything but good descendants of old Adam at the very least.

"The nearer we got to the shore, the more I was enchanted. Fairyland it looked like, and I peered out to catch a glimpse of the fairy folk, who, I felt sure, must inhabit the island.

"And now something peculiar happened. Something I couldn't quite explain to myself powerfully attracted my attention. A pair of big, sparkling eyes it was I

Digitized by Google



was certain that, with their owner, seemed to be taking stock of us from behind the low scrub. It was, I was sure, a living, breathing reality.

"The minute we grounded I makes a spring, turns a deaf ear to the bos'un's call, and with a ten-knot running stride makes for the object that had so stirred my imagination. No sooner, however, did I get within hailing distance than blest if the contrary fairy thing didn't run with a speed according, and in a jiffy was out of sight.

"Wondering how I should get back to the boat, I turned to retrace my steps, when, without warning, I received a crashing blow on the back of my head which felled me to the ground.

"How long I lay unconscious I can't say, and it doesn't much matter, but when I did come to, I saw that I was surrounded by a mob of shrieking naked brown devils.

"They grinned and gibbered at me like demons when they saw me move a bit, and indicated in unpleasantly unmistakable fashion that my last hour had come.

"I'm no coward, never was one, that I know of. Storm, squall, or fine weather have always been alike to me. But I must confess in this case to a feeling of dread suspense. Any moment the deadly blow might fall. I shut my eyes, whispered to myself a fervent 'Amen' to a not very long life and—waited.

"Then, as if by magic, the howling and wrangling about me suddenly stopped, and I heard distinctly the clear, silvery ring of a woman's voice. What she was saying I could not make out, but evidently the speaker, whoever she might be, had influence of no mean sort with the savage rabble.

"Curious to solve the riddle, I opened my eyes. Surely the fairy idea was real—a beautiful, undeniable fact!

"Kneeling in tears beside me was a woman, a girl, young and sweet. Her face, daintily small and round, was of dusky hue, her hair jet black, while her tiny brown feet were as perfectly formed as those of my Lady Vere de Vere.

"But it was her eyes that held me, held me spellbound. Large and lustrous, they seemed to have in them the whole soul of their pretty owner. First did she turn them in tender compassion upon me, and then flash them in indignant command round upon the scowling crowd. Strangest and most curious thing of all, though, the girl, every now and then, would take my hand, and impulsively kiss it.

"This action of hers appeared greatly to impress the others, for at every repetition of it the latter showed more and more a disposition to relinquish their prey.

"The lingo they jabbered was double-dutch to me, while my own talk would have been just as incomprehensible to them. It was a difficulty certainly with regard to a proper mutual understanding.

"Then, suddenly, an idea appeared to strike the girl. Rising to her feet, she went through a sort of animated and eloquent pantomime.

"Being, I think, no fool, I contrived to gather by degrees the course she was steering.

"The natives were hostile to white intruders, that was clear. Then by a series of wonderfully expressive gestures she got me to see how that it was a custom with them, when a white man's doom was sealed, to accept a maiden's intercession, signified by the kissing by her of the victim's hand.

"One condition was attached, however, to the arrangement (and as she interpreted it a beautiful blush deepened the delicate brown of her cheek and throat), viz., that within seven days the respited one must take his preserver for better and for worse.

"This was indeed a startling situation.

"Still, I was practically alone in the world. Not a soul existed to care whether I lived or died. My shipmates had not attempted a rescue, so turning it all over in my mind, I decided to accept what I couldn't really help.

"The little creature by my side (she was very small), seemed somehow to know that I had so settled it, for with a wave of her wee brown hand she impatiently dismissed the niggers.

"When we were quite alone, I took a pointed stick, and stooping down, wrote in the sandy soil the words 'My wife.'

"Then, by signs and suchlike, I endeavoured to teach her their sound and meaning.

"By-and-by she seemed to grasp it, and clapped her little hands with delight.

"All that followed is to me now, as I sit here and look out upon the quiet waters of the old Thames, as a dream, a tale told so many years ago that every incident, every character is ghostly, indistinct, almost impossible.

"Briefly, for the story in all its details would take too long in the telling, we married.

"For some days the men of the place hid me from any search that might be organised by the *Fortune's* people.

"But none was made, at least I heard of none.

"It was after quiet had settled down, that I found out who it really was that I had married.

"My informant was a truculent, shifty-eyed native, by name Obishama. Himself with a sneaking affection, of a kind, for my Meta (I had so named her), he bid me, in a bumptious, superior sort of way, to beware how I treated my spouse, as she was a princess; the daughter, only child in fact, of Maramaha, the King of the island.

"A princess! and that she should marry me! This was, indeed, altogether out of my reckoning, and a truly queer state of affairs.

"However, considering whence it came, I took the news coolly, and as a matter of course; succeeding in disguising my astonishment.

"Obishama, expecting that I should be profoundly impressed, was consequently alike disappointed and puzzled at my indifference.

"'Very well,' I said. 'Then, if that's so, and my Meta is heiress-apparent, I must be in some sort a royal personage myself now. Don't worry your-

Digitized by Google

self, I'll look after my wife, and, too, after you, who, if I am not greatly mistaken, need it pretty considerably.'

"He didn't, of course, understand a word I said, but left me with so sulky and even threatening a manner that I looked for bad consequences for myself should opportunity arise at any time.

"To hurry on, ten years went by without disturbing influence of any kind. Ten peaceful years. Waited upon hand and foot by Meta, I fear that I developed a somewhat dependent and selfish spirit. Only every now and again would force itself upon me a passionate desire for the land of my birth; for the larger freedom of civilisation and intelligent intercourse.

"This was but a passing thought, but it strengthened with time, until when, as I have said, ten years had slipped away, the longing became painful, and more almost than I could bear.

"I think Meta saw my trouble written in my eyes. Women, be they of what hue they may, are keen to read the souls of the men they love, and she did love me. I knew that; knew it even better afterwards, to my life-long sorrow and regret, when sorrow and regret were all too late.

"One chick we had, a boy, and in build and temperament my own image. Like his mother he was brown, but of a lighter tint. He was as brave as a little lion, too, and when, as was our wont, we went down to the lagoon for a swim, and a fishing raid, he would excel even me in his diving and swimming feats and gambols.

"One day—shall I ever forget it? I can't for it is burnt into my brain. One day, in the early morning we went down to the bay, and my lad, before I could stop him, must needs start to swim right across to the coral ridge.

"He reached it in safety, and I watched him, with proud tears in my eyes, as he stood, dripping with brine, the water-drops upon him shining like diamonds in the morning sun.

"Presently I noticed him turn his face seawards, and when I too looked in the same direction I saw—I can see it now—the white sails of a ship! But that was not all.

"Making good way towards the shore and me, having passed through the gap in the reefs, was a boat, manned by half-a-dozen white men.

"Was I mad? Was it wicked to parley with such a boon, that seemed to come straight from the hand of Providence?

"Still, his face now turned towards me, my boy stood gazing, eyes-wide, at the boat near now to the strand.

"Strange that, for the moment, Meta was forgotten; my son was there too, but as a being of another world. What a wretch I feel now, felt in my inmost soul even then.

"When within a short distance of the shore, the strangers hailed me. I must have presented a strange figure, sun-burnt, naked, save for a loin cloth, and with hair and beard long and dishevelled.

"How can I describe the issue? Before I could consciously collect my thoughts I found myself in the boat and the bow oarsman preparing to put off.

"The reason for prompt action was soon clear to me.

"Flying from out the thicket of cocoa-palm down towards the boat was a woman. My heart, if not my eyes told me who it was. Meta! my wife! and behind her a yelling, furious crowd of savages.

"Swift as a roe she sped nearer, until with a last convulsive bound she clung hold of the boat's prow.

"'Love—love!' she wailed. (I had taught her that word, and for ten years it had been as music in my ears.)

"'Love—love!' Oh! how the swim in her eyes as I saw it then, mocks me and stabs me to-day!

"The man in the bow had just succeeded in shoving off into deep water, when the foremost among our pursuers (I will swear that it was Obishama) made with his club a swinging blow at my Meta's head. She fell backward with a little cry, and then—lay still as the ground itself.

"For the moment I was a madman, and but for the boat's crew would have sprung overboard, to sell my life as an atonement for hers.

"As if their object were now accomplished, the demon horde melted away into the palm-brake. The two last things I saw through the almost blinding mist of bitter self-reproach and anguish, were the still, extended form on the sand, by the water's edge, face upturned to the sky, and upon the coral reef, standing out in clear relief against the horizon, that other, the lithe, bare figure of my little nine-year-old son.

* * * * *

"Thirty years!—thirty years! It seems but as yesterday. Yes, I've had news, and that only quite of late. A missioner, a traveller in those seas, told me a month ago that the present king of the island (its name I never did know) is a man of evidently English blood. His rule is firm and wise, so much so that the savagery of former days is now battened down for ever.

"From certain, and to me, sure signs I know this king to be my son. I shall never see him *here*, for my course is nearly run, and port is in sight.

"Yet can I see him with the eyes of my heart, and when we do meet, as meet we shall, perhaps he will tell me that he has forgiven me. Mayhap, too, Meta, my wife will be with him, the same smile on her lips, the same tender look in her eyes as when, thirty years ago, she saved me from death, and gave me the gift of her life's great love."

RALPH ENDERBY.

NOW ON SALE.

No. 5 of

"The Curiosity Shop."

The Illustrated Companion to "PEARSON'S WEEKLY."

ONE PENNY WEEKLY.

THE CURIOSITY SHOP contains: Absolutely new and fresh articles. Bright and originally-conceived pictures. Strong and well-seasoned fiction. Nothing that you can get anywhere else.

Unlike all other curiosity shops, the contents of this one are changed every week, and you can buy every article and picture in the shop for one penny.

Digitized by Google

The Wrong Man.

I was at Stockholm simply as a tourist and sight-seer, and I was all alone. I had no idea of meeting anyone I knew, and a surprise awaited me on the first night of my arrival when a man whom I clearly saw was a Polander edged along up to me on the verandah of the hotel as I smoked my cigar and said:

"You are discretion itself, Mr. Grelling. You have registered under another name. How were matters in London when you left?"

"I don't exactly understand you," I replied as I looked him over and made sure that we had never met before.

"I admire your caution," he said with a laugh, "but you need have no fear of me. You see I have my credentials."

He took a card from his pocket on which were inscribed three capital letters of the Greek language with a curious scrawl beneath, and as I looked without being able to make head or tail of the thing, he whispered:

"The others will be here inside of two days, and we will have a meeting. I have been here three days, and I find nothing to alarm me. I trust matters in London are all right?"

"As far as I know," I replied, as I returned his card and wondered whether he was trying to cheek me or had really mistaken me for somebody else.

"Good. We can settle all the details in an hour after the others get here. It will be as well that we are not seen together, but I will notify you when we are ready."

When he had gone I made up my mind that he had mistaken me for another man, but I could not quite understand his expressions. He was evidently in Stockholm by appointment, and others were to arrive later, and a Mr. Grelling, who was no doubt an Englishman, was mixed up in the affair, if not the leader. The matter puzzled and annoyed me for half-an-hour, and then I dismissed it from my mind.

Three hours later, as I retired to my room, the stolid-faced and wooden-headed waiter who carried my light hung about in a queer way after setting the candle down, and I finally gave him a small coin and waved him out. Instead of going he whispered to me:

"I wish to warn you. Strange men have been here for a week. I think they are waiting for you."

"But who can be looking for me?" I queried in reply.

"You know best. Good-night and Heaven preserve you. I will keep my eyes and ears open for you."

I wanted to question the man but he hurried away and left me more befogged than before. I spent an hour trying to draw some satisfactory conclusion and then fell asleep.

Next morning at breakfast the same man waited on me. I had a little table by myself, and while bringing my dishes the waiter whispered in my ear:

"The two strange men are at the fourth table. I am sure they are Russian spies and will watch you."

Now I had the key to the mystery. There was some sort of a conspiracy on foot, probably against the peace of the Czar, and the conspirators were to meet at Stockholm.

From what I had read and heard of such affairs the plans and plots generally originated in England or Switzerland, but these men had selected nearer ground. Their plot must have been suspected, or the Russian spies would not have been there. Yes. the two men were Russians, and though their idea seemed to be to pass for merchants they made a poor pretence at it.

I don't pretend to say that a spy can always be spotted offhand, but I do assert that after one of them has followed the occupation for several years there are many ways in which he betrays his calling to an observing eye. They cast many furtive glances in my direction, and when I realized that I was to be under espionage I felt a spirit of devilry take posession of me. I would carry off the *rôle* of conspirator with brazen cheek.

For the next two days I was closely shadowed. Whenever I wandered about the town, one of the two men followed me. No doubt it was noted down whom I addressed, when I took my meals, how many cigars I smoked and all other little details.

After the first day of this spy business the same stolid faced waiter slipped into my room with pale face and whisperingly exclaimed:

"Those spies are following you everywhere. For goodness' sake be careful. Ah, me, but who could have put them on the scent!"

"See here, Hans," I said as I put my hand on his shoulder, "you evidently know a good deal about this affair, and I wish you would tell me what the dickens it all means. Has your gang planned to rob a bank, steal a steamboat, or upset the Russian Government? I don't like to be kept in the dark like this."

He looked at me open-mouthed for half a minute, and then a broad grin stole over his face. He thought I was getting at him to test his prudence and loyalty.

"You will carry it through all right," he finally said, with many heavy nods of his head, and he went away looking very well pleased.

At the end of another twenty-four hours I got a further insight into the mystery. I had strolled into another hotel not far away to examine the register, as a globe-trotter invariably does for no reason he can explain, when a traveller entered who might have been my twin brother so far as outward appearances went. He was of my height and weight, had the same coloured eyes, hair and moustache, and I believe our own mothers would have wondered which was which. He stared at me, and I stared back, and I wandered back to my own hotel, knowing that the real man from London had arrived.

An hour later the Pole came to me in a great funk. He had confused the two of us, as well he might, and given his little affair away to a stranger. He started to say something, but I stopped him with:

"I have seen your chief and know how the mistake came about. Nothing you say to me will go farther. What you are up to I don't know and don't want to know, but don't mix me up in it. Good day."

Digitized by Google

He mumbled blessings on my head and disappeared to be seen no more, nor did the twin brother call on me or send me any word.

My waiter was also thoroughly flabbergasted when he discovered that a mistake had been made, but a few words quieted him.

The Russian spies must have had a bad time of it trying to settle on the right man, but they finally decided in my favour. The other Englishman was free from surveillance, while I was dogged closer than before.

At the end of a week and while they were still dogging me, and I was rather enjoying it, there was a fire on board a ship in the harbour.

It was about nine o'clock at night, and a great crowd gathered on the wharves to watch the conflagration. I made one of the number, and in my anxiety to secure a good view I mounted the bows of a smart looking brig lying at a wharf.

I was hardly over the rail before two men followed and seized me and hustled me down into the cabin. They were the Russians who had been spying on me.

Of course I protested and made a great noise but I was run into a stateroom and locked up, and within an hour the brig was out of the harbour. It seemed as if she had simply been waiting my arrival on board. We had been under weigh a couple of hours when my door was opened, and I was ordered to step out.

I found the captain of the brig, the two spies and a Russian government official awaiting me."

I have told you that the other man and I looked to be twins, but I had not time to look for little details. As I sat down opposite the Russian official he began comparing my description and appearance with a written description, and at the end of five minutes he rose up and thundered at the two spies:

"Dolts! Idiots! Blunderers! You have arrested the wrong man! This is not the proper man."

There was a row that would have drowned a band for the next ten minutes. The spies protested that I answered the description given them and had carried off the character in all ways, and the official shouted at them:

"Has he a mole on his chin? Does his left eyelid droop a little? Is there a scar on his right hand thumb? Oh, you blunderers and incompetents, but you will be rewarded for this!"

"If not too much trouble," I said to the official as he got through his storming, "will you kindly explain why I have been made a prisoner in this fashion? Of what am I guilty? If guilty of anything, by what authority do you take the law in your own hands?"

I was told that it was a mistake, but got no other satisfaction. The brig was put about, but as the wind fell we did not make the harbour until after daylight. Then I was bumped on the wharf without apology.

I walked straight to the British consul and told him the story, his reply was:

"Why, man, you had best thank your stars instead of looking for an apology. When the Russian officials get hold of the wrong man by mistake, he is generally sent to Siberia to cover up the blunder."

Later on I found that the other Englishman and his party left Stockholm the same evening, but where they went and what sort of conspiracy they had on hand I never ascertained.

C. B. LEWIS.

ALL THE LATEST PARTICULARS ABOUT THE GREAT TEN-POUND NOTE SCHEME.

23 Ten-Pound Notes Already Claimed. 50 More Still Wandering About the Country.

IN order that ladies may have an extra opportunity of sharing in this great *Pearson's Weekly* scheme,

FIVE TEN-POUND LADIES

have been dispatched all over the country, each of whom will deliver up the Sealed Envelope to the lady who fulfills the conditions mentioned in *Pearson's Weekly*. No gentlemen need apply.

For those who may be too modest, or who cannot easily leave their homes to ask men in the street the momentous question, the Editor of *Pearson's Weekly* has prepared a dainty little card with the words: "Have You Got that Ten-Pound Note?" printed in scarlet upon it. All you have to do is to

PLACE THIS CARD IN YOUR WINDOW,

and if one of the Ten-Pounders happens to see it he will at once call, and upon your producing a copy of the current number of *Pearson's Weekly* he will hand you a Sealed Envelope entitling you to the sum of £10.

Address a halfpenny post-card to the Ten-Pound Card Department, Pearson's Buildings, Henrietta Street, London, W.C., and you will receive one of these cards under cover and post free.

The latest song, "Have You Got That Ten-Pound Note?" is being sung every night by Mr. R. G. Knowles in various London music-halls with great success.

Copies of this song are now ready, and may be obtained at 1s. 6d. each. Send your order *at once* to Room 47, Pearson's Buildings, Henrietta Street, London, W.C.

Full particulars of the scheme will be found each week in *Pearson's Weekly*, and fresh developments appear in the *Daily Express* every day.

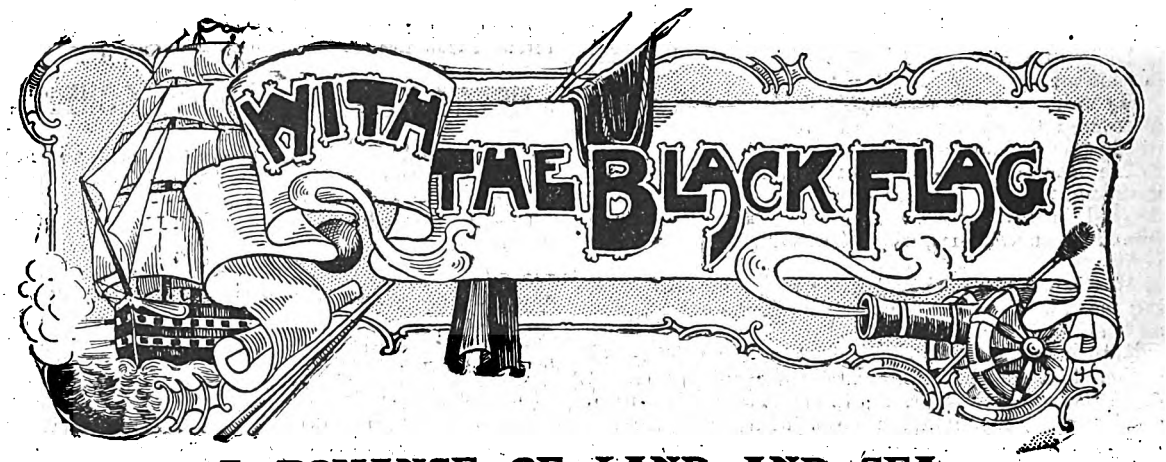
The following are the names and addresses of the winners of Ten-Pound Notes up to the time of going to press:

H. E. Baker, 4 Beaconsfield Road, Magdalen Road, Norwich; John Lotan, 23 St. Anne's Chambers, Ludgate Hill, London, E.C.; Charles Lee, 1 Agnes Terrace, St. Mary's Avenue, Southend; Charles Wright, 30 Oxford Gardens, North Kensington; Robert Gautier, 132 Clarence Road, Wimbledon; W. W. Tonkin, 5 Grove Road, Brixton, S.W.; E. G. Baldock, 68 Portland Street, Lincoln; Arthur Wellings, 12 The Forgate, Worcester; A. Bowman, 413 City Road, London, E.C.; John Roe, Hatfield Road Board School, St. Albans; R. J. Martyn, 4 Albert Road, Morice Town, Devonport; Mr. W. H. Hole, Stationmaster, Teignmouth; Archibald Brown, Market Place, Carluke; J. D. Southall, 38 Rosebery Gardens, Crouch End; W. Cotton, Coxbridge, West Pennard, Glastonbury; W. H. Wayne, 19 Hurstfinch Road, St. Helens; May Grammer, 154 Elgin Avenue, Maida Vale; Albert J. Page, Sawbridgeworth, Herts; Mrs. F. Pezaro, 86 High Street, Kingsland, N.; James I. W. Ash, 34 Cricketfield Road, Hackney Downs; Mrs. S. Fitzpatrick, 13 Killarney Parade, Dublin; Miss Winifred Eldridge, 337 Seaside, Eastbourne; Charles W. Ward, 30 Milton Street, Maidstone.

The original Sealed Envelopes by which claims have been made can be seen at the following places:

Mr. John Lotan's, Ludgate Hill Station; Mr. H. E. Baker's, offices of *Eastern Daily Press*, Norwich; Inspector Lee's, Cooper Brothers, Cliff Town Road, Southend; Mr. C. Wright's, Crown Hotel, Southampton; Mr. W. W. Tonkin's, Lang Sims, 437 Brixton Road, London, S.W.; Mr. E. G. Baldock's, Clifford Thomas, 202 High Street, Lincoln; Mr. Arthur Wellings', Mr. Large, The Forgate, Worcester; Mr. A. Bowman's, 413 City Road, E.C.; Mr. John Roe's, Mr. W. H. Richardson, 5 High Street, St. Albans; Miss May Grammer's, Mr. Burge, chemist, 123 Shirland Road, Paddington; Mr. Southall's, Seagrief and Sons, Broadway, Crouch End.

Digitized by Google



A ROMANCE OF LAND AND SEA.

By WILLIAM WESTALL.

Author of "With the Red Eagle," "The Phantom City," "Nigel Fortescue," etc., etc.

PRINCIPAL CHARACTERS.

Major Wyvenhoe, commander of an expedition which went out from England to help the Venezuelans in their struggle for liberty. He is intrusted with dispatches for delivery to Bolivar, the Supreme Chief.

Captain Cautley, who is in charge of the ship which took the expedition out.

John Ready, the servant of Wyvenhoe.

General Arismendez, ex-Governor of Pampatar and Vice-President of the Venezuelan Republic. He received Wyvenhoe and Cautley on their arrival in Venezuela.

Dona Iago Santleo, and Antonio Bonanza, two Venezuelans who accompany Wyvenhoe when he takes the dispatches to Bolivar.

CHAPTER XVI.

Don Antonio Returns.

Bolivar eyed me askance, but before he could answer a crowd of generals and colonels spurred up to him demanding vengeance for this further act of royalist treachery and urging an immediate advance on Calabozo.

"Do you think you could take it?" he asked, smiling ironically.

"Only give us the chance and you shall see," they cried, flourishing their spears and waving their bannerols.

They showed no lack of spirit these wild warriors, and in action, to give them their due, they were nearly as brave as their words.

"You shall have the chance. I promise you that, but not to-day," returned the Chief. "As yet we know little of the enemy's strength, and nothing of his intentions, and to-morrow or a little later I expect reinforcements. Till then, patience."

On this the commotion ceased, though the generals made no secret of their displeasure at not being allowed to lead their tatterdemalions against Calabozo, which, though its walls, built as a defence against "Indios brutos," were of mud, would not easily be taken so long as it was held in force by Morillo and his Spaniards.

"I am obliged to humour them occasionally," observed Bolivar in English. "The hold of a patriot chief over followers who serve without pay is not like that of the commander of an army of regulars who has the means of inforcing strict discipline. You have no idea how many difficulties I have to contend with, and will not I am sure, judge us by European standards."

This confidential aside, and the friendly, almost deprecatory tone in which it was spoken, so surprised me that I could only say:

"Of course not, Señor General."

Later in the day I met Don Iago, who had been appointed to the command of a battalion of blacks. He shared to the full my sorrow and indignation over Don Antonio's fate.

"Did anybody ever have a brighter or braver comrade?" he said. "I had got to love the fellow; and to think of his being so wantonly sacrificed makes me wild with anger and grief."

"I suppose there can be no doubt that he is dead."

"Not a shadow of a doubt. Morillo would not give him time to say a prayer, as Bolivar well knew when he sent him on his fatal errand."

"Of course he knew. Besides, Paez protested. What could be his motive?"

"Revenge, or rather dislike. He bore Bonanza a grudge and I have heard say that Don Simon never forgives an injury or forgets a grudge."

"The same idea occurred to me, but it is hard to believe he could be so base."

"He betrayed General Miranda to the Spaniards, which was even baser."

"Yet he is faithfully served by his officers, and the privates seem to be devoted to him."

"Some of them are, though if it were not for Paez he would have no following on the llanos, and they like him because he lets them plunder and does not bother them with too much discipline. Besides, Don Simon has good qualities, one is the art of winning the affections of his colleagues, when it pleases him to make the effort. Moreover, they know that he is indispensable."

"As a general?"

"As a Supreme Chief. We have better generals and better organisers, but there is nobody else whom the politicians and the army would obey. If Bolivar were to fall the rebellion would collapse. There are people who think that the departure of the Spaniards will be the signal for civil war. However, that does not concern us at present. Was anything particular said after Bonanza went down?"

"You could not well have acted otherwise or said less," continued Santleo when I had told him what had passed. "All the same, I regret that circumstances compelled you to say so much. Don Simon may resent it; on the other hand he

Digitized by Google

may not, may even like you all the better for your boldness. Let us hope so, for though when he takes to a man he cannot do too much for him, he is a subtle and dangerous enemy."

"You mean that if he has taken a particular dislike to me I may expect a stab in the dark?"

"Not literally. I don't think *el Tio Porsupuerto* is likely to suborn anybody to murder you. There are other ways of gratifying a grudge, as Don Antonio found to his cost."

"El Tio Porsupuerto" was a nickname by which Bolivar was known among the troops, first bestowed on him by Paez because of the chief's habit of answering: "Porsupuerto" (of course) when he did not want to commit himself to an opinion.

As I was still unattached and the Chief had no present need of my services, and had given me leave to dispose of myself as I thought fit, I accompanied my compadre to his quarters, and there spent the night in a hammock, which made a pleasanter bed than the bare ground.

In the cool of the evening Santleo paraded his blacks for my inspection, and put them through a few simple evolutions. They were stout fellows enough, but indifferently armed and I did not see a shirt amongst them. However, as Don Iago observed, men who have always gone naked are not fastidious in the matter of clothes. He seemed to be a keen soldier and an efficient officer, and was doing his best with the very raw material which the Chief had placed at his disposal, getting very little help from his subalterns, who were almost as raw as the men.

As one part of the encampment was rather exposed and too near Calabozo, to be quite safe Santleo had caused several trees to be felled in such sort as to form a breastwork which might be held for a short time against a superior force; as it proved, a wise precaution, for shortly before daybreak we were roused by the rattle of musketry, on which he ordered the reveille to be sounded and the battalion to fall in, and he and I, mounting our horses, rode forward to reconnoitre.

We had not gone far when we met two officers, riding in hot haste, who reported that one of General Zedeño's infantry regiments had been surprised by the enemy and nearly cut to pieces, and that a strong body of the enemy was advancing in our direction, a statement which was immediately confirmed by the appearance of a number of fugitives, running for their lives and followed by several squadrons of Morillo's dragoons.

"Shall you fall back?" I asked Don Iago.

"No, I shall post my men behind the breastwork and among the trees and hold the position till help comes."

"And I will bring you help," I said, wheeling my horse round.

"Good! Report to the Chief, but see Paez, if you can; he is the man for prompt action."

On this I galloped off, taking the nearest cut to head-quarters, which were fully two miles away, the encampment being much scattered, partly out of carelessness and over-confidence, more perhaps out of necessity, the troops having to bivouac where there was shade from the sun and water for themselves and horses.

I was well mounted and armed, in addition to my sword and pistols, with a lance which had been presented to me by one of my brother staff officers, *al uso del pais* (according to the custom of the country). But I anticipated no difficulty in making my point since, though the Godos were coming on apace, all, so far as I could see, were behind me and I had a good start.

The savannah was almost level and comparatively open, albeit a few scattered palm groves and high bushes impeded my view and might enable an enemy to get ahead of me unperceived. Hence, though I rode hard, I rode cautiously, keeping a keen look out and giving "cover!" as wide a berth as possible without deviation too much from my course.

I had gone about a mile when I heard a shout to my left rear and looking thitherward saw a man running towards a thicket and followed by a brace of Spanish dragoons. He ran so fast, impelled by fear of death, that it was even betting whether the troopers would overtake him before he gained the bushes. Of me they took no notice, possibly had not yet seen me, and I could easily have ridden away from them as from a strictly military point of view, and considering my errand, I perhaps ought to have done.

But a man's life was at stake, and without considering aught else, I wheeled round, gave a shout to encourage the fugitive, couched my lance, and galloped towards his pursuers, who on seeing me pulled up and seemed uncertain what they should do next.

After a moment's hesitation one of them whipped out his sword, the other a pistol, and came on to meet me. I went for the first, keeping him to my right and going at full gallop, as much to confuse his aim as to add impetus to the shock. The bullet went wide, as I thought it would, and before the fellow could fire again my lance was through his body, where I left it, and drawing my sword, gave my attention to his companion, who, however, avoided the encounter by riding away, which I allowed him to do in peace.

"Very neatly done, Señor Wyvenhoe, and I am vastly obliged to you. You should have recovered your lance, though. However, for a beginning it was by no means so bad, and with a little more practice you will be as expert as any of us."

"You, Don Antonio; you here! Good gracious, I thought you were dead and buried!" I exclaimed, in utter and most unutterable surprise. "What—? But we must away; mount this fallen trooper's horse (which I had caught) and come along."

This he did, and we rode on together.

"How on earth did you escape?" I asked. "We all felt sure that you were killed, either by the volley from the walls or afterwards."

"Not a bullet touched me, though my horse was riddled. Yet I had been killed all the same but for a happy thought. Knowing that all foreign officers who may be taken prisoners are examined by Morillo before being executed, I

Before the fellow could fire again my lance was through his body.

Digitized by Google

His amazement and consternation on beholding Don Antonio were unspeakable.

said I was English and took your name in vain, which procured me an interview with the general, who, as I presently gathered, being alarmed at the reports he has heard of the formation of another British legion, is anxious to detach British officers from the patriot cause.

"After expressing his surprise that a man like me could bring myself to serve in so rascally an army as ours, and under such a fool of a general as Bolivar, he offered me, as the alternative of death, a commission in his own army. I had, of course, no intention of accepting his offer, but I listened to him and pretended to be almost persuaded, and in the end he gave me twenty four hours for consideration, and sent me to the main guard. Fortunately there was nobody present who knew English, and I mimicked, I think not unsuccessfully, both your accent and your manner, my dear friend.

"I was well treated, neither put in a cell nor very closely guarded, and when about two hours before dawn I heard the bugles blowing I knew there was going to be a sortie and my chance had come; so taking advantage of the confusion and the darkness, and the sentry's back being turned, I slipped out, made for the walls, which are not very high, dropped into the river, and got clear away. In order to avoid falling into the hands of the enemy a second time, I went a long way round, dodging from bush to bush, and at the very moment when I thought myself safe those confounded fellows spied me and gave chase, and had you not come up just in the nick of time would have given me my quietus."

"You are a lucky man. What people say is quite true. You have more lives than a cat; but for goodness sake don't repeat Morillo's remarks about Don Simon and his army. If they came to his ears he might think you had invented them."

I suspected that Bonanza had incurred Don Simon's enmity much more by his reckless speaking than his practical joking.

He promised to heed my warning and we presently arrived at head-quarters.

The army had no tents, but in many places the troops had built huts, or rather, sheds, roofed with palm leaves and open at the sides. In one of these Bolivar's hammocks had been slung and as we came up he turned out.

His amazement and consternation on beholding Don Antonio were unspeakable. He trembled and turned pale as though he saw before him a veritable ghost, as probably he thought he did.

"Good morning, excellency," quoth Bonanza saluting.

"*Cien mil diabolos!* Where have you come from?" gasped the Supreme Chief.

"From Calabozo. The Godos are beating up our quarters and I profited by the opportunity to get away."

"The dickens they are! That accounts for the firing. I thought it was merely some of the pickets exchanging shots."

"One of Zedeño's regiments has been almost destroyed," I put in, "and unless Major Santleo is speedily supported, he, too, will be overwhelmed."

"*Madre de dios!* Is it so bad as that?"

"Shall I inform General Paez?"

"By all means. Tell him to go to Santleo's help, and try to keep the enemy at bay until I can bring up the guns and General Zaraja's infantry. Ride with him, then return and report. You will remain here, Captain Bonanza. I want to know about the state of things in Calabozo."

Straight as a die I rode to the llaneros' camp and found them under arms, for Don Paez, having heard the firing, had mustered his men and was ready for whatever might befall.

When I had given my message, he gave a great shout and ordered his men to advance. They answered with a cheer, for these rough fellows were true soldiers, and rejoiced in the call to battle, as hunters rejoice when the blast of the horn and the bay of the hounds tell them that a fox has "gone away."

Don José, galloping ahead, tossed his lance in the air, caught it as it fell, then threw it forward and picked it up without drawing rein; and there was not a man of his *guardia di honor* who could not do the same.

As we rode on the rattle of musketry, at first almost inaudible, grew louder, and when we sighted the palm grove it was shrouded in smoke, out of which came flashes of fire and a din of deadly strife.

Don Iago was beset by a regiment of cazadores, two or three squadrons, and a couple of field pieces.

On seeing us the cazadores tried to form square, but before the movement could be effected the llaneros were at them with their lances, and the regiment broke up and fled, while the cannons and the cavalry fell back on the main body, which was deploying in their rear.

Santleo was delighted with his black fellows.

"They neither flinched nor showed fear," he said, "and if they were a little better trained and armed I would back them against the best infantry of Spain."

"That is in the future, and we have to deal with the present," observed Paez, sharply. "You cannot hold this wood against a whole division of Godos. Fall back at once towards headquarters, and I will cover your retreat; and you, Major Wyvenhoe, return to Don Simon, and say that unless he hurries up with the infantry and artillery we shall lose the day."

"Si, Señor General," I answered, and went off at full gallop. There was much confusion at headquarters. Bolivar had not expected that the Spaniards would make a sortie in force, and, like everybody else except Paez, was taken by surprise. Nevertheless, two or three battalions were got together, and, with four field pieces, sent to reinforce Santleo.

I was sent back a second time, with orders to tell Paez to do his utmost to keep the Spaniards in check until the chief could bring up all his strength.

Digitized by Google

This he eventually did, though none too soon, and but for Don José's military aptitude and desperate valour the day had ended in disaster.

Though the action presently became general, it was less a pitched battle than a series of isolated engagements, and ended in a draw, our irregular horse being as much superior to the enemy's cavalry as were his foot regiments to our infantry, though some of the latter showed good courage, and with stricter discipline and better leading would have done wonders. It was also greatly in Bolivar's favour that only half of Morillo's army were Spaniards, the remainder being native levies as many-hued and as ill-trained as our own.

The sun shone pitilessly in an unclouded sky, and the dust rising from the brown earth and mingling with the battle smoke was suffocating. As many men fell from exhaustion as from the enemy's fire. By noon both sides had had more than enough and the royalists retired in good order to Calabozo, unpursued even by the llaneros.

Our losses were heavy, probably heavier than the Spaniards', and had not the Supreme Chief expected reinforcements he would have been forced to retreat. Soon these began to flock in. Don José's popularity and the fame of his exploits brought him many recruits of the right sort, and a few days after the battle General Urdenetta arrived with a whole division. His appearance at the front, however gratifying to Bolivar, boded me no good, the more especially as I had made up my mind that unless he apologised I would ignore our previous acquaintance and, save on service matters, hold no converse with him whatever.

When I mentioned my resolve in this regard to Santleo he looked very serious.

"I think you are right," he said after a moment's thought. "After what has happened you could not without loss of self-respect treat Urdenetta as a friend. All the same, trouble will come of it."

"In what shape?" I asked.

"I wish I could tell you—probably in some unexpected shape. At present Bolivar may or may not be ill-disposed towards you. I rather think he is halting between two opinions, but if you cut Urdenetta you will have two enemies equally powerful and unscrupulous."

"And I shall have two friends—yourself and Bonanza, and I think I can count on both of you."

"On me you may count to the death," rejoined Santleo warmly. "Also I am sure, on Don Antonio."

"So if I get into a scrape you will help me out, and I shall take care not to let either Bolivar or Urdenetta catch me tripping."

"That is not necessary. Urdenetta did not catch you tripping at Santa Margarita However, let us hope for the best, and fore warned is forearmed."

This talk took place in Don Iago's quarters, a shed open to the winds and furnished with two makeshift chairs, a ditto table, and two hammocks—one of which was occupied by him, the other by me. A sentry, black as ebony and nearly as naked as our first parents before they went astray, stood under a tree in a statuesque attitude; the guard, all of the same colour, reposed in the shade. In the distance could be seen other sentinels and the piled arms of several outlying pickets, the recent surprise having put everybody very much on the alert.

The only discernible objects that moved were a man, a dog, and a mule.

"Who would walk on the llanos when he could ride?" queried Don Iago, turning lazily in his hammock.

"Who would do either, in the heat of such a day as this, if he could help it?" said I. "Why does not he rest in the shade till the sun goes down? The fellow must be a salamander."

"An Indian salamander, then."

"How do you know? He may be a Spanish creole, a Zambo, a black, or even a European."

"By his gait, which also tells me that he comes from far away. No native of the plains or the coast walks as that man walks," quoth Don Iago, gazing intently at the stranger, who was making straight towards us.

"If it were possible I could almost believe," he added, in a low, intense voice, as though he were unconsciously thinking aloud, "I could almost believe it was the Cazique. . . . But no, it is not possible. It cannot be—and yet . . . . Cuerpo de Dios! It is nobody else. Tamanac himself." And Santleo, slipping from his hammock, ran to meet the new comer, of whom he made much, leading him by the hand.

"The Cazique Tamanac, my oldest friend, the friend of my father, and one of the best of men," he said, making his guest sit down in his hammock, while he, himself, took one of the chairs.

The Indian, though no longer young, was a man of splendid physique. In complexion he was lighter than the generality of his race; of stature tall; his limbs were muscular and beautifully moulded, his hands and feet small. His thick, lank hair was parted in the middle and confined by a narrow red fillet, so as to show his broad forehead and shapely ears, in which he wore silver rings, and from his neck hung a golden cross, a bag of charms, and a toothpick fashioned out of a condor's quill.

Tamanac's sole garment was a woollen *ruana*, wrapped loosely round his waist and reaching to his knees, leaving bare his broad chest seamed with scars; his only weapon a long double-edged knife, with a white handle carved out of a cayman's bone. He wore a broad-brimmed sombrero of split palm leaves, and sandals made of the white fibres of

As many men fell from exhaustion as from the enemy's fire.

Digitized by Google

the aloe. For the rest, he had a light and springy gait, carried his head high and his shoulders well back, his face was handsome and thoughtful, and he bore himself with a dignity befitting his years and his rank.

"The Cazique has made a long journey; he comes from the mountains," added Don Iago.

"From your home?"

"Yes, from my home."

"I hope he brings good news."

"I also, but I have not heard his news yet. He has been travelling since sunrise, mostly on foot to save his mule, and before he talks must eat and drink."

Then, after a short pause, Santleo, who was more excited than I had ever seen him, added in English:

"You said a little while ago that you had two friends. Now you have three, for my friends are Tamanac's friends, his foes my foes. Is it not so, Cazique?"

"It is so. You shall be to me as a son," said Tamanac, giving me his hand which I took in silence, being unprepared with an answer, for though I had guessed that Santleo could speak English this Indian's knowledge of the language surprised me beyond expression.

"You know English then? I thought so," was for the moment all I could say.

"That, there is no denying, though I doubt whether I should have told you at present, had I not been constrained hereto by the Cazique knowing so little Spanish."

"But who is he? How does he happen to know English and where are these mysterious mountains whence he comes?"

"None of these questions I am free to answer, though I would fain do so. It seemeth unkind to repay your frankness with reserve, but verily it is not so, and I hope the time is not far distant when I shall be permitted to deal as openly with you as you have dealt with me. In the meanwhile we are as good friends as ever. Is it not so?"

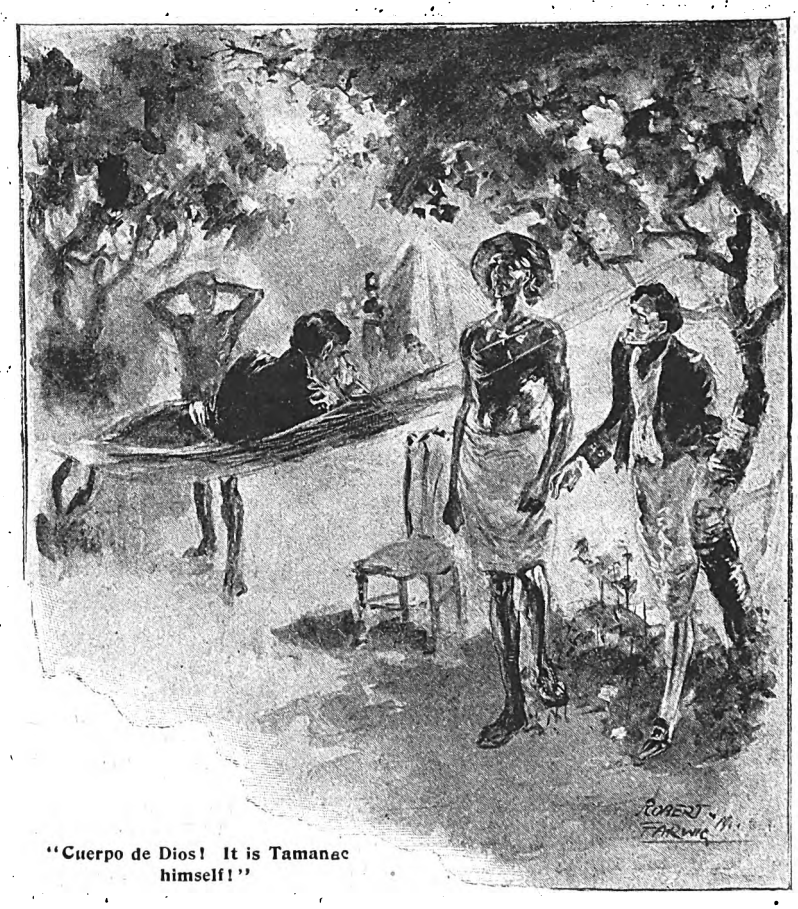
"Surely. And the Cazique being your friend I count him also as mine. But he has news for you and it is time for me to go."

"Not at all. Tarry yet a little longer. His coming is no reason why you should depart."

"It is a matter of duty. I may be wanted at headquarters. And I shall see the Cazique, who will doubtless stay with you for a day or two, again."

"For several days I hope; we have much to say to each other, and after his hard journey he will need a long rest."

On this we parted and I went away wondering and greatly tantalised. How this Indian, who knew little Spanish, had picked up English, what were his relations with Don Iago, where the mountains whence the journey was so long and hard, why Tamanac had come and Santleo's lips were sealed I asked myself, again and again, and the more I wondered the more I was puzzled.



"Cuerpo de Dios! It is Tamanac himself!"

But what perhaps puzzled me most was Santleo's English. He spoke it as fluently as I did, yet with an accent and intonation which, albeit I could not call them foreign, were strange and unfamiliar.

Moreover his phraseology was quaint and his pronunciation of certain words peculiar, reminding me at times of that of an old Quaker from the north of England who used to visit at my father's house when I was a boy, all of which suggested the probability of Don Iago having acquired the language from some old person who had left the country when he was very young.

By the time I came to this conclusion I had arrived at headquarters, so endeavoured to dismiss the subject from my mind, but strangely enough one of the first questions put to me by Bolivar was whether I had learnt aught more as to Santleo's connections and his family, a question to which I was fortunately able to give a straightforward answer.

"I thought you would have succeeded ere this in gaining his confidence," observed the chief, in a tone of disappointment. "But it must be as I said, his people are fanatical royalists, and he wants to keep them in the dark as to his whereabouts and present occupation. What I am most curious about is their name, for Santleo, you may be sure, is only a *nom de guerre*."

And then he spoke of his plan of campaign, which was very grandiose. His army would shortly number fifteen thousand men, and, after taking Calabozo by assault, he proposed to march over the mountains and end the war by the capture of the capital. On several points of detail he asked my opinion, which, knowing that Don Simon preferred praise to criticism, I gave with circumspection. The only

Digitized by Google

suggestion I ventured to offer was that it might be well to invest the town at once, so as to prevent Morillo from falling back towards Caracas, where he would find both reinforcements and supplies, and be able to offer us battle on ground of his own choosing.

"That has been thought of and shall be done," was the answer, and the subject being exhausted I was about to retire when Urdenetta appeared on the scene.

"As you two have met before there is no need of an introduction," remarked the Chief urbanely. "Major Wyvenhoe is on my staff, general, and acquitted himself admirably when we gave Morillo such a beating."

"Oh, yes; we have met before and know each other well, don't we, Señor Major?" answered Urdenetta with a courtly smile, and making as though he would greet me in South American fashion.

"Yes, Señor General, we do know each other," I returned, giving him the military salute and stepping aside to avoid his embrace.

A scowl passed over Urdenetta's face, and his little, deep-set eyes gleamed with anger. Bolivar, who looked both surprised and annoyed, said drily, "You need not remain, Señor Major. I have matters of importance to discuss with the general. When I want you I will send for you."

On which I saluted a second time and went my way, feeling that, as I could not have acted otherwise, I had acted rightly; also with a doubt the less, for now I knew, if I did not know before, that I had finally forfeited Bolivar's favour, probably made a bitter enemy of him, as I certainly had of Urdenetta.

(To be continued.)

AN EMINENT INVENTOR.

Of the numerous citizens of Birmingham, there is none who is more deserving of respect than is Mr. Johnson. Not only is he an amiable and upright man, but he is gifted with remarkable inventive genius. At least, such is his opinion, and those who are not personally acquainted with him seldom deny that his opinion is right.

Mrs. Johnson, however, does not regard her husband as an able inventor. She admits that he means well, but she asserts with much emphasis that when one of his inventions comes in at the front door it is time for her to fly out of the nearest available window, if her life is really worth saving.

As to one of his recent inventions, which nearly led to a tragedy in his family, it must certainly be admitted that he made a disastrous mistake, though he was actuated by the best of motives.

Mrs. Johnson was in the habit of complaining that she found it extremely tiresome to manage her sewing-machine, and her affectionate husband determined to supply some power, other than the female foot, to the machine.

After experimenting with galvanic batteries until he had burnt two coats and a carpet with acids, and after having tried in vain to construct a steam-engine that would not fill more than half the space of the room in which it was placed, he fell back upon clockwork.

In course of time he made a really beautiful engine, worked exclusively by clockwork, and fitted it to the sewing-machine. When wound up it would work the machine for five consecutive hours, and after adding to the machine an improved device for holding the cloth and leading it under the needle, he felt that he was a benefactor of the female sex, and a worthy successor of Morse and of the inventor of the steam-engine.

Mrs. Johnson was delighted with the new invention when it was explained to her, and readily agreed that the neighbours should be invited to see it in operation for the first time.

The neighbours responded heartily to the invitation, and at seven-thirty on the third day of last month, Mr. Johnson's drawing-room was filled with the leading citizens of Birmingham and their wives—that is to say, those who, having spoken favourably of Mr. Johnson's inventive genius, were by him regarded in the light of leading citizens.

At eight o'clock Mrs. Johnson sat down to her sewing, and undertook to run a double gusset in a new dressing-gown designed for her husband. The clock-work was wound up, the machine was started, and the gusset was stitched with twice the rapidity usual in such cases. Unfortunately, the machine did not stop when it had finished its allotted task, but continued to stitch the dressing-gown until it fairly became quilted.

Probably it would have gone on and converted the cloth into a compact bundle, sewed and resewed a dozen times, had not Mrs. Johnson come to the rescue, and attempted to cut the thread.

She did succeed in rescuing the cloth, but at the same moment the demoniacal machine fastened upon her clothing, and proceeded to sew it with insatiable energy. Vainly did Mr. Johnson try to stop his clock-work, and vainly did he strive to pull his wife away. The machine rapidly gathered her skirts into its unholy clutches, and there was every prospect that after the skirts were finished it would proceed to hem Mrs. Johnson herself, and to put a series of gussets in portions of her frame where they were not needed.

Luckily, there was one present, a young physician, who did not lose his presence of mind. He seized his knife and cut the fastenings of Mrs. Johnson—that is to say, he cut her loose. The machine was compelled to satisfy its rapacity upon her skirts alone, while the unhappy lady was wrapped in a tablecloth and removed to her private room.

This is why Mrs. Johnson is justified in denouncing her husband's inventions, and public opinion in Birmingham is decidedly unfavourable to Mr. Johnson as an inventor.

P. Weeks.

Digitized by Google

SHORT STORIES ABOUT RAILWAY TRAINS.

We devote, every week, two pages of *Short Stories* to pithy, humourous anecdotes similar to those which appear in these columns. A prize of £1 1s. will be sent to the reader who submits the best storyette this week, and a copy of "Rosalba," by Olive Pratt Rayner, to each of those whose attempts are used. The anecdotes may be either original or selected; in the latter case the source *must* be stated. The prize of One Guinea offered for the best Storyette in this competition has been won this week by Cissie, c.o. 102 Hunslet Hall Road, Leeds. Attempts this week must deal with Stories about HAUNTED HOUSES, and must reach the Storyette Editor, *Short Stories* Office, Henrietta Street, Strand, London, W.C., by Monday, October 15th. Post-cards only, please.

What a Sell!

I WAS travelling by the midnight express from Leeds to Dundee. The only passengers in the carriage besides myself were two young men and an elderly gentleman, who sat in the corner reading *Pearson's Weekly*.

We had just passed Errol, when suddenly the engine brake was applied, and the train made several terrific jumps.

One of the young men, evidently anticipating a serious accident, excitedly snatched the copy of *Pearson's Weekly* out of the old gentleman's hands.

Hardly had he got possession of it when the other young man made a grab at it. Then the light in our carriage went out, and a desperate struggle in the dark ensued between the two men, and I could hear the paper being torn into fragments.

When the carriage had been re-lit the two young men looked thoroughly ashamed of themselves, and apologised to the old gentleman as best they could for their disgraceful conduct.

"Oh, that's all right," he replied, "I had read the paper and I didn't care what became of it so long as I had the insurance page in my pocket."

Whereupon he produced the page containing the insurance coupon. C. I. S.

Cheap Pillows.

Two Hunslet women recently visiting London for the first time, had an amusing experience during the midnight return journey. On reaching a certain station, the porter walked up and down with pillows for the weary travellers who might hire them. Evidently the Hunsletian ladies were not in touch with the hiring spirit of the age.

"Wod's them, pooarter?" asked one.

"Pillows, ma'am."

"Heaw much?"

"Sixpence, ma'am."

"Sixpence? Wod's inside of 'em?"

"Feathers, ma'am."

"Eh? I'll tek two."

Two were accordingly handed to the good lady, who moralised to her companion thus:

"Eh, sither, th' covers are wo'th sixpence, tha knows! Isn'd id wonderful whod they con do i' th' South? Aw'm gooin' to hev two mooar o' them. Yo' corn'd git 'em so cheap i' Hunslet."

Needless to say, the two good ladies were disagreeably surprised to find they were not allowed to take the pillows away when Leeds was reached. J. B. C.

Then There was Silence.

RECENTLY, the occupants of a third class compartment were considerably annoyed by the silly remarks made upon objects that were passed, by a bouncing youth seated near the window.

His fellow passengers bore it without a murmur, notwithstanding a general wish that he was miles away. The climax was reached when, on nearing a lunatic asylum, he said:

"How nice the asylum looks from the train."

"Young man," solemnly replied an old gentleman, looking over the top of his paper, "before long you'll have occasion to remark how nice the train looks from the asylum." B. D.

Beware of the Train.

A RAILWAY company wanted to run a new line through a certain farmer's land against his wish.

One day the farmer was not overpleased to receive a visit from the company's representative, who described to him the direction in which the proposed line was to go. Said he, pointing with his hand:

"We want the line to run straight across there."

"Ay! oh, ah!" said the farmer, slowly nodding his head, and getting aggressive.

"Yes, we want to go right through by way of that barn yonder."

"Oh! do ye indeed?" warmly exclaimed the son of the soil, by this time quite wrath. "An what d'ye tak' me for? D'ye reckon I'm goin' to stan' by an' open an' shut yon barn door every time t'engine comes along?"

M. H.

Very Embarrassing.

A LADY riding in a railway carriage, was much annoyed by the fixed stare of a long, lank, sallow-looking woman sitting on the opposite seat. She had piercing black eyes, and kept them fixed on the lady's face.

Finally the train stopped at a little station, and the woman leant across the carriage and, laying a bony hand on the lady's arm, said:

"'Scuse me, but may I ask you a question?"

"Certainly," replied the lady.

"Well, I just wanted to know if your complexion is natural, or if it's one o' these inamelled kind I've heard of?"

"My complexion is quite natural, thank you."

"It is? Well, I'm jist sorry to hear it. I was hopin' it was one o' the inamelled kind, an' that you would tell me where I could git one like it. That's all. Thank you, ma'am." F. J. D.

Digitized by Google

How She Told the Class.

A WOMAN recently took a third-class railway ticket at Birkenhead from that place to Hooton. She entered a first-class carriage, from which she was seen to emerge by an official when she arrived at her destination. He accosted her with:

"I say, missis, what class ticket have you got?"

"A third class, sir," she replied at once.

"Then why," her interrogator continued, "were you riding in a first-class carriage?"

"Oh, get away!" said the woman, "you cannot cheat me. Did I not run to the engine, count 'one, two, three,' and get into the carriage?" A. H.

Bee-fooled.

THE village of Hatfield was in a state of wild excitement, owing to the receipt of a telegram, addressed to a local resident, reading as follows;

"Queen will arrive at 3.40 this afternoon."

The telegraphist, bursting with importance, imparted the news to the delighted villagers that the Queen of England intended to pay them a visit that day, on hearing which the inhabitants turned out *en masse*, and when the 3.40 train arrived there was an expectant crowd at the station to give their Sovereign an enthusiastic welcome.

Alas, the only thing that left the train at Hatfield was a small perforated box, labelled "Live Bee, with Care." Where was Her Majesty?

It was subsequently explained that the addressee of the telegram, an apiarian, had that morning wired to the nearest town for a queen bee which he was in urgent want of.

And the crowd which had assembled to meet a bee sheepishly slunk away. W. C.

The Eskdale Express.

AN amusing anecdote is told in connection with the Eskdale Railway, upon which the rate of speed seldom exceeds six miles an hour, and where it is the custom for the train to stop and take up passengers between the stations.

On one occasion a lame old woman was walking along the line with a basket of eggs, on her way to Ravensglass to catch the market train for Whitehaven.

The driver, as was usual, brought the engine to a standstill as soon as he caught up to her, and at once told her to jump in.

"Nay, nay," replied she. "Ah's in a hurry; Ah'll be thur lang afoor ye." J. P. S.

Couldn't Understand It.

IN many parts of South Africa railways are comparatively a new departure, and in consequence a large proportion of the farmers are entirely ignorant of the way the engines work.

One stalwart colonist, who thought himself cleverer than his companions, was standing on the platform of a small up-country station during shunting operations.

He had been explaining the principles of steam as a motive power to an interested crowd, when suddenly the engine began to move backwards, pushing a string of trucks.

His jaw dropped, and he gasped out:

"I can understand how the engine pulls the trucks, but I'm hanged if I know how the trucks pull the engine back again!" M. H.

Couldn't Trust the Officials.

"PAT," said the squire, "I want you to go to the railway station and find out what time the next train leaves for London?"

"Yes, sor."

After an absence of two hours the man returned.

"Good gracious!" exclaimed the squire, "what a time you've been."

"Well, ye see, yer honour," replied Pat, "I had to wait. I couldn't trust them station fellers; they'd say anything, so I stuck tight an' seed the train start wid my own eyes." J. B.

She Knew Something would Happen.

NOT long ago an old lady entered a railway carriage at a small town in Yorkshire, and it appeared that she had never been in a train before, for so she told her fellow-passengers.

The train, the carriages of which were unlighted, had not long been in motion, and had just put on speed, when it dashed into a rather long tunnel, and as it did so, the old lady was heard to exclaim in alarm:

"Oh! I've gone blind—what shall I do! I knew something would happen if I ventured on one of these things." R. L. S.

PEARSON'S
New Morning Paper.

1/2d. The 1/2d.

The Paper for Home Reading.
The Paper for the Housekeeper.
The Paper for the Busy Man.
The Paper for the City Man.
The Paper for the Sporting Man.
The Paper for EVERYBODY.

Daily

THE MOST ORIGINAL, UP-TO-DATE, ACCURATE AND BEST NEWSPAPER
Published in this Country.
Published SIX days a Week, NOT once.

1/2d. Express 1/2d.

ON SALE EVERYWHERE.
ORDER A COPY NOW.

VAMOOSE

As they say in America (meaning "Go"), to the nearest bookstall and ask for

"THE OCTOBER PEARSON'S"

if you want something really good to read. You will get seventeen magnificent stories and articles; enough literature to last you for a month.

Digitized by Google

A New Lease of Life.

SOME months ago I was introduced to a gentleman who was making San Francisco his headquarters with the expectation of meeting his son, who had set out about a year before to make the tour of the world by the eastern route. Community of tastes threw us much together, and one day it was arranged that we should make a duck shooting expedition to some convenient quarter.

Tomales Bay was the locality selected, and thither we went with the intention of taking a three days' holiday.

On the second day, however, just as we were in the act of pushing off shore—I was already in the boat—Wycherly made a spring and landed just where his left foot caught somewhere about the look of one of the guns, thus letting it off and pouring the whole charge of shot into his right leg.

He fell upon the stern seat, while the man, who was just springing after him turned his energies to dragging the boat back to land.

In a moment I was at the wounded man's side, and at length got him upon the beach.

In a few moments I had ripped open his trousers' leg. From the position of the wound and the spouting of the blood it was easy to see that the posterior tibial artery had been severed, and that, if prompt measures were not taken he would soon bleed to death.

Improvising a tourniquet out of a handkerchief and a bit of stick, I temporarily stopped the flow of blood, and the attendant and I carried my now unconscious friend to a dairy ranch near by, where the hospitable farmer put a comfortable apartment at our disposal,

Nor was it a bit too soon, for the system of compression I had been obliged to use proved too weak for the great iliac artery, and, just as we laid Wycherly on a couch, the torrent of which I had been apprehensive burst forth again.

I was now, however, in a better position to act, and by the time the man—whom I had dispatched on horseback for my instruments—returned I had the case well under control. The only cause for alarm now was extreme weakness and the risk of secondary hemorrhage.

It was while watching by Wycherly's bedside that I evolved the plot which forms the gist of my story. I determined to try transfusion, and, to tell the truth, I rather congratulated myself, from a professional point of view, that chance had thrown in my way such a splendid opportunity.

I watched the men when they came in to their noonday meal, and among the dozen or two I saw two whom I singled out as those who must serve my turn. It did not require a second glance at their ruddy cheeks to assure one less knowing than a surgeon that they possessed a practically unlimited store, so far as my purpose was concerned, of the pure life fluid of which I was in quest.

When I broached my project, they were at first very averse to it, but finally they agreed to the terms, provided it did not entail much pain.

Luckily I had some cocaine with me, and so anæsthetized the region of the median vein that they did not even feel the incision, and I accomplished a satisfactory transfusion into Wycherly's arm at the same spot, despite the fact that I had to improvise an apparatus out of a syringe and some tubing which I found in my case.

My point, however, was gained. I had succeeded in saving my friend's life, for the moment at least. I had also sent the two youths away in high spirits at having earned two months' wages in a couple of hours and with the admonition not to do any more work till I saw them again.

I had telegraphed down to San Francisco and received, by the first train, such instruments and appliances as I had ordered to be sent me.

I had left the room for a few minutes with my patient resting comfortably, but on my return, what was my horror to see that the ligature had burst, the bedclothes were drenched with blood, and the deadly pallor on my friend's unconscious face with the weak and intermittent jets of blood from the re-opened artery, told me but too plainly that he was alre dy almost past human aid.

Hastily applying a styptic and compress, I again tied up the blood vessel, meantime shouting lustily for Fritz and Wilhelm, who happened to be near by, and came running in with some other members of the family.

Before Fritz and Wilhelm had bared their arms my plan was laid. I recollected having seen that morning the carcass of a newly killed calf hanging up in the slaughter shed. I bade someone fetch me the heart and neighbouring organs.

When these arrived, finding them still warm, I selected a blood vessel somewhat larger than those I was about to cut, and speedily had four pieces of about an inch in length ready for use. I then led Fritz to the left hand side of the bed, and at once severed the cephalic branch of the median vein of his right arm at the elbow.

Raising the left arm of the dying man from the bed, I made Fritz sit down so as to bring them nearly to a level and cut the same vein at the same place. My purpose was to connect the lower extremity of Fritz's vein with the upper of Wycherly's, and *vice versâ*.

To do this I slipped the cut pieces of the calf's blood-vessel over the cut extremities of Wycherly's vein, and then inserted the corresponding ends of Fritz's vein into the other ends of the calf's vein, which served precisely the same purpose as the joint used in connecting two pieces of metal pipe. After completing the connection I brought the arms of both men close together, bandaging them tightly in that position, so as to obviate any risk of breaking the connection.

Then I took Wilhelm around to the right side of the bed and connected his left arm in the same manner with Wycherly's right. A complete and perfect connection had now been formed with the circulatory organs of the three men—they formed, in fact, one circulatory system.

Digitized by Google

No perceptible effect was noticeable upon Wycherly for half-an-hour. It is true he was being supplied with the life giving fluid from two sources, but they were by no means abundant ones, and besides out of thirty odd pounds of blood which a healthy man possesses I am afraid to say how much he had lost.

In the case of the youths, however, a critical observer would have detected a very appreciable diminution in the colour of their faces, and in order that they might not become alarmed at any feeling of weakness, I ordered some bottles of the best wine the establishment afforded to be brought and administered it to them freely, at the same time diverting their thoughts as much as possible.

Soon I noticed that the colour was returning to Wycherly's cheeks. It was evident that his life was saved and that the measures I had employed had been the means of doing it.

About half-an-hour afterwards Fritz and Wilhelm became restive. I explained to them that to move from the position they were in, much less to have the bandages taken from their arms, would entail the death of the sick man; that their meals would be brought to them there, and that they would even have to sleep just where they were; also that I could not tell exactly how long this condition of things would last, but that while it did they would get £4 a day apiece for their services after that day, for which they would get £20 apiece.

The sight of the gold which I counted to each of them —having received a supply that morning from Wycherly's bankers—removed the last trace of discontent.

From that day on Wycherly's recovery was steady and rapid. Within a week his appetite returned, and he was strong enough to have been up and about.

Several more days elapsed, until one morning I considered it safe for the invalid to take outdoor exercise. I did not at once sever the connection which bound him to the two young Germans, partly because of some observations I had made which suggested a peculiar train of thought.

Was it fancy that Wycherly was becoming structurally and organically affected by the new blood which was now circulating through his system? Could the mere transfusion of ordinary blood into his veins have given the freshness of look, the elasticity and buoyancy of spirits which were now his, to a man who, scarcely two weeks before, had been upon the bed of death?

And could it be possible, on the other hand, that I detected a somewhat older look in the German lads who formed part and parcel of this curious physical trinity? It was with a view to observe more closely and thoroughly both the surgical and physical aspect of the case that I decided to preserve the *status quo* for a time at any rate.

Up to this time, at my friend's request, I forbore to send any intimation to his friends at home regarding the serious accident that had befallen him, as he feared to cause them unnecessary alarm.

Now, however, he requested me to write them a full account of the matter, and also of his rapid convalescence. There were, he told me, only three members of his household proper, now that himself and son were absent—namely, his aged mother, his sister and a young lady, a distant relative, who was betrothed to his son.

Before this letter was dispatched the China mail brought news from his son, who wrote to say that he found Japan so interesting that he did not propose to leave it for a month to come.

From this time on a most remarkable physiological change began to take place in the three beings who were so curiously linked together by their circulatory system. They were evidently fast becoming assimilated in physical features and conditions. Wycherly was indeed growing younger, while his companions were growing proportionately older.

Once I was able to grasp and recognise this dominant fact I found myself wondering, not so much at the fact itself as at the rapidity with which the change was being accomplished.

I could only account for this last feature of the strange metamorphosis by remembering that the blood coursing in the veins of this strange partnership was, in the first instance, almost wholly that of the young Germans, as Wycherly's vessels were well-nigh drained at the commencement of the trial. He therefore took a fresh start in life, so to speak, with a large capital of new blood, and since then he had been contributing only one-third of the supply to the common stock or partnership circulation. Accordingly only one-third of the common blood was being assimilated by old organs, while two-thirds were being assimilated by young and robust ones.

In addition to this, Wycherly's assimilative organs were being fed and their waste being carried off by blood which was day by day becoming younger as the process went on.

It was therefore impossible to escape the mathematical conclusion that Wycherly would grow younger, while Fritz and Wilhelm would grow older, till a stable equilibrium in the physical condition of the trio was reached.

I confidently looked forward to the time, and that at no distant date, when I should have the satisfaction of seeing before me three robust young men of twenty-eight, at which time there would no longer be any occasion to maintain their inforced union. I further calculated that the state of equilibrium in age would be reached in about a month from then, so that by the time my friend's son arrived from Japan there would be but the slight disparity between twenty-three and twenty-eight in their respective ages.

Two days before the China steamer was due I carefully separated the three men. The altered appearance of Wycherly, though in the highest degree striking to me, excited no surprise among the dairy people, who had first seen him in a deathlike swoon and who attributed his altered looks to returning health.

As for the young men who had become prematurely matured through keeping company with an invalid, no one thought anything of it, and no one pitied them, as they had been paid liberally for their loss of vitality.

Wycherly, however, upon his return to the city, sent each of them a cheque for an amount which amply represented the earnings of the eight years of life which they had lost. We returned to the city in company, a fashionable tailor fitted out the young English gentleman, my guest, and we arranged to meet next morning to go together to the China steamer.

"Is Mr. Wycherly on board—Mr. Stephen Wycherly?" asked my friend next day of one of the stewards.

"Mr. Wycherly?" replied the man, starting. "Why —oh, yes, I remember. Please to wait, sir, till I call one of the officers."

Presently we observed one of the officers coming forward, conversing with the steward. As he came up he bowed gravely and said:

"I grieve to tell you, gentlemen, that Mr. Wycherly died on the passage here and was buried at sea. If you

Digitized by Google

will accompany me to the surgeon's cabin, he will supply you with all the particulars." And he led the way aft.

Sorrowfully I followed the grief-stricken parent, whose bowed head and unsteady step showed the violence of the blow.

"I am speaking to Mr. Wycherly's brother, I presume," said the surgeon, after the officer had explained our errand, turning to my companion. "The resemblance is so striking that I do not think I can be mistaken, though I should say you were slightly his senior."

"His father," replied my friend simply.

"His father! Excuse me. If you will come inside, I will show you my books."

It turned out that poor Stephen, my friend's son—his name also—had been taken down with dysentery on the sixth day out from Yokohama and had never rallied from the attack.

"Did you remark the surgeon's expression of incredulity when you said you were the father of the Mr. Wycherly who died on the passage?" I said to my friend next day as he sat in my office. "It may turn out that you will have trouble in establishing your identity. I can, of course, vouch for it, but it is not likely that my story would gain undisputed credence, seeing that it is unparalleled in the annals of science?"

"Make yourself easy on that point," returned Wycherly, with something of heat in his tone. "As to my friends at home, is it reasonable to suppose that they would fail to recognize one who is thoroughly conversant with each detail of our family affairs?"

"I hope it may turn out as you say," I remarked dubiously.

Just then my servant entered with a card. I started on reading it and handed it to Wycherly.

"Miss Gertrude Tremaine!" he ejaculated. "But how—how——"

"The lady has come to inquire regarding Mr. Wycherly—Mr. Stephen Wycherly," said the boy.

"Show her in," said I, and immediately a tall, handsome brunette appeared in the doorway.

She looked first at one and then at the other, as if undecided how to act, then advanced to where Wycherly was sitting, too bewildered to speak, and took him by the hand.

"Why, Stephen," she said, "don't you know me? But I didn't expect to find you here. I thought I should find papa here. They told me I should get news of him here at the place I used to direct all my letters to."

"Why, Gertie," returned Wycherly, regarding her with embarrassment, "don't you know me? Don't you know Stephen's father?"

"What does this mean, sir?" she said, drawing herself up with offended dignity. "But do not flatter yourself it was to see you, sir, that I came. I came at the express desire of your grandmother and aunt to see that your father was being properly taken care of. Oh, Stephen," she continued in a softened tone, "they are so very anxious about him at home."

"But, Gertie, I am old Stephen Wycherly, whom you came to see," said my friend.

"You!" she cried with a ripple of silvery laughter, as if now entering into and enjoying the joke. "You! I suppose you think that having made the tour of the world gives you the right to assume age. And now I come to think of it, perhaps it does, for you do certainly look five years older than when you left us a year ago, if that is anything in your favour."

I had been studying all this time how to extricate my friend from his dilemma. So, rising and looking at my watch, I said in a fatherly sort of way:

"You young people can get along very well without me, I think. I have an engagement which will take me at least half-an-hour; so I am sure you will excuse me."

When I returned, they were gone, and merely a note from Wycherly remained on the table, saying that he would communicate with me shortly.

From that day to this I heard nothing of him till I received this letter:

Wychwood Hall,
Norfolk.
September 15th.

My Dear Doctor,—Forgive my abrupt departure from San Francisco. You no doubt wonder how matters have turned out with me. First of all, Gertie—Miss Gertrude Tremaine, now my wife—made a terrible noise after you so considerately, and, I will add, pusillanimously went (she is looking over my shoulder now and has made me put in that last adverb) because I persisted in telling her that I was old instead of young Mr. Wycherly. By little and little and by explaining as well as I could that the treatment I had received after the accident she read about in your letter had produced the extraordinary change in my appearance, she subsided into an apparent acquiescence with what I told her. You may call it what you please, you may attribute it to the transfusion, or to the arts and wiles of Gertie, but certain it is that before we were half over the Atlantic I was head over heels in love. Nor was it a one-sided affair, either, and by the time we reached home we were engaged.

How I dreaded going home! When we got into the carriage at the railway station, the footman while touching his hat "hoped that I had left my father well." The same thing was repeated at the hall. My mother wept over the return of her grandson, and my sister fell upon the neck of her nephew. When, two months after our return, Gertie and I were married at the village church, I am satisfied that nine-tenths of the people present believed that the Stephen Wycherly who signed the register was son to the man who stood before them. And what is the use of setting people right upon the question? I have determined to remain Stephen Wycherly, Jr., since they will have it so.

Your friend,
Stephen Wycherly.

P. S.—I enclose two cheques for £100 each for Fritz and Wilhelm.

There! What do you think of that for a *denouement* to my transfusion operation?

Robert Duncan Milne.

IF YOU HAVE A RELATIVE—

who has passed away either at home in peace or abroad in war, send his photograph—which you probably cherish—and we will enlarge it to a beautiful India ink and crayon portrait, 15in. × 12in. mounted on plate sunk mount 24in. × 19in.

Relatives of soldiers at the front may obtain one of these enlargements for 6s.

Other photographs will be enlarged for 7s.

Full particulars appear in the current issue of

THE CURIOSITY SHOP.

A coupon from that paper must accompany each order.

A sample enlargement is on view at these offices. Below are other addresses where the enlargements may be seen:

Portsmouth.—A. B. Bennett, 408 Commercial Road, Landport.
Southsea.—L. Hillyer, 9 Green Road.
Glasgow.—William Love, 221 Argyle Street (opposite Central Station), and William Barr, 88 Sauchiehall Street.
Liverpool.—F. W. Edwards, 122 Pembroke Place, and Henry Jones (tobacconist), 184 Oakfield Road.
Blackpool.—Coppock (newsagent).
Newcastle-on-Tyne.—Messrs. T. and G. Allan, 18 and 20 Blackett Street.
Sunderland.—Edward Thompson, 263 High Street West.
Manchester.—J. Matthews, 88 Oxford Street, and Messrs. M. Carr and Co., 38 Alexandra Road, Moss Side.

Digitized by Google

The Mad Cabman.

It was a closed cab I hailed—a yellow cab—and its number was 17766. I remember the number distinctly, and I will tell you how it happened that its number and colour have stuck so like burrs to my memory.

When I got out of the door of the Freemason's Tavern (on the night of February 15th, 1860) where the dinner of the "Benevolent Superannuated Night Porters' Association" had been held, and called a closed cab from the stand, as the cabman got down from his box and opened the door for me, with the natty twist and tug peculiar to the craft, I looked inside and saw that one of the cushions was torn nearly in half, and that the foot-mat was kicked up in a dirty heap in one corner.

Upon which observing the number of the cab to be 17766 and somewhat, perhaps, exhilarated by the "Benevolent Night Porters'" champagne, I remarked good-naturedly that "one might expect things to be at sixes and sevens in cab 17766." The cabman growled something in return, but he made no other answer.

One other thing, too, I noticed about the cab—having rather a sensitive eye for colour—and that was, that the vehicle was painted a bright canary colour, bright as the wings of a goldfinch; now yellow being a colour I peculiarly abhor, except in sunshine and calceolarias, I grumbled, half aloud and half to myself, that "it must have been a madman who painted a cab such a colour."

"No more mad than you, master," replied instantly an angry voice from somewhere or other; but whether it was the waterman, who now stood holding the door, and hoping "I would remember him," and whose pewter badge shone like silver in the gas-light; whether it was some street boy lurking round for pence; whether it was a drunken waiter, or even some mere impertinent passer-by, I could not in the hurry of the moment very well determine.

Wine turns some men into braggarts, others it makes cowards. Some sing, and others talk, when wine mounts up into their brain. Me it makes silent, wary, suspicious, and cautious. It quickens me, it extends my mental vision, it heightens all my senses. It seems, if I may so express it, to come to the windows of my mind, and rub a vapour from them, so that I see people clearer and deeper.

It specially had this effect on me the night in question, so before the cabman had yet shuffled up the capes of his coat, and tied a fresh knot in his whip, I had calculated how many miles it was from Long Acre to my cottage on Downham Green, east of Hammersmith, and observed that the horse was a good one and untired.

"Vere to, sir?" said the cabman, forcing the door with great difficulty into its proper place, and then with all his strength grinding down the rusty or bruised handle.

"To No. 4, De Beauvoir Terrace, Downham Green, Hammersmith."

"And how many miles do you make it?" said the sullen rogue again as he rudely thrust his rough face in at the window, speaking with a sour, hard voice.

I replied that I called it not quite five.

"Not much less," said the man bitterly, with a growl, as he put one foot on the step to mount to his coachbox. "And mind it's double fare, sir, after twelve," he added, returning again to carefully pull up both windows, and to re-open and re-slam the opposite door of the cab.

I did not like the vindictive look he gave me as he did this; but I said nothing, for I knew his number, and the wine made me reckless of all dangers, but I did not know the motive of all that care then.

"Will you go on," I cried, "with your ramshackle cab, or I'll get out and take another—a better one?"

"Ve'll go on fast enough presently," growled the ill-conditioned fellow with a peculiar emphasis, as he jumped up on his seat. The horse spluttered about for a moment on the stones, struck out a spark or two with its hoofs, and then sprang forward. The waterman flinging down his water-bucket took off his hat ironically to my driver. I heard a voice behind us calling for a "cab quick."

"Take care how you drive that there gentleman," cried out a policeman, and we were off. The lamps of Long Acre passed us in quick procession; it seemed but a minute and we were in St. Martin's Lane. At that instant the gusty wind bore across the road the "half past twelve," struck by the bell of St. Martin's Church.

The driver, thinking of his overfare, turned, and tapping at the window, with a brutal leer asked me if I heard "the clock a-striking" but I did not reply, for I had taken a strange dislike to the man, and my only wish now was to get as soon as possible to my own home, and rid myself of a fellow probably half-intoxicated, and evidently determined to be extortionate and troublesome.

By this time it had begun to rain fast; the mist, before wavering and wandering, now fell in long, lashing lines, that beat fiercely against the cab windows, covering them with a moving surface of water, that rendered it impossible to see out of either glass.

The wind too, beat against the cab, and flew howling before us up the street. Still we drove on fast and steadily up Regent Street, where now nothing could be seen but a stray policeman cowering up in a doorway.

I never saw such rain before nor since. It seemed to whiten all the pavement, and to madly dance and splash, as if each drop were a living thing. Yet all this time that the rain seemed ready to beat in the windows, the cabman, with head bent deprecatingly down, drove on singing scraps of a coarse sea-song:

> "Belay there! belay!" was all he would say,
> As we tossed in the chops of the Channel.

I struck the window angrily, to stop his ribald and insolent song; but he did not seem to hear me, and paid no attention to my signal; so throwing myself back in a corner of the cab, I began to turn over the chief events of the evening in my mind, just to while away the time.

Through a pleasant haze the past hours seemed again to defile before me.

I went through all the moments from the time the man at the door gave me the ticket for my hat, to the

Digitized by Google

time that I gave it back again to the same man, and told the waiter to call me a cab from the nearest stand.

I remembered all the bows and hand-shakings of the Committee Room, and how at last, in an irregular body, we moved into the dining-hall, marshalled by the jolly-looking, portly stewards, with blue rosettes in their buttonholes.

I remembered the buzz as old Lord Foptoddle, our noble chairman, arrived and took his seat; I remembered, too, with a smile, the bursting out of "Down among the barley," from the professional singers, just as the dessert was set upon the table.

Then came the procession round the table of "the superannuated night porters," and the tremendous auctioneer's blow of the toastmaster's hammer, that heralded the first toast.

Again I seemed to hear the anile speeches, and insincere compliments, the ridiculous praise, the extravagant self-laudation on the mutual flattery system.

Again, through a din of tongues, and a clattering of plates, I heard the treasurer read those tiresome, endless items such as——

"Twenty pounds from Lord Foptoddle." (Cheers.)

"Ten pounds from the Marquis of Cheshire." (Renewed cheers.)

Again, too, for the twentieth time, I heard the treasurer thank the secretary, and the secretary thank the treasurer; and then, at last, not a little flurried, I rose myself to propose "The Ladies," who smiled upon us from the gallery. I all the time thinking only of pretty little Nelly Pledgett, my doctor's daughter, who I saw beaming and radiant in a front seat. I got quite eloquent on the subject of female beauty, and sat down amid tremendous applause.

I was replied to by the good doctor, who, thanking the meeting on behalf of the ladies, begged to propose the health of one of the best friends of the society—need he say he alluded to—"Osbert Wilkinson, Esq?" (Cheers).

But suddenly, through all these motley recollections, there flashed a painful thought—a suspicious apprehension of I scarcely knew what coming evil. It seemed, when I think of it now, almost like a presentiment of what shortly after happened.

I remembered that, as I sat down, somewhat heated by my speech and was pouring myself out a glass of that excellent sherry to wind up with, my old friend, the doctor, who by-the-bye, sat opposite to me at dinner, leant across the table and gave me a peculiarly keen and searching look from under those thick, grey eyebrows of his.

"What does that detective's look of yours mean, doctor?" said I, pleasantly enough.

"It means that you must take care of yourself," said he in a grave voice; and no more passed between us, for at that moment I rose to leave, having some business that would call me up early in the morning.

He followed me out, though, and when we shook hands in the doorway, I am not sure that he did not hold his stop watch in one hand, and feel my pulse with the other; but I was so busy helping Nelly on with her scarlet opera cloak that I did not pay much attention to the nervous old fellow, who, between ourselves, I think is getting rather past work; he worries one so with warnings and mysterious threats, as if I wasn't in the finest health, and my life insurance just advantageously settled.

Dear Nelly! what an anxious look she gave me, as I stepped into my cab! I was sure that the girl loved me.

All this evening I had been haunted with anxieties about this troublesome Chancery case of mine, "Wormwood *versus* Widgett," the vexation and delays of which had nearly driven me mad. I had really felt quite giddy over it that very morning, and began to get alarmed about over-working my brain, as my doctor taxed me with doing. I could not get the thought of it, even now, out of my mind, till a certain growing apprehension overpowered it.

We were still driving on at a strange, unequal rate—now at a furious gallop, now at a fierce trot; but where we were I could not very well determine—I looked out, for we had just got into a dark side street, and there was no lamp visible, up or down, so far, at least, as I could see without putting my head out, for the windows were jammed so close it was impossible to open them.

It was here that, for the first time, I began somehow or other to have some vague apprehension of the sanity or honesty of my driver.

Then came thronging into my brain stories I had heard years ago in Paris of a celebrated and dangerous gang of thieves who had for their accomplices many of the drivers of the night fiacres.

These fellows drove whatever passengers they could procure into obscure streets, and then robbed and sometimes murdered them. Was I to be the victim of such a scheme?—and if I was, what hope had I, alone and unarmed, to escape, at such an hour too, and on such a night?

Now was the time to resist, however, before it was too late. My resolution was prompt. I struck at the window as loudly as I could without breaking the glass; I kicked at the panels of the door; I shouted.

Suddenly, with a tremendous jolt on the kerb, the cab stopped. As the door opened I cried, "Let me out, you rascal—I'll not be robbed." I stepped forward to get out, but was met by a fierce blow on the chest from the cabman, whose eyes now literally glared with rage.

"That's enough of your mad tricks, Bedlam Billy," he said, as he thrust me back violently into the cab; "you vant a straight vescut, you do, and you shall have one," then slamming the door with a wrench that showed extraordinary strength, he leapt on to the box, and drove away with a fury that sent me reeling into a corner of the seat.

Hitherto I had dreamt only of robbery, now I was sure that the man who drove me was mad, stark staring mad. He was going to drive me into some river, or down some pit, or in some way or other to hurry himself and me to a horrible death. There he was now, standing up to drive, leaning forward to lash on the eager horse, that, frothing with pain, leapt at every blow of the man's whip.

I do not know why I did not instantly break both front windows, and pull the man off the box; or force open the door and throw myself out; or, breaking all the glass, shout to everyone through the openings that the man who was driving me had gone mad.

From whatever cause it happened, I know not but I I did none of these things.

It was now long past midnight, and I could see no one, not even a policeman.

We were fast getting into the suburbs. The speed rendered it almost certain death to leap out, and, moreover, no strength I could evoke could succeed in forcing open either door.

I waited, therefore, for some halt or pause that would

Digitized by Google

give me an opportunity of struggling with the madman to whose care I had so unhappily intrusted myself.

On we flew, on, the horse leaping and plunging as if it would have broken from the harness. We dashed down streets, whose random lamps seemed to race past us; we tore down lanes, where houses were yet but few, except at the beginning.

Now the wheels grazed against a post, and now against a garden wall; but still the madman who drove me seemed somehow or other to struggle through all dangers, and drive on more frantically than before.

Once we dashed through a turnpike. Some voices screamed after us, and my driver screamed to them in return, but what they said or what he said I could not distinguish.

We were now racing up a long side street, where in the distance, to my horror, I could just discern through the pale light of the first daybreak, a yawning pit dug for the foundations of new houses. There was no railing on the one side, and the road was a mere deep-rutted lane, without limit or boundary.

I saw at once that our fate was inevitable; it came ere I could in any manner extricate myself from the vehicle.

The horse near the deepest place gave a plunge and reel, then dropped, spite of the redoubled lashing of the frantic driver—yes, fell, dragging the carriage with it into what seemed to me in that imperfect light, and in that whirl of my senses, a chasm of darkness at the bottom of which crouched Death waiting for his prey. There was a crash, a cry, and I fell stunned.

* * * * *

I know not how long I lay insensible; but when I recovered, it was day break, a faint red light was striping the eastern sky, and I could see surrounding objects, though in a dim, uncertain way. I was lying beside the fallen cab and its dead horse; the driver I could nowhere see.

My first impulse was to rouse myself, totter on my legs, and discover where I was hurt, or if any bone was broken.

To my great delight I found myself whole and sound, with the exception of a slight sprain in my right foot, at least so I thought at first; but as I put down my hand to touch my injured foot, a heavy red-clotted drop of blood fell on it. I lifted my hand to my forehead, and found there a deep cut, from which the blood was oozing thickly. I instantly took out my handkerchief and bound it tightly round the wound, so as, if possible to staunch the blood till I could get assistance. But where was I, and where was the driver?

"Thank goodness," I cried aloud, "that I am at last rid of that madman!"

I looked round to see what sort of place the wretch had ensnared me into.

It was an unfinished suburban street, with raw brick skeletons of houses, stretching their frail dreary walls up into the misty morning air.

Some were caged in with scaffolding, others had great heaps of mortar still piled up in front of them; unfinished iron railings, doors daubed like clowns' faces, with patches of red; windows white with circles in their panes; gateways with gaping pits where steps were to be, everywhere met my eye.

In front of me on a dead wall, "Alpha Terrace," the name of this future paradise, was written in staring whitewash letters. The only sound I could hear, far

"HOW STOUT YOU ARE GETTING!"

THERE is too often a scarcely veiled reproach in that exclamation: "How stout you are getting!" At any rate, the corpulent one is generally sensitive on that point, and perhaps feels a reproach where none is intended. Certain it is that to lose the *svelte* symmetry of youth, to broaden out, to "swell wisibly," as Sam Weller has it, and finally to become "fat and scant of breath," is a process at once humiliating and distressing, especially to those who possess that keen appreciation of personal appearance which is a part of what is termed good breeding. There is now, however, no excuse for those who have resigned themselves to carry to the grave the rotund proportions of a Falstaff. The perusal of a little book entitled "Corpulency and the Cure," by F. Cecil Russell, has afforded us not a little interest and instruction on a subject which has hitherto received but superficial attention from the medical profession. Mr. Russell has made the cure of obesity his life's study, and judging from the record of his achievements—over a thousand grateful letters from his patients are printed in the book—he has been singularly successful. The author's treatment is not by "wasting." There is no "sweating"; there are no restrictions as to eating and drinking: no drastic conditions of any kind. The medicine prescribed is simple and pleasant, purely vegetable, and perfectly harmless. Its action is twofold; it reduces the redundant fatty tissue at a very rapid rate—in some cases to the extent of one or two pounds in twenty-four hours—usually from 3lbs. to 4lbs. in a week (sometimes considerably more), and at the same time it acts as a refreshing and invigorating tonic, promoting a healthy appetite, and dispelling the feeling of depression and extreme *malaise* experienced by the majority of corpulent people. "Does the fat return after cessation of the treatment?" is a question that many will ask. No, under normal conditions it does not. Mr. Russell's treatment goes to the root of the malady, and, without having the slightest pernicious effect even on the most delicate persons, eliminates the cause of the tendency to corpulence. "Corpulency and the Cure," a dainty little book of some 256 pages, is now in its eighteenth edition. We would cordially recommend such of our readers who are troubled with what we will call, for the sake of euphony, "exaggerated *embonpoint*" to procure a copy by sending two penny stamps to Mr. F. C. Russell, Woburn House, Store Street, Bedford Square, London. This well-known specialist can claim the unique distinction of having successfully treated over 10,000 cases of obesity.

FREE—Special Offer—FREE.

To all Readers of "Short Stories" Suffering from Obesity.

Mr. Russell will be pleased to forward, post free, a copy of his book, CORPULENCY AND THE CURE, 256 pages, in a sealed plain envelope, to all applicants forwarding 2d. in stamps to Woburn House, 27 Store Street, London, W.C.

Digitized by Google

and near, was the restless twitter of the wakening sparrows.

I touched the horse; he was dead, cold, and already stiffening. The cab lay on its side, rising like a wall before me, at the bottom of a newly-dug foundation, some twelve feet from the roadway. It was wonderful how I had escaped.

But the wretched maniac who would have taken my life, was he lying crushed beneath the cab? I must rouse myself and see if I can find any trace of him, though, doubtless, he believed me dead.

If unhurt, he had fled, howling and exulting to meet with that certain detection he had not cunning enough to escape; if injured, he had crawled away to obtain help.

As these thoughts passed through my mind, I stepped painfully over the dead horse, and again exclaiming:

"Thank goodness he is gone!" walked round to the other side of the cab, which had hitherto been hidden from me.

Good Heavens, what did I see? My enemy the madman, sitting between the upturned wheels, with his back against the body of the carriage, quietly cutting a leather trace into two long flexible strips. On his face, which was smeared with mud and gore, there was a hideous smile of malice as his eyes met mine.

"Vy, hallo, Lushington?" he said—not appearing in the least alarmed or surprised, and continuing his task —"this is a rum start of yours, isn't it? Vot are you a-going to give me for my fare? I'm not going away, Colney Hatch, vithout getting paid for your mad capers, so don't think it, Mr. Hanwell. So now then, Crazy Bill, stump up."

"It is you who are mad," I said, "and I shall leave you to your keeper."

"Ve'll see about that," said the villain, slowly getting on his legs and advancing towards me with the two leather straps, that he had now knotted into one long cord, dangling behind his back. "You must come off with me to Bedlam, my man; you ain't safe at large; a cold shower-bath is what you want, old Billy Bedlam. Now easy—hiss!—easy."

"Lunatic," I cried, "beware of a desperate man."

"There's two of us desperate, as far as that goes," said the wretch, leaping on me to bind my hands.

Then as the fellow advanced, and ere he could seize my throat I drew a long broad knife quickly from my trousers' pocket, and stabbed him under the left breast. He threw up his hands, screamed. "The madman's done it!" and fell dead on his face.

I stood for a moment spellbound, but the sight of a red stream of blood winding towards my feet aroused me.

* * * * *

I was a murderer; my brain was on fire; those drear gaunt houses seemed dancing round me; the earth seemed heaving into graves.

I erased the number of the cab, to escape detection, then threw down the knife, and fled I knew not where, with the speed of an escaped malefactor.

I shall never know where I ran. I passed through streets where shops were beginning to be opened in the bright morning sun, people called to me but I never stopped; I leapt over gates and chased through the rank grass of lonely meadows.

There was a dead silence at first in the air, and I thought I had escaped, but presently a sound, at first no louder than the bay of a watch-dog, seemed to gradually swell into the clamour and cry of a vast pursuing mob.

I could hear voices, and the tramp of feet; the wretches had dogs with them; they were tracking me. How strange that among them I seemed to specially distinguish the voices of Doctor Pledgett and his daughter Nelly! What had they to do there? I saw the mob breaking through a distant orchard, and thought I had beaten them off like so many wild curs; but suddenly in front of me at a turning I cannot avoid, run three men. They point to a dead, bleeding man lying on the ground. I dash at them. There are blows that fall crashing on my head, then there is a great darkness.

* * * * *

When I awoke it was a soft spring morning, and I was in bed in a room I had never seen before. Oh, so neat and trim! A goldfinch was singing pleasantly at the window, and there were bouquets of violets on the white cloth of the dressing-table.

A bright, rosy cloud rippled over the sky; a cheery fire sent quivering up the chimney its little yellow flames, and made a cosy, murmuring sound with its puffing jets of gas.

I rose in bed by a great effort, for I was very weak, and looked at myself in the great toilet glass that faced the bed. I saw not myself, but a pale, hollow-faced, old man, whose shaven head was bound in wet bandages. It looked like Lazarus when he ascended those steps that led from the inner darkness.

Suddenly the door opened, and who should enter but my good friend, Dr. Pledgett? It was his house I was in.

He smiled when he saw me once more conscious; but shook his finger when he observed that I was trying to speak.

* * * * *

The rest may be told in a few words. The long and the short of it was, that I had had a brain fever. The disease had broken out the night of the charity dinner, as my doctor had long expected.

The severe mental labour of that case of "Wormwood *v.* Widgett had been too much for my brain. Pledgett had, indeed, as he sat opposite to me at dinner, that eventful night, seen premonitory symptoms of the disorder, and had tried to follow my cab. By my friend's wish I had been sent to his house, for the sake of greater attention.

Of my crazy doings that night, the less said the better. They ended, however, I may mention, in my upsetting the cab myself (for I had insisted on driving), in a dangerous place, and then stabbing the cabman, whom I had mistaken for an escaped madman.

Luckily the wound, though it bled severely, had not proved dangerous. As for myself, I had then escaped from the cabman, who had tried to take me safely home seeing I was delirious, and being found in a field near Chiswick, was driven to a hospital, from whence Dr. Pledgett, hearing of my detention there, took me to his own house.

I soon recovered thanks to my kind doctor, but, alas! having before lost my senses, I now lost my heart. I spent my long days of convalescence in wandering in the garden with Nelly, in practising duets, and reading Tennyson. I soon found it impossible to be happy without her.

To-morrow week, Nelly Pledgett, I am proud and happy to say, becomes Mrs. Osbert Wilkinson, thanks to my imaginary mad cabman and the yellow cab No. 17766.

Walter Thornbury.

Digitized by Google

ORCHESTRAL

ORGANETTE

A £4 4s ORGANETTE for 35/-

The most remarkable musical instrument ever made. An Organ in Miniature. Is built just like a full-sized organ, with proper reeds (2 sets) and 3 stops. No teaching required. A child can play it at sight and produce as good music as the most accomplished pianist.

A VALUABLE BOOK FREE.

Our splendidly illustrated catalogue of Household Requisites, Jewellery, Plate, &c. Get it, even if you don't buy from us. Sent post free on application.

J. M. DRAPER, Dept. 336, Organette Works, BLACKBURN.

OUR NEW

CATALOGUE

THE "IBIS" TOOTH POWDER

(Registered)

Is the only Dentifrice which, if regularly used, cleans discoloured teeth and dissolves away tartar. It is by this wonderful power that it permanently preserves good teeth and prevents further decay in bad teeth. In this way also it is an effectual PREVENTIVE of toothache, neuralgia, and gumboils.

Sold in 6d. and 1/- boxes, or post free for 7d. and 1/- from the ANTEXEMA COMPANY, 83 Castle Road, London, N.W.

Neuralgia Positively Cured!

Free Test Offered.

The annexed cut presents in the prominent white lines the nerves most liable to attacks of Neuralgia. Sufferers will know only too well the pain tracks, and will be glad to know of a Simple and Sure Remedy. The proprietors will send Free two sample Zox Powders to any reader of *Short Stories* sending stamped envelope to ZOX CO., 11 HATTON GARDEN, LONDON, E.C.

VIE D'OR FOR THE HAIR.

THE AMERICAN TREATMENT.

Vie d'Or puts 10 years on the life of the hair.

SOLE AGENT:

GUSTAV ROSSELLI, 4 New Park Street, Park Lane, LEEDS.

Price 2/9 post free.

DRUNKENNESS

CURED. This can be done with or without patient's knowledge. Send me a stamp and I will tell you how. (Send no money.) Address, in confidence, Mrs. C. H. (Room 8), 195 Oxford Street, London, W.

2/9 CHALLENGE TO THE WORLD—OUR WARRANTED TIMEKEEPER, 2/9

With a guarantee to keep correct time for three years, will be sent to any address on receipt of P.O. or stamps value 2/9 and three stamps extra for postage. To every purchaser during this month we give with it ABSOLUTELY FREE a strong Mexican SILVER CHAIN. All we ask of you is to show them to your friends, as by doing so you advertise our business.

GENEVA WATCH IMPORTERS, 148 Old Street, London, E.C.

TOO STOUT.

I was for years; by chance I came across a simple home remedy that reduced me from 17st. to 10st. 12lbs., and I will willingly send particulars free to any sufferer enclosing stamp. Mrs. L. E. FELL, 195 Oxford Street, London, W.

THE MOST NUTRITIOUS.

EPPS'S

GRATEFUL—COMFORTING.

COCOA

BREAKFAST—SUPPER.

POST FREE THREE STAMPS

A Treatise on the Modern and Successful Treatment of Nervous Diseases and Exhaustion, by local absorption.

Fully up to the advanced ideas on the subject.

THE MARSTON CO., 59 and 60 Chancery Lane, London, W.C.

"WORTH A GUINEA A BOX."

BEECHAM'S PILLS

FOR ALL

BILIOUS & NERVOUS DISORDERS, Sick Headache, Constipation, Wind and Pains in Stomach, Impaired Digestion, Disordered Liver, and Female Ailments.

SALE OVER SIX MILLION BOXES YEARLY.

In Boxes, 1s. 1½d. and 2s. 9d. each, with full directions.

Prepared only by the Proprietor,

THOMAS BEECHAM, St. Helens, Lancashire.

Sold by all Druggists and Patent Medicine Dealers everywhere.

THE BEST OF ALL BEVERAGES AND THE CHEAPEST.

GOOD! IT'S MASON'S Extract of Herbs

8 Gallons Prime Beer for 6d.

Sample Free for 9 Stamps.

AGENTS WANTED EVERYWHERE.

NEWBALL & MASON, NOTTINGHAM.

Digitized by Google

THE BRAIN GYMNASIUM.

In these competitions a prize of £2 will be awarded each week to the competitor whose attempt we receive giving the correct solutions of all the puzzles. If more than one is absolutely correct the prize of £2 will be given to the first correct attempt dealt with.

If no lists of absolutely correct solutions are sent in the first prize will be awarded to the competitor whose attempt is first dealt with showing the fewest mistakes.

Each week we shall award in addition to the above, either ten of our silver plated pencil-cases or ten popular novels, to be distributed amongst the competitors whose attempts are absolutely correct and have failed to win the first prize, or, if no complete lists of correct solutions are received, to those whose attempts show the fewest mistakes.

Write all your solutions on one sheet of paper, putting the number against each. Post the batch in an envelope marked "Brain Gymnasium," to reach the Editor, Short Stories, 18 Henrietta Street, Covent Garden, W.C., by first post on Monday, October 22nd, 1900.

Readers are invited to submit puzzles, acrostics, conundrums, word-squares, etc., for publication on this page. A penknife will be given to each reader whose attempts are used. All attempts must be vouched for as original, and, of course, it is distinctly understood that the sender of a puzzle must neither compete in the competition nor divulge to anyone the solution. Any reader found infringing this rule will be severely dealt with.

No. 235.

The following letters, when re-arranged, will form a double-word square, the connecting word of which is a Continental city:

AAAAA EEEEEE II M NN O PPP RRRRRR S TT W Y.

No. 236.

My initials and finals will give the names of an English poet and author respectively:

A term in physical geography; a fabulous monster; a tool; complete; a logical term; a historic island; a heraldic term.

No. 237.

Six hundred and sixty so ordered may be
That if you divide the whole number by three,
The quotient will exactly in numbers express
The half of six hundred and sixty, not less.

No. 238.

The first and third letters of equivalents of the following, when re-arranged, will give the name of a town in the Orange River Colony:

A musical instrument; to entangle; a prayer; an eastern cosmetic.

No. 239.

I am a well-known proverb:

My 20, 10, 26, 31, 19, 29, is a legal term.
My 16, 9, 12, 14, is a fish.
My 7, 1, 30, 18, 2, is an Indian title.
My 6, 30, 15, 32, is a bird.
My 11, 18, 19, 13, 29, 22, is an insect.

No. 240.

My FIRST'S my SECOND'S counterpart
In matter, form, and name;
Reverse me, and divide each part,
The likeness is the same.

My WHOLE is to all children dear,
But mostly so in France;
I always in that land appear
At youngsters' rout or dance.

RESULT OF "COMPOSITE FACES" COMPETITION.

The first prize of £2 has been awarded this week to Miss Emma Jordan, 21 Providence Street, Plymouth, whose attempt was first dealt with, and showed the least number of mistakes.

A copy of "The Raid of the 'Detrimental,'" by the Earl of Desart, has been sent to each of the following:

R. Jenkins, South Darenth, Kent.
Miss A. Clark, Cambridge.
H. R. Redman, Hastings.
E. Chalton, Spa Road, Bolton.
Miss E. E. Joyce, Taghmon, S.O., co. Wexford.
Mrs. E. Rees, Undercliffe Lane, Bradford.
Miss N. Adamson, Choppington, Morpeth.
A. Crafter, Orpington, Kent.
J. W. Shaw, Hitchin.
A. Williams, Courtney Road, Holloway, N.

SOLUTION OF BRAIN GYMNASIUM.

Nos. 217 to 222.

No. 217. Pterichthys (rich, thy, pest).

No. 218. Rebate.

No. 219.

A cl E
M aco N
E lbin G
R eve L
I ow A
CarnarvoN
A lmon D ENGLAND—AMERICA.

No. 220. HEMLOCK.

No. 221.

P L U M
L Y R E
U R N S
M E S S A G E
A N A L
G A P S
E L S E

No. 222. £126, £84, £42, £58, £21, £29, £14, 10s., £25, 10s.

There are many other ways of working out this last puzzle, and competitors who send in other correct solutions will stand an equal chance of winning the prize with these who send in the solution here published.

SHORT STORIES ADVERTISEMENT RATES.

Single column, per inch, per insertion	£0 10 0
Double " " ...	1 0 0
Full page inside, facing page of matter, either white paper or 2nd or 3rd page of cover, or back page, per insertion	10 0 0
Half-page " " "	5 0 0
Quarter-page " " "	2 10 0
Eighth-page " "	1 5 0
Front page, whole " "	12 10 0
" half " "	6 5 0

All spaces above one-eighth of a page are charged at per page rate.

Series discount: 5 per cent. for 13, 10 per cent. for 26, 15 per cent. for 52 insertions.

Black blocks are charged 25 per cent. extra. All advertisements are subject to approval. All copy must be sent in by Noon on Tuesday, Oct. 16th, if intended for the issue on sale Oct. 20th, and dated November 3rd. The Proprietors reserve the right to hold over or suspend the insertion of any advertisement without prejudice to other insertions on order. All communications should be addressed to the Advertisement Manager, "Pearson's Weekly" Offices, Henrietta Street, London, W.C.

Printed and published by C. Arthur Pearson Limited, Pearson's Buildings, Henrietta Street, London, W.C.

Digitized by Google

CHIVERS'

DELICIOUS! WHOLESOME! REFRESHING!

FLAVOURED WITH RIPE FRUIT JUICES.

DR. A. B. GRIFFITHS, Ph.D., F.R.S.E. (Edin.): "I have no hesitation in stating that Chivers' Jellies are the best I have ever examined."

WOMAN'S SIGNAL: "Absolutely clear and pleasant to look at on the table, and the flavour simply perfect."

A FAMILY GROCER: "We think them superior to any others, consequently have given up selling any other makes."

FREE SAMPLE on receipt of post-card. S. CHIVERS and SONS, Histon, Cambridge.

JELLIES.

1,000 CYCLES FREE.

Our Lady's or Gent's Link will be sent free of any charge for delivery on receipt of 1/6. These are not American or Foreign trash, but are made in England. This is our first advertisement, and by it we are determined to bring our name before the public. This offer will only hold good to the readers of this paper for the next 14 days. We will send with the bicycle a nickel silver lamp and pump, and the whole will be packed in a wood crate and sent to your address free immediately you take advantage of this advertisement and the offer we will send. A written guarantee given with each bicycle. We give these machines away to encourage you to become agents for us. If the bicycles are all given away your 1/6 will be returned. Send 1/6 and stamped addressed envelope for receipt. Address the London Direct Supply Company (Dept. E), 4, Duke St, Strand, London, W.C.

NOSE

MACHINES, LEES RAY, S. S. Dept., South Castle St, Liverpool, is a specialist on Ugly and Red Noses. Send stamp for particulars of his patent scientific Nose Improvers. Red Nose Cure, medically approved, 3/9. Outstanding Ear Machines 11/6.

A SUM of from 12s. to 25s. per week can be earned in spare hours or evenings by either sex everywhere.—Send addressed envelope for particulars to Box 24, Eclipse Works, 89 Aldersgate Street, E.C.

WHY BE FAT?

When a lady, who has discovered a simple means of Self-Cure will be happy to send particulars of same to any sufferer from this distressing complaint. Free on receipt of stamped addressed envelope. ADDRESS:

Mrs. TREVOR WELLS,
63 *HIGH HOLBORN, LONDON, W.C.*

HAIR DESTROYED.

Send me an envelope (stamped and addressed) and I will tell you how to remove all superfluous hair **free of charge.** (Send no money.) Address, in confidence, Miss E. V. (Room 3), 195 Oxford Street, London, W.

DEVONSHIRE CREAM

(Really Genuine). In Patent Air-tight Tins. ½-lb., 1/4; 1-lb., 2/4; 2-lb., 4/-, including Tin & Postage.
Mrs. CONYERS, Morchard Bishop, DEVON.

VARICOCELE.

Every man suffering from Varicocele and the allied troubles, should send for treatise, describing their Causes, Symptoms, Results, and Successful and Painless Treatment without surgical operation or the use of cumbersome trusses and electrical appliances. Will be sent sealed, post free, three stamps.

S. S. MURRAY,
7 Southampton Row, London, W.C.

KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR

KAPUTINE

SAFE REMEDY CURES

HEADACHE and NEURALGIA

IMMEDIATELY,

And is sold by all leading Chemists in Packets of 18 Doses, 1s.

To ANYONE HAVING THE LEAST DIFFICULTY, it will be sent post free for 12 Stamps by "KAPUTINE Ltd.," Huddersfield; or, on receipt of a stamped addressed envelope, A. M. Kaputine, Huddersfield, you will receive a free sample.

The fact that "KAPUTINE" is recommended by many leading Medical Men, and is used in National Hospitals and Infirmaries proves that it is THE, THE recognised SAFE REMEDY FOR HEADACHES.

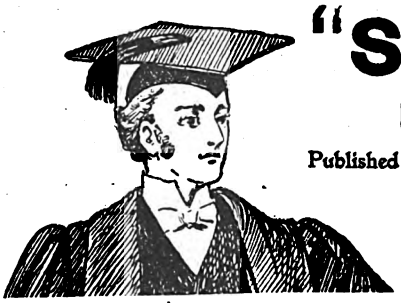
Refuse Substitutes and demand "KAPUTINE," the Safe Remedy. There is no substitute "LIKE IT"; nothing "AS GOOD"; nothing "SIMILAR."

KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR

Digitized by Google

A BOOK WORTH MANY POUNDS!

Professor Boyd Laynard's Great Work:



"SECRETS of BEAUTY, HEALTH, and LONG LIFE."

Published by HAMMOND, HAMMOND, and CO., 19, 21, and 23 Ludgate Hill, London.

The publishers have much pleasure in announcing the issue of the popular edition of Professor BOYD LAYNARD'S great work, "SECRETS OF BEAUTY, HEALTH, AND LONG LIFE."

This remarkable handbook to the three subjects embraced in the title has been a long period in preparation by the author—being, in fact, the labour of many years of diligent research and earnest investigation. The work is arranged in TWO BOOKS, FIFTEEN PARTS, and 127 CHAPTERS, the whole of which (in the popular edition now offered to the public) is bound in ONE VOLUME.

The book, although published at Two Shillings, will, if ordered direct from the publishers, be forwarded, carriage paid, to all readers of this paper at the low discount price of

ONE SHILLING AND SIXPENCE.

This is to secure for it a place in every home, by bringing it within the reach of all.

Amongst the numerous subjects dealt with in Professor Boyd Laynard's Work, the following are but a few (a complete syllabus, showing the contents of the whole of the 127 chapters, enumerating upwards of 500 subjects and divisions of subjects, can be had free on application to the publishers) :—

Analysis of beauty—Beauty a possible attainment—The way we make our own faces—Secrets of face transformation—Changeableness of beauty and its causes—Metaphysical secrets of keeping young and preserving a youthful appearance—The author's investigations into the causes why some individuals look younger than others at a certain age—Wonders of the skin—Relation of the skin to beauty—Effects of mental emotions upon the skin—Bad complexions and their causes—Diet that spoils and diet that improves the complexion—General care of the complexion—Construction, growth, and wonders of the hair—Why hair falls out, and its remedy—Premature greyness: its causes and prevention—General care of the hair—Superficial hairs—Wrinkles, and how to treat them—Freckles, tan, and blackheads—Oily skin, dry skin, and loose skin—How the nose may be improved—Protruding ears and their treatment—Offensive breath—Anatomy of the teeth—Why teeth decay—General care of the teeth—Tallness, and how to attain it—Round shoulders, and how to cure them—How to acquire a full chest—Perfect form and figure: their proper proportions—Thinness, and its treatment—Excessive stoutness—Care of the hands—Care of the feet—Physiognomy; or, the art of reading character from the face—Mental influence upon health—Power of the mind over the body—Influence of the mind in curing diseases—How the mind can induce disease—How violent passions injure health— aughter as a medicine—Ailments cured by laughter—Wonders of digestion—Relative value to our bodies of the principal articles of food—Fruits and vegetables as medicine: their various influences upon the physical system—Health-preserving diet, and its consistency—Diet favourable to mental exertion and intellectual culture—Influence of various foods upon our passions and propensities—Some perilous articles of food Light, and its influence upon health—Exercise and its relations to health—Baths and bathing; their influence upon health—The way we breathe, and how it affects our health—The marriage state, and its influence upon health—Statistics showing the comparative vitality of married and single persons—100 professions, trades and occupations: their respective influences upon health and long life—Sleep, and its relation to health—Conditions for healthy sleep—Insomnia—The eyes, and how to preserve them—The ears and hearing: how to prevent deafness—The voice: its culture and preservation—Memory, and how to improve it—Stammering, and how to cure it—Prevention of disease—Colds: their nature, prevention and treatment—Indigestion—Constipation—Neuralgia, Rheumatism—Nervousness—Headaches—That rebellious organ, the liver—Blushing: its physiology and treatment—Rules of life for attaining longevity—Compendium of the mental, moral, physical, and external influences that lessen the years of our earthly existence—The mental, moral, physical, and external influences that are conducive to long life—How to live to a hundred—Premature old age and its causes—Short biographies of 30 modern centenarians, whose ages range from 115 to 185 years—Attainment of long life under physical disabilities—General principles that can be laid down for the anticipation of longevity—The eight signs of long life.

WHAT THE PAPERS ARE SAYING.

The *Christian Globe* says: "Professor Laynard writes well on a subject he has evidently studied deeply. As a guide to good looks, health, and longevity this book differs entirely from ordinary works on the same subjects. It is more thorough and at the same time more practical. It is safe to say that anyone who ordered his or her life on the rules laid down in this book would certainly profit both physically and materially."

Success says: "Secrets of Beauty, Health, and Long Life," is no misnomer respecting the title of this remarkable work. The author has unfolded to the world many secrets regarding these subjects, the importance of which it is impossible to over estimate. The work, however, has not been written for the purpose of startling the reader with extraordinary theories, but as a practical hand-book for all those desiring beauty, health and long life. Nevertheless it is, perhaps, the most remarkable work of the present century, as a study of the syllabus of its 127 chapters will fully verify."

The *London Journal* (Aug. 4th) says: "Throughout the whole 127 chapters it is practical and sensible. It contains an immense amount of valuable advice, and, moreover, it is written in such a bright style that it is as interesting as a novel. Apart from the general usefulness of the work as a complete handbook to beauty, health, and longevity, it possesses an additional value to those requiring reliable advice upon specific subjects. For example, the chapters treating upon the skin, the complexion, the hair, the teeth, the eyesight, the voice, deafness, sleeplessness, nervousness, memory, stammering, diet, indigestion, and other important matters too numerous to mention, are each worth a physician's fee to particular readers, as they are based upon the pathologies of the highest medical and scientific authorities."

ORDER FORM. *TO BE CUT OUT.*

To HAMMOND, HAMMOND & Co.,
19, 21 & 23 LUDGATE HILL LONDON, E.C.

Please forward me Professor Boyd Laynard's complete work, "SECRETS OF BEAUTY, HEALTH AND LONG LIFE" (carriage paid), for which I enclose the sum of

ONE SHILLING AND SIXPENCE

Name _____

Address _____

Advertisements should be sent to "Short Stories" Advertisement Department, Henrietta Street, London, W.C.

Digitized by Google

£100 A WEEK IN FOOTBALL PRIZES. *See PEARSON'S WEEKLY.*

SHORT STORIES

A WEEKLY MAGAZINE FOR HOME AND TRAIN

No. 616. FOR WEEK ENDING OCTOBER 20TH, 1900. [ONE PENNY.

GIGANTIC BANKRUPTCY SALE CATALOGUE.

Re BRITISH CARPET WEAVING CO., late of Old St., London.

F. HODGSON & SONS, of LEEDS, have purchased for Cash the whole of the business, goodwill, and effects from Official Trustee in Bankruptcy. Illustrated Sale Catalogue of Brussels, Axminster, Velvet, and Foreign Carpets and Hearthrugs can be had Post Free, if mentioning SHORT STORIES, 20/10/1900.

4/6

To readers of SHORT STORIES, 20/10/1900. On receipt of Postal Order or stamps value (Regd.) we will send you the **Largest Genuine Reversible Carpet in Brussels Finish, with Rug,** ever sold at the Price, direct from the Looms to any address on receipt of amount. Suitable for drawing-room, dining-room, bedroom, &c., bordered and woven in Brussels Patterns, as an advertisement for our goods, thus saving any middle profit. Remember, these are woven and are made of a material almost equal to wool.

Thousands of these Carpets have been already sold at double these prices.
SPECIAL OFFER.—2 Carpets and 2 Rugs, 8/-.
Prodigious sale of the "PRUDENTIAL"

BRUSSELETTE CARPETS

Admittedly The Marvel of the Age.

Woven and Reversible, rich Brussels and Turkey Patterns and Colourings, superior quality, with handsome Border to match. A Marvel of Excellence and Beauty. These Carpets are superb imitations of real Brussels, and except by the closest scrutiny, the difference cannot be detected.

6 ft. by 6 ft.	**2/11**	**REDUCED SALE PRICE.**		6 ft. by 7½ft.	**3/11**
6 ft. by 9 ft.	**4/9**	7½ft. by 9 ft.	**5/11**	9 ft. by 9 ft.	**7/6**
9 ft. by 12 ft.	**9/6**	10½ft. by 12 ft.	**11/6**	9 ft. by 15 ft.	**12/6**
12 ft. by 13½ft.	**14/6**	12 ft. by 15 ft.	**15/9**	12 ft. by 18 ft.	**19/6**
				9 ft. by 10½ft.	**8/6**
				12 ft. by 12 ft.	**12/9**
				12 ft. by 21 ft.	**22/6**

When ordering, please mention if for Bed, Dining, Drawing, or Sitting Room, and any particular colour preferred.

A Reversible Hearthrug (Reg.) to match, **sent for 1/6 extra, size 2yd 1yd. A Stock of 10,000 Patent Wadded Quilts, Toraliums, or Bed Covers, Reversible** (as illustration). Covered with Oriental Soft Sateen, and on reverse side another beautiful floral design. Size 56in. by 60in.

These Quilts are offered below anything in the Wholesale Trade, and cause the greatest consternation to the buyer, wondering how they can be produced for the money.

AT AN ENORMOUS REDUCTION TO CLEAR OUT.

Sale Price
3/6
each, postage 6d. extra.

SPECIAL OFFER: 3 Quilts for **10s.**, or 6 for **19s. 6d.**, or **12** for **38s.**
Cheques and P.O.'s payable to—

F. HODGSON & SONS, WOODSLEY ROAD, LEEDS.

Allen Foster & Co.

THE LONDON MANUFACTURERS

Buy Direct at First Cost from the Leading Firm of London Manufacturers.

Design No. 326. 10/6.

A Costume any Lady can wear.—Prettily and neatly trimmed with tucks of velvet and cloth. **Sterling Value.** This bodice has a tight-fitting back with full front. The Skirt is cut to drape gracefully. Made in the **Specialite Serge** or **Venetian Cloth**—two splendid wearing materials. Colours: Black, Navy, Grey, Light and Dark Fawn, Brown, Green, Royal Red, Purple, Blue Grey, &c. **Good Fit Guaranteed.** Price only **10/6.** Carriage paid, 6d. extra. Skirt alone, **5/6.** Carriage, 6d. In sending order, please give bust measurement (under arms), size of waist, and length of Skirt in front.

Design No. 326.
10/6

Patterns and Self-Measurement Forms Post Free.

Design No. 2194.
10/6

Send Post-card at once.

GRAND VALUE FOR MONEY.

Write at once for Catalogue of Bargains, Patterns, Order and Measurement Forms. Post Free.

Regular Stock Sizes of Costumes are 34, 36, 38 in. round bust (under arms), the Skirts being 38, 40, and 42 in. long in front. Larger and Special Sizes to Customers' own measurements, 1/6 extra.

Design No. 2194. 10/6.

The FASHIONABLE THREE-QUARTER SACQUE JACKET, 30in. long. Made in the renowned "Alfosco" Beaver Cloth in Black, Fawn, Brown, and Royal. This Jacket has a double-breasted front, with smoke pearl buttons. Price only **10/6.** Carriage, 6d. The GREATEST VALUE ON THE MARKET. Send for one. All sizes in stock. In sending order, give bust measurement (under arms). Money returned if not approved.

ALLEN FOSTER & CO. hold a large stock of **Ladies' Jackets, Coats, and Capes. All Styles and Prices.** ILLUSTRATIONS POST FREE.

Design No. 323.
6/6

Design No. 323. 6/6.

The New and Fashionable Costume Skirt. This Skirt has proved an **immense success.** It is made in all the colours of the two splendid wearing fabrics—The Specialite Serge and the Venetian Coating. All Sizes in Stock. This Skirt is cut in the New Circular Shape, and has a 16-inch flounce round bottom, which is lined with good linenette.

A Bargain for **6/6.**
Carr. paid, 6d. extra.
Send for one.
PATTERNS FREE.

ALLEN FOSTER & CO.,
THE LONDON MANUFACTURERS,
47 Golden Lane, Barbican, London, E.C.

Digitized by Google

BIG PRIZE SCHEME

For MARCH, 1901.

25,602 PRIZES, value £10,000

LIST OF PRIZES:

1	Cash Prize £50	£50 0
1	Cash Prize £40	40 0
10	Handsome Pianos, in walnut, £40 each	400 0
5	Cash Prizes, £25 each	125 0
10	Gents' Bicycles, Freewheels, £17 17s.	178 10
10	Ladies' Bicycles, Free-wheels, £17 17s.	178 10
10	Cash Prizes, £10 each	100 0
20	Jones's Sewing Machines, £8 each	160 0
20	Cash Prizes, £5 each	100 0
50	Rolled Gold Lever Watches, £2 10s. each	125 0
100	Cash Prizes, £2 each	200 0
50	Dinner Services (56 pieces), £2 each	100 0
50	Folding Bed Chairs, £2 each	100 0
50	Ladies' Travelling Trunks, £2 each	100 0
200	Cash Prizes, £1 each	200 0
200	Ladies' Leather Hatboxes, £1 each	200 0
100	Basket Arm Chairs, upholstered, £1	100 0
400	pairs Blankets, 15s. per pair	300 0
200	½-doz Electro-plated Forks, large, 15s. per ½-doz.	150 0
200	½-doz. Electro-plated Forks, small, 15s. per ½-doz.	£150 0
500	Ladies' Umbrellas, 15/- ea.	375 0
500	Gents' Umbrellas, 15s. each	375 0
400	Best Electro-plated Teapots, 15s. each	300 0
400	Handsome Meat Carvers, with Steel in Case, 15s. set	300 0
1000	Cash Prizes, 10s. each	500 0
1000	pairs Bed Sheets 10s. each	500 0
1000	White Linen Table Cloths, 10s. each	500 0
1000	Ladies' Umbrellas, 7/6 each	375 0
1000	Ladies' Leather Purses, 7/6 each	375 0
200	½-doz. Table Knives, 7/6 per ½-doz.	75 0
200	½-doz. Dessert do., 7/6 per ½-doz.	75 0
2000	Ladies' Dress Lengths, Navy Blue Serge, 7/6 each	750 0
2000	Cash Prizes of 5s. each	500 0
4715	Ladies' Leather Handbags, 4s. each	943 0
4000	½-doz. Fine Linen Cambric Handkerchiefs, 2/6 per ½-doz.	500 0
4000	Handsome Work-boxes, 2/6 each	500 0
25,602		**£10,000 0**

CONDITIONS OF COMPETITION.

Every tablet of **Watson's Matchless Cleanser** is enclosed in a Wrapper, with signature up the centre of same. Save the WHOLE Wrapper (tops of Wrappers will be disqualified), and send, postage or carriage paid, to **Joseph Watson & Sons Limited, Whitehall Soap Works, Leeds,** not later than MARCH 31ST, 1901. Each package will be counted as one lot; separate entries must be sent under separate covers. If any parcel arrives, postage or carriage not being fully paid, such parcel will be refused. Be careful to see that the full postage is paid. Each parcel sent in must contain the full name and address of sender, and number of Wrappers sent in must be marked on the same paper. On outside of parcel write legibly **"Prize Competition."** The prizes will be awarded in the above order to the senders of the highest numbers of Wrappers. A list, giving result of the Competition, will be sent with each prize when it is sent out. Every wrapper must have first contained soap. No employee of Joseph Watson & Sons Limited will be eligible. All prizes will be despatched about April 25th.

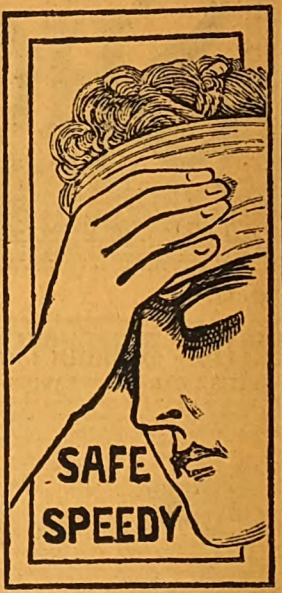
WATSON'S MATCHLESS CLEANSER

The Best Soap for all purposes, still holds the lead. Quality perfect. Is the Housewife's Friend. It saves her health, her strength, her wealth; washes her clothes with ease and leaves them sweet and pure, and will not injure the most delicate fabric. **It has the lar-est sale of 1-lb. tablets in the world.** Sold by all Grocers, Oilmen, &c., throughout the United Kingdom. Buy it. Prove it and secure a Prize.

KAPUTINE

The Best & Safest Remedy for

HEADACHE.



NURSE HILL, of the London Association of Nurses, writes:

"I have seen Kaputine administered to many patients, and can truly say it is a remedy which should have a place in every household."

All Leading Chemists sell KAPUTINE, **1/-**. Samples One Penny.

If your Chemist has not KAPUTINE send his name and address to

KAPUTINE, HUDDERSFIELD,

and we will send you a SHILLING PACKET FREE.

WORTH A CROWN A DOSE.

TO THE QUEEN PURVEYORS

CROSSE & BLACKWELL'S

GREEN PEA. GRAVY. JULIENNE. MULLIGATAWNY. TOMATO. HOUSEHOLD. CRESSY. &c.

SOUP TABLETS

OF ALL GROCERS ETC. THROUGHOUT THE WORLD

COMPLEXION

A woman's complexion is what she makes it, but "Cricine" is the finest aid to a good one. It removes all Blotches, Eruptions, leaving the skin soft and smooth. One trial will convince. "Cricine" Cream is unrivalled.

In two sizes, **2/6** and **5/-**.

Of all Chemists, or post free on receipt of postal order from

The CRICINE Co.,

Regent House, Regent Street, LONDON.

HAIR DESTROYED.

Send me an envelope (stamped and addressed) and I will tell you how to remove all superfluous hair **free of charge.** (Send no money.) Address, in confidence, Miss E. V. (Room 3), 195 Oxford Street, London, W.

ESTABLISHED 1851.

BIRKBECK BANK

Southampton Buildings, Chancery Lane, London.

2% on CURRENT ACCOUNTS, on the minimum monthly balances when not drawn below £100.

The BIRKBECK ALMANACK, with full particulars, post free. FRANCIS RAVENSCROFT, *Manager.*

THE MOST NUTRITIOUS.

EPPS'S

GRATEFUL—COMFORTING.

COCOA

BREAKFAST—SUPPER.

Digitized by Google

SHORT STORIES

No. 616.] For the Week Ending October 20th, 1900. [ONE PENNY.

THE HAND THAT FIRED THE SHOT.

"SIT still!" cried a man's imperative voice close to my ear. And then, before I had time to move or to realise what was about to happen, a hand, clutching a revolver, was thrust over my shoulder from behind.

Almost instantly there was a flash, a loud report, and a bullet whizzed between the heads of the diners in the crowded café, and at the other side of the room a man pitched forward upon the table—dead!

Blinded and deafened by the shot, it was some seconds before I recovered myself enough to turn upon the murderous unknown, who had so coolly used my shoulder as a rest. The café was in an uproar. Men rushed hither and thither in confusion, or sought shelter beneath tables. But there was one man who struggled in the grasp of half-a-dozen waiters and guests, who succeeded in forcing him into a chair and wresting the smoking weapon from his hand. As our eyes met I felt my heart knock loudly at my ribs, for I knew him, and I saw that he knew me.

Unexpected and thrilling as the meeting was, much as he had changed since I last saw him in the uniform of a Spanish officer, I knew I was not mistaken. I had too much reason to remember his dark, cruel face.

Then, like a flash, I remembered something else, and I looked for his companion. There she sat, on the opposite side of his table, a blaze of red from head to foot—hat, dress, gloves, shoes—and her handsome, dark, impassive face looked out of its crimson setting with the seeming indifference of a sphinx. But the little red-gloved hand was clenched, and the little red-shod foot tapped the floor nervously.

I was almost stunned to see her here, in New York, and, above all, with him. But when I would have gone to her side I was forced back by the arrival of the police, and in another moment they had been hurried into a carriage and were driven rapidly away.

For some time no one was allowed to leave the café. The police were arresting witnesses. In virtue of my well-known position as a newspaper man (although I had been unattached since my return from Cuba, with shattered health) I was dismissed with a question.

"Do you know anything of this, Mr. Burton?" asked Sergeant Murphy.

"I saw the man fall. The other was behind me."

"Very good. You'll be on hand if you're wanted, of course. Too bad you're not on the *Telephone* now. There's a good story in this."

"Looks like it," said I, as I strolled carelessly over to where the victim lay, stretched upon two chairs.

I have said I was a reporter. I have the news instinct strongly developed, and having seen those others together, I had small doubt whose body lay upon the chairs.

As I elbowed my way through the

There was one man who struggled in the grasp of half-a-dozen waiters and guests.

All rights reserved.]

Digitized by Google

crowd of phlegmatic officers and excited spectators his face was before my eyes, his name upon my lips. And I was right. All that was mortal of Manuel Garcia lay before me.

Knowing what I did of the past history of these three Cubans, who had so tragically thrust themselves once more into my life, I formed, very readily, a general idea of the causes which led up to this crime, and, as I sauntered homeward through the brisk November air, my mind was busy with thoughts of them, particularly of Colonel José Muchado, whom I hated with an intense ardour worthy of his own fiery race.

The papers next morning fairly bristled with "scare heads," and all manner of theories were advanced. I longed to be again in the thick of it, but months of fever and a Cuban prison had made all that impossible for the time.

Strange to say, no one had actually seen the shot fired, the table at which Muchado sat being in a corner, and partially concealed by a large palm, which formed part of the café decoration.

The police had already established the identity of Garcia, who was known to be in New York organising a filibustering expedition for the relief of the Cuban insurgents. Out of the mass of conflicting statements and futile guesses, I gathered the few facts which were of interest to me. Colonel Muchado refused to talk, and Señorita Blanco, equally silent, was under respectful police surveillance at the home of her aunt, Señora Maria de Soto de Alvarado.

I decided to call upon the señorita forthwith. I wished to recall the memory of certain languorous, Cuban days; to state certain facts which were lying heavy upon my heart. Do not mistake me, I was not in love with Señorita Blanco. She was quite indifferent to me.

But I held Colonel Muchado beneath my heel, and—blame me if you will, when you have learnt all—I was about to crush him as I would a worm. I had not sought mine enemy. He had been delivered into my hands, and I would but mete out to him his just deserts.

I found the señorita, as I had hoped, alone, her aunt being prostrated by the shock of the tragedy. As I entered the room, the señorita, still clad in that striking, red costume, rose from her chair to greet me.

The excitement of the previous night was gone, and in its place she showed a lassitude no less becoming in one of her youth and beauty.

"So," she said, extending a small, white hand. "You have come. I hoped for this. You were in the café when—when——"

She paused and shuddered, ending faintly:

"You were in the café."

"It is because of that I am here, señorita," I answered. "I do not forget the old days at Las Cascas, nor the friendship of your father, whose memory I revere."

Tears filled her eyes, and her head drooped.

"So, you knew that he is dead?"

"I knew it, señorita."

There are those who, by virtue of certain acts of mine (trivial enough, as it seems to me), have called me brave. But as she raised her head there came into the eyes of this slight girl a look which I was glad to know was not for me. She was the personification of revenge as she stood there in a blaze of hate and beauty.

"Señor, he was murdered. Shot down in cold blood. Did they tell you that? Can you believe it? He, as kind as a mother, as gentle as a priest. Yet it is so, señor. He was murdered, but," and her voice fell to a whisper, "he is avenged."

It seemed a thousand pities to break down the weak fabric of her seeming vengeance. But I had sought her with a stern purpose, which I meant to fulfil. In the face, however, of her tragic triumph I could not find it in my heart to be abrupt.

"Is he avenged," I asked, "by last night's work?"

"How else?" she answered. "It was he, Garcia, who gave information to the Spaniards that my father was in secret sympathy with the patriots and spent his fortune for the cause of *Cuba libre*. It was he who caused my father's death. And why? Because he was refused my hand. In his anger he became a dastard and betrayed him. But he forgot me. He forgot——"

"Señorita," said I, interrupting her, "may I ask how you know it was Garcia who informed?"

"From Señor Muchado, who, though a Spanish officer, rode fifty miles through the night to warn my father. But he came too late. My people told me he wept with anger when he found the arrest already made, and in his wrath he let fall the name of Garcia. That was enough for me, and although Señor Muchado refused at first to tell me what he knew, why—I am a woman, señor, and he told me, you may be sure. It was from him I learnt that Señor Garcia had fled to New York, fearing the vengeance of my father's friends, who were many. Together we followed and—we found him."

"You will pardon the question from an old friend. Are you Señor Muchado's wife?"

She flushed hotly at my words, but she replied:

"That is yet to be. No man might call me wife while Garcia lived. But I am the affianced of Señor Muchado."

There was an embarrassed pause. It was evident she meant to tell me no more. It was now my turn to speak, but when I thought of how much anguish it would cost her, I had almost held my peace. But I could not see her enter the fool's paradise of an alliance with Muchado. I had that to say which must find voice, and I steeled myself for the ordeal.

"Señorita," I said, "your story is incomplete. There are details which should be filled in. If you will listen to me, I will supply them."

She was on the alert in an instant, as if she scented some danger.

"I do not understand you, señor," she said coldly.

"I will make myself plain," I went on; and what with pity for her, and the strain I was under to keep calm, my voice sounded hard and unsympathetic. "You are not possessed, señorita, of all the facts relating to your father's death, and pardon me, much that you believe is false."

That same dangerous look flashed into her eyes on the instant, and it became her well; so well, that I, knowing it must give place to more pitiful glances, could scarce proceed upon the task I had set myself to do. I paused a little to give her anger sway.

"You insult me, señor," she cried. "You insult Señor Muchado. I must beg you to leave the house."

"One moment, señorita. You can hardly believe I would be wantonly unkind to a woman in your unhappy position. By the memory of your father, I ask you to hear me. He would have desired it, I can assure you."

There was little enough of softening in her troubled face, but she made me a sign that I might proceed.

"It is a tragic story," I began, "and while I would not drag it out to unnecessary length, I will, if you please, touch upon some matters which are not new to you, but which lead up, with less unpleasant abruptness, to that which you do not know. I wish to soften——"

Digitized by Google

"Spare yourself, señor," she said. "I have borne much. I can bear even this forced communication. But no unnecessary details, if you please."

"When I was sent to Cuba by the *Daily Telephone*," I went on in my own way, for I knew better than she the shock she had to bear, "among my letters of introduction that to your father was considered of the greatest importance. By what secret agency I know not, his attitude was well-known to the paper. It was to Las Casas, therefore, that I at once proceeded, and it was there I made my headquarters for months. Your father, indeed all the household, were most kind to me, and when I fell ill of a fever, it was yourself, señorita, who nursed me."

She moved impatiently.

"It is not to compliment me that you force this interview upon me," she said.

"When you were called to Havana," I proceeded, unmoved, "by a note which afterwards proved to be false, I was so far recovered from my fever that I could move about the house. Your father was, at that time, in a state of great anxiety. Spanish spies were very active, denunciations frequent. He grew cautious, even to timidity—a weakness not strange in one of his age—and dangerous affiliations. Not knowing whom to trust even among his intimates, he trusted me, and from his lips I learnt much of the affairs both of his country and his family. It was in this way I learnt, señorita, of the two men who aspired to your hand—Manuel Garcia, patriot of patriots, and Colonel Muchado, of the Spanish force."

She fairly ground her teeth in anger, and plucked at the folds of her crimson gown.

"But in those troubled times, even love must wait on duty. Garcia, too well-known as an active insurgent to be desirable as an open friend, was bidden to wait until the liberation of the island. Muchado, with whose cruelties the country rang, and whose zeal for Spain outstripped the bounds of common humanity, was dismissed without hope of favour."

"I have heard enough, señor, I have heard enough!" cried the señorita, rising. "Why do you force upon me these criticisms of men, of whose qualities and motives you know nothing? Why do you torture me with useless reminiscence? Go! I beg—I command you, go!"

"Here me out, señorita. The tale will justify me in the end. Neither of these young suitors took his dismissal calmly. There were angry words with both, but your father was firm in this, gentle as was his nature, and his decision was final. So matters stood when you were lured to Havana, that you might not witness your father's arrest. They came upon us in the night, and we awoke to find the house surrounded, and, to give colour to a story of resistance, some of the servants were slain. Neither your father's age nor my sickness protected us from the inhumanity of these ruffians. Hurried from our rooms, half-dressed, our arms were pinioned, and we were forced to walk, with lariats about our necks, through the long night, and in the choking dust of our mounted captors.

"His name! The officer's name!" she demanded fiercely.

"In vain did your father demand the respect due to his years; in vain I announced my nationality and threatened the vengeance of the United States. We were driven forward with coarse jeers and brutal laughter, urged on by blows of lariats and the flat of swords. I will not dwell upon the horrors of that journey, but when, after three days of misery, we were thrown into prison, your father was prostrated under the weight of fatigue and insult, while I raved in the delirium of fever."

The señorita leant a little forward as I went on. I had begun to interest her.

"During the dreadful days that followed, penned in a stifling room with a score of other prisoners, ill-treated, ill-fed, insulted by ribald guards, your father tended me as a mother would have done. I can never forget his gentle ministration, his calm bearing under the worst indignities, his quiet courage and cheering hope.

"Upon a day when I had lain for hours in a kind of lethargy, a Spanish officer entered our filthy cell and approached your father, who had just risen from his knees beside my pallet. I saw the good man stiffen into a stern dignity of bearing, and heard his cold greeting

Digitized by Google

of the smart newcomer. The latter, ordering the other prisoners to fall back to the limit of the crowded room, and judging no doubt from my appearance that the end was near, addressed your father in low tones, which were yet loud enough for me to hear each word.

"'I find you fallen upon evil times, Señor Blanco,' he said with a sneer. 'I must tell you, señor, the case is desperate. Information has been lodged. Information which smells of death. You are denounced as a traitor, Señor Blanco. Do you know the danger in which you stand?'

"'Señor,' replied your father, gravely, 'I am an old man. I can meet death with a smile. But these are ill words you give me. They are an insult alike to grey hairs and an honourable name.'

"'Caramba! my friend, you take it coolly. But it is this way. You see, I am something of a power here. Do not underestimate it. At my word you are free, or—you die. I would like you to choose quickly, for the odour of this cell offends me.'"

At this juncture the señorita sprang to her feet and confronted me.

"His name! The officer's name!" she demanded fiercely.

"Señorita, be calm. The officer was none other than Señor Muchado."

"You lie!" she cried. "You lie! What is the meaning of this trickery? Are you an agent of police? A spy upon my emotions? I will have you driven from the house."

Jove! what a crimson embodiment of fury was she now. Her red dress seemed but the outer sign and emblem of the fire within. She rushed to the door to order my ejectment, but I had my back against it in a twinkling and raised a warning hand.

"Señorita, I swear that I tell the truth. Hear me to the end. If you loved your father, hear me."

She paused at that, then fell to pacing the floor in a whirlwind of rage.

"Go on!" she cried. "I will hear you to the end. But I shall know if it be the truth you tell me. I will not be fed with lies."

"I thank you, señorita. I will waste no time. Your father wasted none on his decision.

"'Señor,' he answered, 'I will die in honour rather than live disgraced. You can offer me, I think, no terms which would not be too dear a price for my remaining fragment of life!'

"'You are a fool,' cried the other roughly. 'Your honour is but a thing of straw, easily fired, soon destroyed. I do not ask of you the worthless secrets of your ragged following. You may well be honoured by my terms. Give me Isabel and you may go to your home and to your futile plots. If not, I shall order the firing-squad for six o'clock to-morrow morning.'

"Your father was not shaken by these threats.

"'My daughter,' he said, 'is not for sale, even at the price of life, nor would I be party to any agreement which should bind her to one who has shown himself a scoundrel.'

"Muchado, in a white heat of rage, menaced the old man with his clenched fist.

"'I will give you,' he cried, 'until to-morrow at six.'

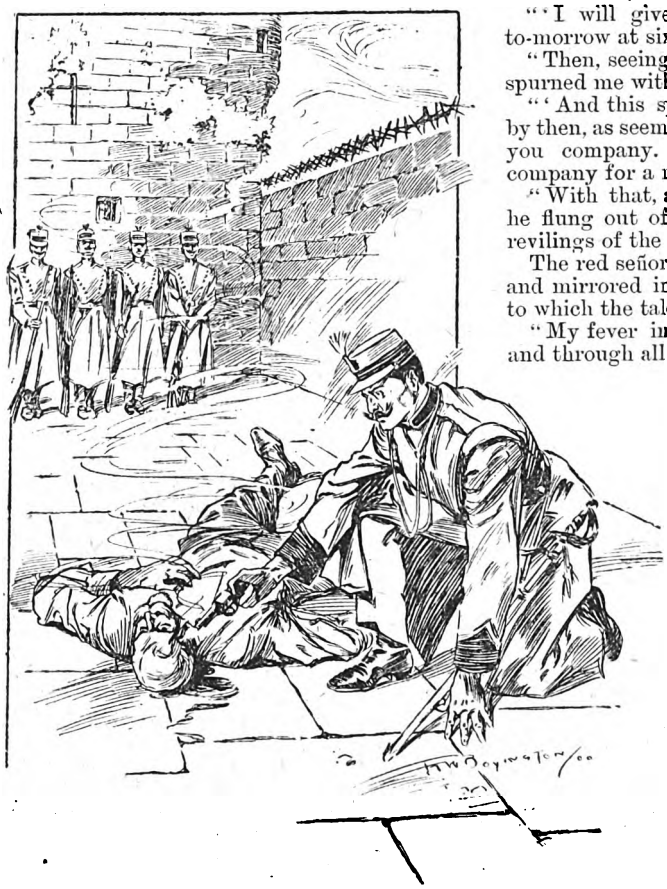
"Then, seeing that I watched him, he spurned me with his foot, saying:

"'And this spy, if he be not carrion by then, as seems most likely, shall keep you company. A Gringo dog is fit company for a renegade ass.'

"With that, and a mouthful of oaths he flung out of the room, amid the revilings of the prisoners."

The red señorita hung upon my words and mirrored in her face every emotion to which the tale gave rise.

"My fever increased with the night, and through all the long, sad hours your father never left my side. Never have I seen such strength of character. Forgetful of himself, he tried to ease what were not unlikely to have proved my last moments. For myself I was too weak to care what happened, and when day broke I lay barely conscious of life. True to his word Colonel Muchado entered the cell a little before six. What was said I could not hear, but suddenly I was dragged roughly from my pallet, only to fall limp and inert upon the floor. Aroused to consciousness by the rough handling I had received, I was aware of your father speaking with grave distinctness.



"He placed his pistol close to that grey head and fired."

"'I have nothing more to say, señor. You have my answer.'

"'To the yard then. We will soon end this folly. As for the Gringo, let him die as he lies. He is not worth a bullet.'

"I heard the tramp of the departing guard, the rattle of their accoutrements, the clang of the cell door. Then, after what seemed an interminable time, there came through the grated window the tramp of those marching feet, the thud of rifle butts upon the pavement, the sound of orders sharply given. By a supreme effort of the will I turned upon my hands and knees, and crept towards the window, which, as I knew, overlooked the prison

Digitized by Google

yard. But the window was high and I could not rise to my feet.

"My fellow prisoners were, moreover, crowding about the grating and struggling for a sight of the tragedy without. But, noticing my futile efforts, they drew back, ashamed of their idle curiosity in the face of one whose close connection with the sorrows of that grand old man, gave him rights above their own. Two of them raised me to my feet and supported me while I looked out through the grated slit, nor did the others seek to disturb me, being touched, I doubt not, by my weakness and the cruelty of the deed at which I gazed."

The señorita sat, a huddled mass of red drapery, from which her dark eyes stared, fixed and tearless.

"The firing party stood beneath the window, so near that I could almost have put forth a hand and touched them. Over against the dead wall at the other side of the yard your father faced them, erect and fearless, with bared head and shirt thrown open at the breast—a gallant sight, señorita. I shall see it while I live. Between the soldiers and their victim, Colonel Muchado paced to and fro, white as the plume of his shako. He held his watch in his hand and glanced at it nervously and often. Your father stood like a rock, in sharp contrast to the other's feverish mood.

"'You have two minutes more, señor,' Muchado called out sternly.

"Your father disdained to answer, but catching sight of my pale face behind the bars he smiled and waved his hand. Muchado did not look up. His agitation was intense. The tiger and the cur fought within him. Again he called:

"'One minute more.'

"Still no answer. Only a moving of the lips in prayer. That last terrible minute seemed an age, but at length the colonel spoke again:

"'The time is up, Señor Blanco. Do you still refuse? Then here you die, a traitor to your country and your sovereign.'

"Following this came the short, sharp words of command, and as the order 'Fire!' fell from Muchado's lips the levelled rifles cracked and a brave man met ignoble death. While the smoke yet hung heavily in the yard Muchado walked over to the prostrate form. Whether he saw some sign of life I cannot say, but he placed his pistol close to that grey head and fired. Then with a braggart's oath, cried out:

"'So perish all the enemies of Spain!'

"I saw no more. The strain had been too great, and I fell back into the arms of my fellow-prisoners, unconscious."

The señorita, no longer an incarnate vengeance, cowered, weeping, in her chair. I went to her and touched her gently on the shoulder.

"Señorita," I said, "you once accepted the unsupported word of Colonel José Muchado in a matter of life and death. I do not ask you to accept mine on those terms. Some time during his last sad night on earth your father found means to write this brief statement, this last farewell, hoping that by some means it might come at last into your hands. Had I died, my fellow-prisoners were sworn to see it delivered, if fate permitted.

"But when, through the influence of the American consul I was set free, I bore the letter in my breast. Too ill to remain in Cuba I came to the United States, resolved to seek you again, when my health should be restored. Having found you here I have nothing left to do but give you this little scrap of paper on which are written your father's last words."

She took the paper mechanically, but did not open it.

"You have given me a cruel blow, señor," she said, "but I thank you. It is better so. I cannot but believe you, and I will not insult your honour by reading this paper before I tell you so. I beg of you to leave me now. I wish to be alone."

And so I left her, nor did I ever see her again, save once, and then not face to face. Receiving an offer from the *Telephone* to serve as special correspondent at Queen Victoria's Golden Jubilee, and the police considering my testimony in the Garcia murder case as of no importance, I accepted, in the hope that new scenes might expedite my cure.

After completing this assignment I made a tour of the continent, and at Madrid made one of the crowd that gathered to witness the return of General Weyler.

As I stood in the street among the throng, a carriage drove briskly by, and in it I caught one glimpse of a face I could never forget. It was Señorita Blanco, the wreck of her former self, clad now in deepest black, and with all the old fire departed from her face. It made me inexpressibly sad, for I knew, as no one else could know, the fire that still burned within.

When I returned to New York, Muchado had paid the penalty which the law exacts from murderers. Into the details of his trial, in which Señorita Blanco was the chief incriminating witness, I shall not enter. That he was a murderer my own eyes had shown me.

Not, let me confess it, in that New York café, but in that earlier time when he had done to death that gallant gentleman, Señor Juan Blanco. Of the murder of Garcia he was innocent, but the silence of two persons sent him to the gallows. Señorita Blanco and I sat in judgment upon him, and rendered the silent verdict, "Death."

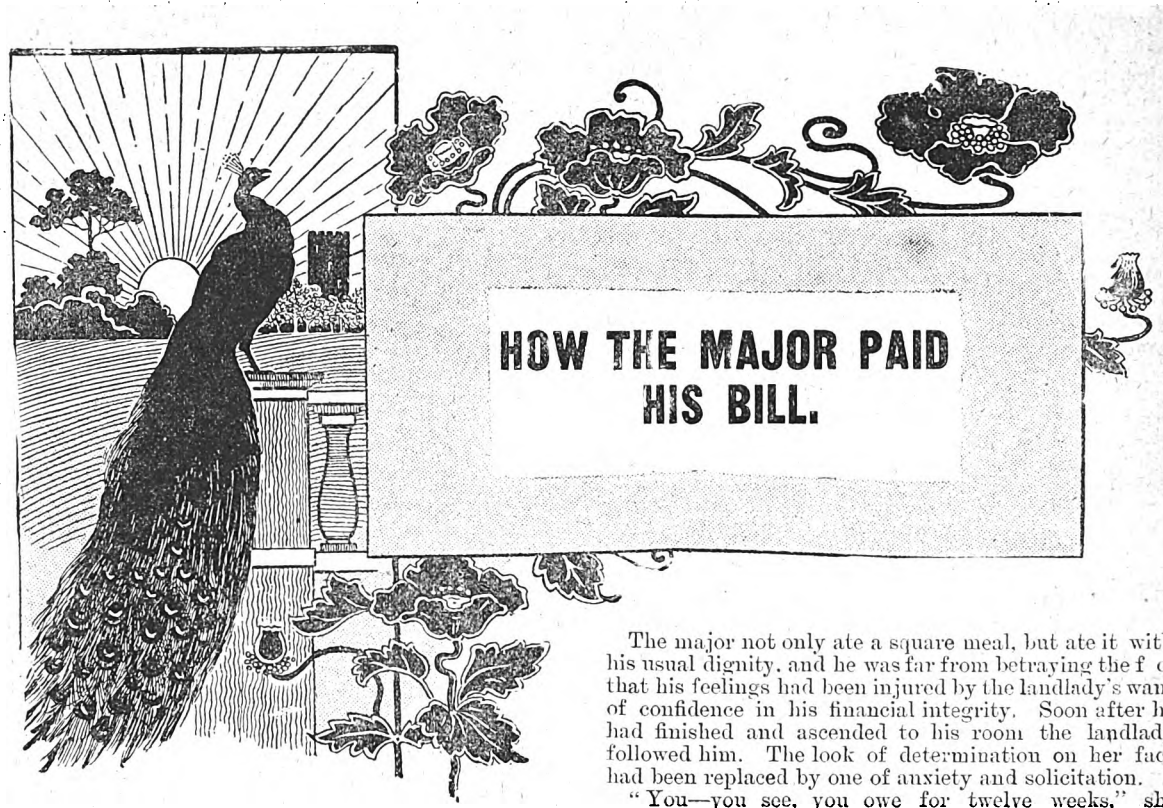
For the voice that cried out in the café, "Sit still," was addressed, not to me, but to the Señorita Blanco, and the hand which was thrust over my shoulder for the fatal shot was small and feminine, and trimly gloved in red.

FREDERIC L. WHEELER.

Mr. Bowser has suddenly decided to complete the holiday which came to such an untimely end when he took a house in the country.

WATCH FOR HIS RETURN.

Digitized by Google



HOW THE MAJOR PAID HIS BILL.

When Major Crofoot reached his boarding-house the other evening there were surface indications of trouble. There was a policeman hanging about the front steps; the major's trunk was down in the front hall; several boarders were lounging about with expectant looks, and the landlady had evidently made up her mind to do or die.

It took the major just thirty seconds to realise the situation. The landlady was about to address him when he held up his hand to interrupt her and blandly observed:

"My dear Mrs. Roberts, I have a favour to ask."

"It won't do no good to talk to me," she replied.

"Will you do me the favour to hand me a statement of my indebtedness? I believe I owe you for five or six weeks' board. If not too much trouble——"

"You owe for twelve weeks, and it won't do any good to talk."

"If not too much trouble," continued the major with dignity, "I should like a statement. It may be twelve weeks, as you say. I pay but little attention to these trifles. Indeed, you may make it out for twelve weeks, and then I will draw you a cheque for the amount. I have been very busy, as you know, and if I have caused you any inconvenience I am sorry for it."

"You—you will pay," gasped the landlady, as she stood and stared at him.

"Should you want three months in advance you can have it as well. So long as I'm drawing a cheque I might as well make it for £40 or £50 as £10 or £20. It might be well, while I am eating my dinner, for you to return my trunk to my room and give the policeman a hint to move on. Come to my room half-an-hour hence"

The major not only ate a square meal, but ate it with his usual dignity, and he was far from betraying the fact that his feelings had been injured by the landlady's want of confidence in his financial integrity. Soon after he had finished and ascended to his room the landlady followed him. The look of determination on her face had been replaced by one of anxiety and solicitation.

"You—you see, you owe for twelve weeks," she explained as she handed him the bill.

"Exactly—I see," he replied, as he received it. "Twelve weeks at thirty shillings a week is £18. Sorry if you have been inconvenienced. Don't you want £30?"

"Oh, major. I am sorry if I hurt your feelings," she protested.

"I must say that my feelings have been lacerated to an extent, but I am to blame for it. I will write you a cheque for £18. Should you want a loan during the month—£50, £100, £200—please let me know. There you are, my dear woman—there you are. It is your due, and I am glad to hand it to you, but I must confess that your want of confidence in my financial integrity is something of a shock to me. One should pay for his room and board of course, but where one is originating, evolving, promoting, and organising to the extent of millions——"

"I know, major—I know," interrupted the landlady, "but I'm no business woman. I couldn't tell about your schemes. You took me in on two of them, and I was to make millions, but I haven't seen a shilling yet."

"But you didn't secure any stock. You delayed until it was too late. I gave you first chance, but you didn't come to time."

"Was that it?" she asked, as she nervously played with the cheque. "I asked some of the boarders about it, and they said your schemes were all wind."

The major looked at her in a pitying way for a couple of minutes, and then got up and walked to and fro for a time before he said:

"My dear woman, you have common sense. If you hadn't you couldn't run a boarding-house. You

Digitized by Google

must let common sense guide you in all things. On two occasions, owing to your confidence in my financial integrity, I have tried to make you a millionaire. Your timidity has been the stumbling block. Let me present you a few facts. You have heard of Egypt, of course?"

"I—I think I have," she faltered.

"One of the oldest countries on earth. In connection with Egypt you must have heard of mummies?"

"Yes."

"Very well. Egyptian kings, queens, princes and great men and women were dying ten thousand years ago. Their bodies were preserved in spices. To-day they are simply relics—souvenirs—curiosities. Every museum must have its mummies. Same with all side shows and private collectors. If mummies were easier to be got and cheaper in price, almost every family would have one in place of a piano. Do I make myself plain?"

"Yes."

"You have a piano here, for instance. It is tuned about once in fifteen years. You have fourteen boarders. Every evening they gather to hear someone drum on the old tin pan. If you had a £5 mummy in the parlour don't you see how much more educational and entertaining it would be? No drumming—no squalling—no complaints to the police, but the fourteen would gather round the mummy while someone reads Egyptian history.

"You must follow me—you can't help but follow me. Can't you realise that if every public school had its mummy the general interest would be enhanced a hundred per cent.? Can't you understand that if a restaurant had a mummy on exhibition, it would beat any sort of music or free lunch?"

"Yes—but—but——"

"Then there is nothing more to say. The demand for mummies is firm and steady. There is always a scarcity in the market. They are simply picked up here and there in Egypt, with nothing like system in buying and selling. To-day—this evening—now, we organise: 'The Mammoth Mummy Export Company.' We capitalise at £500,000. We make a business of buying and selling mummies. We deal only in the genuine article, and we tackle nothing which hasn't been dead at least 10,000 years. Every mummy warranted to have been of royal blood. No common people bought or sold. We buy for £2 apiece and sell for £20. There's a profit of £18 on every one handled, and we'll handle 100,000 per year easily. Do you want anything better than that?"

"It seems all right," doubtfully replied the landlady, "but——"

"And there you are, and there you are," replied the major, as he reached for the cheque. "I have paid you my bill; you turn round and use this cheque to secure £10,000 of stock at low figures. Dividends will go up 100 per cent. at the very least, and if I can work you in as secretary I'll do it. Woman, permit me to congratulate you. To-morrow you can go and order your first bushel of diamonds."

"But you've taken the cheque away from me!" she protested.

"Certainly. You must protect your stock or it can't be held for you. It must be plain to you; it can't help but be plain. We incorporate to-morrow, and the certificates will be ready in two weeks. Meanwhile read up on mummies, as we may decide to send you to Egypt to do the buying. You've got to be posted up, or those fellows over there will work off ordinary mummies on you for kings and queens. My dear woman——"

"But, major, I don't——"

"But you do—you must—you can't help it, and now as I shall be busy the rest of the evening I'll say good-night and go to work. Not a word—not a word. You have my influence behind you, and all will be right and again I congratulate you and ask your pardon for overlooking my little indebtedness. Going? Gone? But keep quiet about it—keep quiet."

"Major Crofoot, I—I——"

But the major was on the other side of the door and the door was locked.

C. B. Lewis.

SECOND LARGE EDITION.

"BESIEGED WITH B.-P."

A complete record of the Siege of Mafeking.

By J. EMERSON NEILLY.

War Correspondent of the "Pall Mall Gazette" in Mafeking.

Crown 8vo, Price 1s. net.
Post Free, 1s. 3d.

"Mr. Neilly tells admirably the thrilling story of the siege."—*Scotsman*.

"As a realistic picture of how things actually happen, no less than a worthy record of one of the most splendid incidents of our history, 'Besieged with B.-P.' is a notable book."—*Pall Mall Gazette*.

At all Railway Bookstalls and Booksellers.

C. ARTHUR PEARSON LTD., HENRIETTA STREET, W.C.

NOW ON SALE.

No. 6 of

"The Curiosity Shop."

The Illustrated Companion to "PEARSON'S WEEKLY."

ONE PENNY WEEKLY.

THE CURIOSITY SHOP contains: Absolutely new and fresh articles. Bright and originally-conceived pictures. Strong and well-seasoned fiction. Nothing that you can get anywhere else.

Unlike all other curiosity shops, the contents of this one are changed every week, and you can buy every article and picture in the shop for one penny.

Digitized by Google

NEW SERIES.

THE ADVENTURES OF THREE ACTORS.

I.—A Night at the Booth.

HALKETT, Boddreys, and myself were temporarily engaged in that interesting occupation, "The inspection of pavements and public buildings," in other words we were "out of a shop," dragging through the ofttimes tedious weeks between one engagement and another.

"What shall we do to-night?" asked Boddreys.

"Oh, stand on our heads and sing 'God save the Queen,' anything for a change from this monotony," said Halkett.

At the end of our summer tour we found ourselves near the pretty town of Kanisborough; in preference to going down to London, parading the Strand and helping to support the Bodega, Marble Halls, and other liquid institutions, we decided, as we had fixed our autumn tour, to spend our four weeks' in what vacation Halkett called "sylvan and rural rusticity."

In a fortnight we had done everything. Fished and bathed in the river, rowed on the canal, walked and bicycled in every possible direction for miles round. The evenings hung heavily, there was nowhere to go to, and evening was just the time we began to look for the accustomed excitement and get restless.

"Call in the landlady and ask her where the nearest theatre is; if it's fifty miles away I'll ride to it," said I.

The worthy dame came in at Boddrey's call, rubbed her nose with her apron, sniffed loudly, stuck her fat arms akimbo and said:

"Well, young gentlemen, and what do you want?"

"We want to know where's the nearest theatre, hall, or schoolroom, where any kind of entertainment is being held from Shakespeare down to a penny concert or a temperance lecture," said Halkett.

"Or a magic lantern show will do."

"Or a Pepper's Ghost show," I chimed in.

"You won't get nothing o' that sort about here," said she.

We all groaned in chorus.

"There's not no theatre nearer nor Northampton, where you come from to me, and I don't know as it's hopen this 'ere 'ot weather, leastways, my sister, as you've been staying with there, says it often isn't, this 'ere 'ot weather."

We groaned again.

"Not even a concert, or a lantern entertainment?" asked Halkett again.

"Not as I knows on, Mr. Halkett," she replied, "but I 'ave heard as 'ow a booth 'as set up at Great Kanis, three miles away."

"A booth," we all shouted together, "why didn't you tell us so at once?" added Boddreys.

"Well, you see sir, you didn't ask me. You didn't say nothing about a booth, now did you?"

We owned we didn't to get rid of her, and bundled her out of the room with a blessing, and started at once.

It was a delightful walk to Great Kanis across the fields, but I fear we did not thoroughly appreciate the cool and calm hush of the evening, the song of the birds, the babble of the brook, and the fragrance and gay colours of the many flowers.

Just then we had a severe attack of footlight fever and would have exchanged it all for the artificial splendours of the front of a theatre.

At the door of the wooden portable we espied the bibulous-looking acting-manager yelling:

"This way to the reserved seats."

He recognised us as brothers in affliction, or as he termed it, "members of his perfession," and gave us three reserved seats at threepence per head.

There was no mistaking the artiste in him. Grease paint strayed all over his face in small patches, taking up permanent abode in odd corners.

He was palpably dressed in his "props," which consisted of a pair of tight white trousers of some forty years ago fashion, a double-breasted coloured waistcoat, which might possess some fifteen years, and a light alpaca frock coaching coat, which might date back perhaps fifty or sixty years.

These were surmounted by a white beaver hat; and we must not forget the huge, coloured tie, the bows of which stuck out like two ears. A comical figure he looked, but what cared he, he was there to attract attention and lure the yokels to part with their coppers.

He had the air of a man who knew his intrinsic value to a nicety and that assurance histrionic experience so often begets.

We took him over the way to the "Red Lion" after the first act (he had already been killed once, and was not to be slain again until the third act) and there he told us how many times he had played Richard III., his

Digitized by Google

favourite part, Hamlet and Macbeth, and what a huge success he had been in several places we had never heard of.

I think they must have been in the Rhondda Valley, or somewhere in Wales by the sound of their names, but we were duly impressed, and he, in consequence, was very pleased and very thirsty.

We took our seats in the building and sat listening to the orchestra, which consisted of a harmonium and a cornet—not a bad mixture, by the way, if your nervous system is in fairly good order.

We had not been there long when up bustled the fat proprietress of the building and manageress of the company, who had been taking money at the penny and twopenny doors.

She leant over the rows of chairs immediately in front of us and peering closely into our faces, said in a voice loud enough to be heard all over the theatre:

"You be 'pros,' ain't you?"

We admitted the soft impeachment.

"I don't take no money from 'pros,'" said she, "you is as free to come in here, as you is to go into the best theatres in the kingdom. My acting manager had no right to take your money. There's your threepence. there's yours, and there's yours," and she dumped our coppers back into our hands. We protested, but she answered:

"You can stand me a drink afterwards, if you like, but I shall always be pleased to welcome you here as often as you like to come."

So much for those worthy people.

"The play's the thing——" and what we came to see.

The title of the play was *The Wooden-legged Murderer*, and the plot revolved round a double-dyed villain, who in common with scoundrels generally, possessed two legs, only in this case one was made of wood. This wooden leg was hollow, and in the cavity was secreted a small rifle. All who thwarted the old vil ain's wicked designs and those whom he imagined he hated, fell victims to this unique firearm, or rather fire-leg. A reason for slaughter, however, was not always necessary, he liked it presumably because it was exciting and his nature to do so.

It was a thrilling moment when the first murder occurred. A rich man sits in his beautiful mansion (its beauties we had to imagine) talking to himself about his enormous wealth—as rich men always do in melodramas—when he is startled by someone with a dot-and-go-one tread, making off with that £40,000 in notes and gold he has left in the bureau in the next room. The thief passes through the room and is making for the French windows to get away. The rich man being brave as well as wealthy, attacks him and drags him down the stage. Then a fearful struggle ensues. Finally, however, the plutocrat is thrown down in one corner and off hobbles the villain as quickly as his wooden leg will allow him, but he hardly reaches the window when his antagonist rise to follow him.

It is a supreme moment, for up goes the wooden leg, the trigger is pulled in the trouser pocket and the first victim falls.

Two servants, hearing the noise, enter the room hurriedly and also fall victims to the fatal leg. Three deaths being a fair number for the first act, the curtain comes down on a dramatic exit by the villain.

In the second act we have detectives and policemen galore.

The villain shoots a detective in this act, and the deed is scarce done when two policemen rush on from either side and collar him simultaneously. After thoroughly searching him—this is a comedy scene, for policeman No. 476 is a comedian—and finding no weapon upon him they think it as well to arrest him on suspicion.

However, they relinquish this idea upon the old man telling them that it was the hero who did the deed, which, of course, they immediately believe, knowing the young man in question to be a most exemplary person of most gentle habits.

They proceed to trot after the hero, bearing the corpse between them (so like policemen who are in a hurry), when Bobbie No. 476 drops his half of the dead man (a laugh here) and declares he has an idea. No. 674 seems surprised at this and warns him not to hurt the defunct with his mental activity.

At which 476 becomes alarmed and anxiously questions his comrade as to the possibility of killing a "dead man twice." Whereupon 674, sitting on the corpse's chest, tells him how his dead grandmother drank a bottle of whiskey the night after she died—at least the bottle was empty in the morning, and there was a strong smell of spirits in the room. It would be hard, indeed, if a little fun could not be had at the expense of corpses, seeing that there are so many in the piece.

No. 476's idea, which he finally heroically delivers to the gods, is to the effect that he cannot believe the hero to be guilty because he knew him as a youngster in petticoats, toddling at his mother's side. The value this evidence of his innocence has, would of course be incalculable in a court of law.

The third act is ushered in with yet more murders, the list by this time has become simply appalling. We have noticed that several unmistakable persons are dying twice and thrice over. (Who will say the dead return not?) In fact one man amuses us considerably by falling every time like a tin soldier. An effective stop is put to this, however, by the villain at last being accused and arrested. The circumstances which lead to his apprehension are these:

A man is found shot, quite dead as usual, but this time with his eyes wide open. It occurs to one bright detective that if they scoop out the eye of the murdered man, the picture of the murderer will be found upon the re ina. Nor are th y wrong, for they all upon examination of the eye declare they see there a portrait of the wooden-legged man with his leg lifted.

The next act opens with a court scene.

After the comedy man had set the whole court by the ears with his overpowering wit, made rude remarks to the judge about his appearance, wife, family, and other personal matters, the turn of the villain comes to appear in the dock.

The dock is placed immediately on the judge's left, so near that judge and prisoner could shake hands if they were so minded.

Upon the left of the desk stands a glass of water containing the accusing eye.

The examination proceeds quietly for some time until the comedian, no longer able to repress himself, rushes into the dock, turns the villain out and addresses the judge and court:

"Shure, sir, it's a whole pack of lies he's afther telling ye, so that he can bring our poor, innocent boy, Master Harry there, to the gallows. But don't be afther taking any notice of the spalpeen, Misther Judge."

"Constable, remove this witness," commanded the judge sternly.

"Ah, there's a dear kind gintleman, sure ye haven't

Digitized by Google

the heart to turn me out of this nice, comfortable cow stall."

"Stand down, sir, immediately," shouted the judge.

"Shure, Mr. Judge, I niver learnt how to sthand down, I only learnt how to sthand up. But I'll sit down to plase ye, and that by your own illigant self," and he climbed over the dock, and sat himself down beside his lordship.

"How dare you, sir; leave me immediately," said the judge, now hoarse with rage.

"I'll niver lave ye, sir. I'll sthay wid yez for the rest av me life and one year longer if ye loike and there's me hand on it, and ye're a fine, handsome, kind-hearted jewel of a gintleman yez are."

The judge thrust the proffered hand away and called again to the constable to remove him, whereupon the comedian and the policeman struggled lustily.

"Oh, you dirty, ugly divil, wid a heart as hard as a sthone," shouted the comedian to the judge as he was being dragged away. "Shure, I would as soon talk to the divil himself as to yourself. Oh, I'll bate the face off yez. Let me get at him."

He struggled free again and made a dash for the judge, who beat him off with bundles of legal documents. The police soon had him again, but not before the glass of water containing the eye had been knocked over. The audience enjoyed this horse-play comedy hugely, and still louder did they laugh when the whole court, police and witnesses, went down on their hands and knees to look for the lost eye. But they did not think to search the villain, who had been very busy during the comedy scene.

"My lord," said the clerk of the court, "the eye is lost."

"It was the only conclusive evidence we possessed," said the judge, "and much as I believe him to be guilty I must declare the prisoner a free man."

"No, not free, for I have the other eye."

It was the detective who spoke. He entered in the nick of time, holding aloft in his hand another glass of water containing the other eye. The audience applauded loudly, the villain cursed and scowled, and those on the stage rejoiced exceedingly and were glad.

The examination of the prisoner continued and, notwithstanding the still irrepressible comedian, finally worked up to this point.

Said the prisoner, seizing the glass containing the eye from off the judge's table:

"So this is the only evidence you have against me?"

"And such overwhelming evidence that it will doom you to the criminal's death you so richly deserve," replied the judge amid applause.

With a loving glance at the liquid as heheld it against the light, admiring it as he might a glass of old and rare wine, the prisoner uttered these words:

"Then this is how I dispose of it," and suiting the action to the words he swallowed the water and eye in one dramatic gulp.

The court was dumfounded, the case dismissed, and the prisoner discharged there and then, looking none the worse for his impromptu lunch.

The next and last act concerned itself with the triumph of virtue and confusion to the wicked ones, especially to the wooden-legged villain. His end was sudden.

He was at his old tricks again, and was about to aim his wooden leg at the hero, escape for whom seemed impossible, when something goes wrong with the rifle; it bursts, there is a fiss of red fire, a loud explosion, and the old villain disappears over the bridge, blown to little pieces, at least so the hero told us. We take his word for it. So ended the drama of "The Wooden-Legged Murderer."

We were very silent as we went home across the fields in the moonlight. I think we better appreciated the charms of the walk or perhaps we were listening to the little white throat singing his night song in the hedgerow.

Be that as it may, one thing was certain, we were completely cured of our footlight fever for quite a week.

Douglas Vigors.

[Next week: A Panto-Sidelight.]

Digitized by Google

THE LOVE OF LENORE.

In the shady garden of an old-fashioned, shabby-genteel-looking house not far from the cathedral town of Wilchester, a girl was making remarkably good revolver practice. A curious pastime for one of her age and sex, but Lenore Stanley had passed the first seventeen years of her life in New Zealand, her father having been a professor at the university of Dunedin.

He had taught her to shoot and had brought her up on lines of his own.

"That's all right, I think," she said to herself after breaking her third ginger-beer bottle in succession. "My hand has not lost its cunning. I wonder where he is? He surely won't fail me again to-night!"

The girl's dark eyes, inherited from her Italian mother, flashed with a dangerous light and her mobile lips worked with a mutinous expression.

"If I thought he was with her!" she muttered between her little white teeth, "I would——" and her fingers closed convulsively on the miniature weapon in her hand. She threw herself down in a deck chair and thought—not pleasant thoughts, not altogether fair thoughts—for when was jealousy ever just?

Life had been hard for Lenore since her father's death which had occurred soon after their arrival in the old country three years ago. She was then left with no near relations and few friends, with forty pounds a year and an education that compared favourably with that of any Newnham or Girton graduate,

She was teaching history and literature at a ladies' college in Wilchester and was spending her holidays in rooms within reach of Harold Courtenay, her lover and the light of her lonely heart.

Last night he had disappointed her and to work off her restlessness she had brought out the little revolver which her father had given her to carry on their long rides up country in Maori-land. At last her quick ear caught the whizz of cycle wheels. She knew it was Harold and half rose from her chair in expectation.

"At last I escaped!" he said, bending down and taking Lenore's hand in his. "The mater had a tennis party and I was on duty. I only got away by offering to ride home with Kathleen Bryce."

"No wonder you are late! It was hardly worth your while to come. Were you taking her home last night, too?"

"No, she was taking me. At least, we went over to their place and she drove us home in her cart. It was a ripping night for a spin. I only wished it had been you, little one."

Lenore's lip curled and she brought her brows a trifle closer together.

"Such an afterthought as that was not worth keeping for twenty-four hours," she retorted. "There is a far cry from Miss Bryce, the aristocratic belle of Wilchester, to an unknown school-teacher who is not in any 'set' and can only be recognised as a mere acquaintance when Society's eye is upon us."

"A far cry indeed, like ginger-beer to champagne! The one easy to get, and cheap and nasty when you've got it, the other stored out of sight like a priceless treasure," said Harold throwing himself on the grass at her side and taking possession of her other hand.

Something touched her sense of humour and she laughed. It was no use trying to be angry with Harold.

"What a brilliant attempt to idealise a very prosaic smile! But I must be the ginger-beer, cheap and easy to get. Governesses have long been a drug in the market, while Miss Bryce——"

"Oh, shut up, there's a dear girl! I didn't come to talk about that dressed-up doll. I came to be with you, to have you all to myself. Hullo! What in the world's this! A dainty thing, too!"

He had put his hand upon the revolver which Lenore had dropped on the grass when she heard him coming. She now made a quick movement to possess herself of the weapon and in the scuffle the remaining loaded chamber went off. In an agony of terror she saw the blood stains on her lover's white coat sleeve and ran to the house for help.

Her landlady came running out and they soon found that the injury was of a slight nature, merely a flesh wound below the elbow.

Lenore bathed and bandaged it with loving care, and in those few minutes Harold Courtenay saw what a wealth of love was his. Hitherto his advances had been met with a tantalising reserve, and now in the deepening evening shades she atoned for her past unresponsiveness by a tenderness that was new and bewilderingly sweet.

"It was all my fault, and I would not have hurt you for worlds!" she whispered, trembling in spite of herself.

"My darling, it was the best thing that could have happened to me. Supposing you had got the bullet instead of me! That would have been too horrible," he said, drawing her to im with his uninjured arm. "It is worth far more than this scratch to have you like this," and he kissed her quivering lips till the smiles had returned to her eyes.

The course of their love made great strides after this. Harold found Lenore more and more enthralling. She was full of the winning grace of a woman who loves and knows she is loved in return; no longer tormented by jealousy she gave rein to the warm, loving nature that had so long been stifled within her. The summer days sped by in uncounted joys.

With the end of the holidays came the inevitable return to work and the realms of conventionality. Lenore pulled herself together with mingled feelings. She felt she could not go on living at the high emotional pressure of the past fortnight without letting the work suffer by which she made her way in the world, and so far the lovers had only talked of love, there had been no question of marriage. Harold had surrendered himself to the charm of her society with the readiness of his pleasure-loving nature, but he was not yet prepared to face parental displeasure by marrying in opposition to his father's wishes. Mr. Courtenay senior had made his money quickly, the coat of arms was of recent purchase and Harold was to marry a wife whose lineage should be even longer than the parental purse. The young man was in no hurry to fetter himself, his main ambition was to make a name in the world of sport.

He had started a small racing stud and was training as a gentleman jockey, with the full consent of Mr. Courtenay, who grudged no expense so long as his son's hobbies threw him into smart society.

Harold was somewhat relieved when Lenore propounded the return to practical life, yet, manlike, the first time they met in Wilchester and she kept her side of the bargain, he was ready to throw prudence to the winds for the sake of a kiss or a caress.

Digitized by Google

Lenore lived with one of the other teachers at the College and was pretty free to come and go as she pleased, so through the glorious autumn weather, Saturday afternoon found her and Harold taking long country walks or revelling in the seclusion of the garden where the accident had occurred.

Kathleen Bryce of Brydon Court, upon whom Mr. Courtenay had fixed as his future daughter-in-law, was considerably mystified and not a little piqued at Harold's frequent refusals to join her bicycle and tennis parties. She began to suspect the existence of a rival and set her wits to work to discover the truth.

She had a young cousin at the College, upon whose love of romance she worked successfully till she had unravelled the threads of the mystery. On a fine October afternoon she decided to make practical application of the knowledge she had gained.

Mounting her cycle she rode slowly along the road leading to Needham station, which she believed to be the usual trysting-place of the lovers. Presently she saw Harold Courtenay bowling along on his machine. She dismounted and began to get out her pump.

"Good afternoon!" he called out, making as though he would go on.

"Oh, Mr. Courtenay, would you mind helping me? I can't pump up this tyre."

She looked very pretty and there was no help for it. But even Harold's good nature was not proof against a suppressed "Confound it!"

He soon pumped the tyre up and was wondering how he should give her the slip, when she sprang into the saddle, saying:

"It's such a glorious day for a ride. I'm going to Needham to get some blackberry trails for my snuggery. I love the red and brown tints, and the wood is carpeted with them just now."

He reviled his fate and sought in vain for a way of escape. He could not ride to Needham with Kathleen when Lenore was waiting there for him, nor could he break faith by persuading Kathleen to go elsewhere. He racked his brains in vain and quickened his pace in the hope of his companion giving in.

But Miss Bryce was not thus to be shaken off. She felt she was on the right track and kept up the speed manfully for a good spurt. Then she told him laughingly that she was afraid he wanted to get rid of her. He stammered an apology and resigned himself to his fate, hoping that some happy chance might keep Kathleen and Lenore apart.

Miss Bryce noted his embarrassment and sought to distract him by her most approved wiles. She was a very lively companion and he had regained something of his good humour when they reached the station, beyond which lay the woods.

"I just want to see a man about a horse," said Harold, dismounting, "so I'll say good-bye. I hope you'll find the blackberry trails all right."

"I'm not in hurry. I'll wait till you've seen your man and then you can help me pick the trails. It will be much more fun if there are two of us."

He hurried on to the platform and looked eagerly for Lenore. There was not a trace of her to be seen. She had evidently missed the train. Thank the kind Fates, the storm was averted!

He was quite his usual, sunny self when he came back to where Kathleen was waiting for him. They had a very good time in the woods, and any occasional qualms as to Lenore's whereabouts were soon dissipated by the bright sallies and ready repartee of his companion.

She had dressed herself with studied simplicity for this woodland ramble, and Harold came to the conclusion that he had never seen her look so nice or found her so free from affectation.

"Oh, I must have that spray!" she exclaimed, darting from his side into a tangled glen below where they were standing. The next moment she lay moaning among the bracken, unable to move.

"I can't walk, it's my knee," she said piteously to Harold who had promptly gone to pick her up.

"By jove! That's bad! Then I must carry you, if you don't mind. Tell me if I hurt you. Is that all right?" he asked kindly as he raised her in his arms.

"Yes, quite. You've not hurt me much," she answered with a pretty show of patient resignation, at the same time putting her arms round his neck and settling down with a sigh of content which he took to be pain.

Lenore had started directly after school taking some lunch with her so as to make the most of the glorious weather. She had gone to a cottage near Needham station to get some milk and out of sheer lightheartedness had decided to watch Harold's arrival and let him have a little hunt for her.

When she saw him ride up with Kathleen Bryce a perfect tumult of perplexing emotions possessed her. Every solution of the problem except the right one suggested itself to her in rapid succession. Conquering her first impulse to make her presence known she resolved to watch the game from her coign of vantage, and as she did so many a chance remark she had heard lately in College about the coming engagement of Miss Bryce and Harold Courtenay came to her mind.

Hardened and embittered she waited and watched, like a tigress she was ready to spring, all the evil in her nature was inflamed by the sense of having been tricked, duped, betrayed into false hopes. She saw the pair go gaily off, and saw them return.

She noted the care with which Harold put her rival into the train and only with great difficulty did she suppress the cry of passion that rose to her lips.

She crept into another carriage of the train which conveyed them, and on their arrival waited till Harold had placed Kathleen in the carriage he had ordered to take her to the Court from Wilchester Station.

He cycled away in search of a doctor and the moment his back was turned, Lenore ran to the side of the carriage and poured forth a torrent of accusations:

"Ah! Coward! You want to steal my lover! You must needs plot and scheme to win him from me! You have have been acting a part to feel his arms round you!"

Kathleen was startled out of all self-possession and cowered in her seat as if in physical fear. She was on the verge of hysterics when a burly porter intervened:

"Cabby, you'd better drive her 'ome. And you'd better move on quietly, or there'll be a bigger row than there is," he added, drawing Lenore from the carriage door.

* * * * *

In a few weeks' time Lenore Stanley had been requested to resign her post at the College, owing to the scandalous, cleverly concocted tales which Kathleen Bryce had set about in Wilchester in revenge for the scene at the station, and as a further blow to her intercourse with Harold.

Much to her disgust young Courtenay had not followed up the advantage she gave him at Needham, she strongly suspected that Lenore had still a strong hold on his affections, so she worked the wires with skill and

Digitized by Google

cunning. It was an utterly uneven contest and Lenore was worsted.

Peace had been restored between the lovers after that unlucky Saturday afternoon and Harold had sought to make up for the pain Lenore had suffered by unremitting tenderness and a thousand pretty attentions; but when scandal became busy with her name he could think of no better course than to persuade her to leave the town.

This she refused to do, and as the weary weeks went by she had to learn the bitter lesson that Harold Courtenay was not the man to risk the loss of pleasure and profit for the sake of the girl he had taught to love him.

They met but seldom and when they did his mind was full of his racing stud and his chance of winning a race at the spring meeting. He talked a great deal of horses, very little of love, and spoke not a word of marriage.

The day of the Crawford races came round and it found Lenore a heart-broken woman. All the youth, gaiety, and warmth of her nature had been crushed out of her in those bitter winter days of neglect, calumny and solitude.

She had seen Harold several times lately in the town with Kathleen Bryce and for some weeks even his letters had been discontinued. She had a fancy to see him ride and with some difficulty secured a place near the winning-post.

She was in the act of starting for the course when a smart dog-cart rattled down the street. Attracted by a strong impulse she looked up as it passed. The occupants were Harold Courtenay and Kathleen Bryce, the latter wearing his racing colours, and he let his eyes rest on Lenore without a sign of recognition.

She turned back quickly and ran up to her room. Her face was a shade paler and her lips more tightly compressed when she finally set out to take her place betimes.

The Courtenay-Bryce party were on a coach and Lenore hardly took her eyes off them. She noted jealously every look and smile that passed between Harold and Kathleen, with the morbid seeking for suffering that some natures cannot resist.

The great race of the day began, and public enthusiasm ran high in favour of young Courtenay, whose horse, bearing the gruesome name of "Sudden Death" romped in after an exciting contest. The winner was acclaimed from all sides, and for a second Lenore felt his eye rest upon her, but with no loving glance, rather a look of annoyance.

He turned his head quickly and was just in time to catch a rose that Kathleen threw from the box seat of the coach. As he pressed it to his lips Lenore rose to her feet, whipped her revolver from her side and took a rapid but accurate aim.

The sharp report was followed by a cry of horror from the by-standers as the hero of the hour flung up his hands and dropped, shot through the heart.

In the momentary confusion that ensued Lenore dashed to the side of the murdered man and flung herself on his body. The police removed her by force, her reason had given away at last, and she babbled wildly as she went, pointing to the riderless horse that stood as it were watching his dead master:

"Ah, Sudden Death! Sudden Death! The best thing! She won't have him now! He is mine! Sudden death! He is mine!"

MARY FERMOR.

TWENTY-SEVEN SEALED ENVELOPES CLAIMED.

£270 ALREADY PAID.

THE Editor of *Pearson's Weekly* has sent out fifty men, each with a sealed envelope containing a letter entitling the recipient to the sum of £10. To secure one of these envelopes it is only necessary to ask one of the Ten-Pound Men the question, "Have you got that Ten-Pound Note?" and at the same time to show a current copy of *Pearson's Weekly*. Full details of the scheme will be sent on application to Room 36, Pearson's Buildings, Henrietta Street, London, W.C.

In order that ladies may have an extra opportunity of sharing in this great *Pearson's Weekly* scheme,

TEN TEN-POUND LADIES

have been dispatched all over the country, each of whom will deliver up the Sealed Envelope to the lady who fulfills the conditions mentioned in *Pearson's Weekly*. No gentlemen need apply.

The latest song, "Have You Got That Ten-Pound Note?" is being sung every night by Mr. R. G. Knowles in various London music-halls with great success.

HOW TO GET A COPY OF THE SONG.

Copies of the song are now ready, and may be obtained from all music-sellers and newsagents for 1s. 4d., or direct from the Song Department, Pearson's Buildings, Henrietta Street, London, W.C., for 1s. 6d. Postal Order (not stamps) post free. If your newsagent or music-seller has no copies he can get one for you if he likes. Already hundreds of orders have been received, and these will, of course, be dealt with in rotation.

Full particulars of the scheme will be found each week in *Pearson's Weekly*, and fresh developments appear in the *Daily Express* every day.

The following are the names and addresses of the winners of Ten-Pound Notes up to the time of going to press:

H. E. Baker, 4 Beaconsfield Road, Magdalen Road, Norwich; John Lotan, 23 St. Anne's Chambers, Ludgate Hill, London, E.C.; Charles Lee, 1 Agnes Terrace, St. Mary's Avenue, Southend; Charles Wright, 30 Oxford Gardens, North Kensington; Robert Gautier, 132 Clarence Road, Wimbledon; W. W. Tonkin, 5 Grove Road, Brixton, S.W.; E. G. Baldock, 68 Portland Street, Lincoln; Arthur Wellings, 12 The Forgate, Worcester; A. Bowman, 413 City Road, London, E.C.; John Roe, Hatfield Road Board School, St. Albans; R. J. Martyn, 4 Albert Road, Morice Town, Devonport; Mr. W. H. Hole, Stationmaster, Teignmouth; Archibald Brown, Market Place, Carluke; J. D. Southall, 38 Rosebery Gardens, Crouch End; W. Cotton, Coxbridge, West Pennard, Glastonbury; W. H. Wayne, 19 Hurstfinch Road, St. Helens; May Grammer, 154 Elgin Avenue, Maida Vale; Albert J. Page, Sawbridgeworth, Herts; Mrs. F. Pezaro, 86 High Street, Kingsland, N.; James I. W. Ash, 34 Cricketfield Road, Hackney Downs; Mrs. S. Fitzpatrick, 13 Killarney Parade, Dublin; Miss Winifred Eldridge, 337 Seaside, Eastbourne; Charles W. Ward, 30 Milton Street, Maidstone; Albert House, 8 Lansdowne Terrace, Holloway Street, Exeter; George Tyler, 35 Cattle Market, Loughborough; Miss Annie Hamilton, 12 Blythswood Drive, Glasgow; Mrs. Redgrave, 14 Burnley Road, Stockwell.

The original Sealed Envelopes by which claims have been made can be seen at the following places:

Mr. John Lotan's, Ludgate Hill Station; Mr. H. E. Baker's, offices of *Eastern Daily Press*, Norwich; Inspector Lee's, Cooper Brothers, Cliff Town Road, Southend; Mr. C. Wright's, Crown Hotel, Southampton; Mr. W. W. Tonkin's, Lang Sims, 437 Brixton Road, London, S.W.; Mr. E. G. Baldock's, Clifford Thomas, 202 High Street, Lincoln; Mr. Arthur Wellings', Mr. Large, The Forgate, Worcester; Mr. A. Bowman's, 413 City Road, E.C.; Mr. John Roe's, Mr. W. H. Richardson, 5 High Street, St. Albans; Miss May Grammer's, Mr. Burge, chemist, 123 Shirland Road, Paddington; Mr. Southall's, Seagrief and Sons, Broadway, Crouch End; Mr. Brown's, John Young, bookseller, High Street, Carluke; Mrs. Pezaro's, 86 High Street, Kingsland; Mrs. Page's, Truswell and Sons, Sawbridgeworth; Mr. Ash's, "Three Sisters," Queensdown Road, Hackney Downs; Mrs. Fitzpatrick's, 81 Lower Dorset Street, Dublin; Miss Eldridge, 337 Seaside, Eastbourne; Mr. Ward's, Walter Ruck, stationer, High Street, Maidstone.

Digitized by Google

THE CLOCK.

THERE was at Epinal in 1600 or 1700 and something—it is so long ago that I do not remember the exact date—a clock with chimes, music and moving figures that excited the admiration of all the neighbouring towns.

From Vesoul, Chaumont, Nancy, and even Strasburg, from the four cardinal points, in fact, flocked inquisitive men and women, who, at the approach of midday, crowded into the back shop of old Master Tiphaine, the ingenious constructor of this complicated machine.

Master Tiphaine had never consented to part with his masterpiece; to the offers of honours and money, a hundred times repeated, he gave formal refusals, saying:

"My native town will inherit it after my death. If you took away my clock now you would kill me, you see, for it is a part of my life."

Master Tiphaine did not exaggerate; for long years, absorbed in the most impossible calculations, he had conceived and thought out his plan of mechanism; in fact, it took ten years before his project was realised.

He made all the pieces himself, and fitted them together patiently after a thousand fruitless trials—oh, how many sleepless nights, how many hidden discouragements!—until he attained finally the certainty of triumph. Indeed, Master Tiphaine did not exaggerate in claiming that this clock was a part of his life.

One day, then, the inhabitants of Epinal learnt that the old clockmaker had solved his problem, and that they were summoned to assure themselves of the perfect working of the apparatus.

They took care not to miss the appointment. They admired very much the construction of the machine, but when at the stroke of twelve the mechanism set in motion the figures, men-at-arms, heralds, apostles, etc.; when the chimes rang, mysterious bells played a popular air, the cock crowed, the ox bellowed, the ass began to bray, and the fat goose to utter his hoarse cry—due, as everyone knows, to a cold contracted by an ancestor on Christmas night—there was a wild admiration, an irresistible enthusiasm among the spectators.

"Once more!" they called out.

"I cannot oblige you," replied Master Tiphaine, "the machinery is arranged to work only every twenty-four hours. If I disturb the least thing the whole is deranged, and I am too old to recommence such labours. Come back to-morrow!"

On the next day the sightseers came in still greater numbers. Then the news spread, reached the country and the neighbouring towns. Every day the back shop was filled with admirers who were untiring in applauding the masterpiece of Severien Tiphaine.

But for some years Master Tiphaine had remained indifferent to the sincerest and the loudest praises. In the confused din of exclamations he listened only to the laugh of a child, a clear laugh, joyous and fresh as the chant of a mountain cascade, purer and more melodious than the mysterious bells that sang in the clock. Among all the faces that bent towards him gaping with surprise, Tiphaine observed only the pink and white cheeks of Guillemine, a pretty little child of five years of age, his grand-daughter.

Guillemine did not miss one of the midday representations. Master Tiphaine installed her in the first row, then he raised the curtain that protected his clock. From this moment all his attention was directed to his grand-daughter.

With as much impatience as the child he counted the tickings, he awaited the preliminary clicks. Immovable, in a state of ecstacy, Guillemine fixed her wide-opened, blue eyes on the clock.

Click! click! f-r-r-r-ou!

Gearings, springs, cogwheels began to move with a noise like the flapping of wings.

Master Tiphaine read on Guillemine's face the emotions that pervaded it, and he felt a childish joy.

Coo-coo-ricoo! the cock arose on the top of the belfry.

Guillemine clasped her hands. The bells tingled, and the infant Saviour, lying in the manger, appeared. There was the ox, the ass, and the fat goose. Higher up angels hovered in the clouds, which the dove, carrying the olive branch, flew across. The magi, the shepherds, followed by their bleating flocks, filed by in procession.

Guillemine began to fidget on her stool; she bit her lips, pulled her fingers; Master Tiphaine himself is restless; like the little girl he is he awaited the surprise.

There it is! The temptation of St. Anthony! The imps which dance about the friend that gambols, cavorts unceasingly. That was the surprise that Guillemine was waiting for. Wild with joy she jumped about, clapped her hands and laughed. Ah, this laugh! That was the surprise that Master Tiphaine waited for.

The old grandfather laughed in his turn; he laughed until he was ready to weep, and the procession ended as the cock rising again closed the entertainment with a crowning coo-coo-ricoo!

Master Tiphaine seized the little girl, shaking with laughter, clasped her in his arms, and mingled his snowy locks with the blonde ringlets of Guillemine.

One cold day in December, the sightseers of Epinal, who, in spite of the cold, came to the shop of the master clockmaker as punctually as certain citizens of Paris, not long ago, used to go to the Palais Royal to regulate their watches by the report of the cannon, found the door obstructed by old Severien Tiphaine.

"No one can come in to-day," said he, sadly.

"Why?" they asked. "Is the clock broken?"

"The clock is not broken," replied Tiphaine in a still sadder tone; "but Guillemine is ill, poor little one,

Digitized by Google

and we are expecting the doctor, who ought to be here soon; so then I ask you please to go away without noise."

They acceded to his request, made their excuses and withdrew. Master Tiphaine then entered a room with closed shutters, lit up by a few burning faggots. At the end of this room in an alcove, where the fantastic shadows danced about, there was a white bed, and in that white bed, quite pale and delicate, Guillemine was lying.

At the foot of the bed a young man and a young woman were standing, looking sadly at the little girl. Master Tiphaine advanced with soft steps, trying to prevent the floor from creaking under his weight, and when he was quite near the bed he said, addressing the young man:

"Well, my son, has she spoken?"

"No; she has not. She does not seem to hear when she is spoken to, and yet she looks at us with her beautiful blue eyes."

"Father," said the young woman, "I am frightened, for our Guillemine is like a dead person, lying with the eyes wide open."

Master Tiphaine bent over the couch, and trying to smile.

"Guillemine," said he, "little Guillemine."

The prostrate child fixed on him eyes that seemed to see no longer. She did not stir.

"Heaven have pity on us!" sighed Master Tiphaine, drawing aside.

Poor, gentle Guillemine!

On the previous day, a little after the midday representation, a high fever had seized her. During a part of the night she had been delirious, crying out and struggling against invisible beings and since morning she had remained in this state of alarming torpor, her limbs stiffened, her eyes staring.

Master Tiphaine looked at the lips of Guillemine, those poor, pale lips, from which only yesterday the melody of laughter escaped.

There was a knock at the door. Tiphaine went to lift the latch.

An old man entered.

"Guillemine," said Master Tiphaine, "here is the doctor, who has come to pay you a visit."

The doctor examined the child and meditated a long time.

"Well," said Master Tiphaine.

The doctor shook his head with an anxious air.

"It is serious, very serious," he said.

The young man hearing these words made a sign to the young woman, and went out.

"What is to be done?" asked Tiphaine.

"Above all, she must be roused from this fatal torpor. It is this prostration that makes me uneasy. Now, then, try to divert her, rouse her up, otherwise, I can answer for nothing."

Thereupon the doctor went away. Then the young woman sat down near Guillemine and, repressing her sobs, sang an old roundelay that used to please the child; but Guillemine's eyes showed that she did not hear.

"What is to be done? What is to be done?" sobbed the young woman, and she began her song again.

Hours passed, Guillemine became more and more pale on the white pillows. Afflicted, hopeless, Tiphaine, the young man and the young woman became silent now, and all was still in the room. Suddenly a rythmical noise was heard.

Tick, tock, tick, tock!

Master Tiphaine knit his eyebrows, and relapsed into a profound meditation. Abruptly he arose and went towards his son.

"Help me to roll Guillemine's bed up in front of the clock," said he.

"What do you want to do?" asked the young man.

"You will see."

They rolled the bed into the back shop, and placed it before the clock. Master Tiphaine raised the curtain that covered the masterpiece. The clock appeared. Guillemine's eyes seemed to move.

"Look closely now, Guillemine! You are going to see the manger and the wise kings and St. Anthony. How you are going to laugh!"

"But, father," said the young man, "it is eleven o'clock at night, and the figures will not appear until noon to-morrow. Can Guillemine wait until then?"

"She shall not wait," replied Master Tiphaine, in a low tone, "and the figures are going to appear."

"But," said the young man, turning pale, "you can only bring about such a result by breaking up the mechanism."

"Yes, that is true."

"Father, this is your life work——"

Master Tiphaine motioned to his son to be silent.

"Bring me a light," he said.

He then drew out nails, screws, plates, laying bare the systems of wheels, and springs. Tiphaine worked slowly, for his hands trembled a little.

"Give me the hammer," he said suddenly.

Armed with the hammer he was about to strike a blow, then stopped. Was he hesitating? He looked at Guillemine, who was staring fixedly at the clock.

"Pay attention, my Guillemine. Now you are going to laugh. You will laugh, won't you?"

He struck a sharp blow. The machine seemed to groan. The spring unbent with a formidable humming, the gearing rolled round. Master Tiphaine threw the hammer far from him, and staggering, had to lean against the wall.

"Light up the clock now," said he to his son, "and look, my Guillemine!"

The hands turned wildly. There came the cock, the men-at-arms, there was the ox, the hoarse, fat goose, and the bells tingled and the chimes rang out.

Guillemine had raised her head, her lips partly opened as if in hesitating prelude to laughter.

Ah, there is St. Anthony, who, quicker than ever, runs along, dragged by his friend with extraordinary gambolings, and the imps, and St. Anthony and the wise men and the shepherds danced a frantic round to the hurrying sounds of the chimes and the bells.

At last the hesitating laugh of Guillemine rose by degrees, ascending like a song of reviving life, and finally breaking forth clear and radiant.

But while she, the gentle, little girl, was thus reviving to new life the poor clock was in its last agony. Sinister cracking, like a death rattle, from which Master Tiphaine suffered horribly, shook its frame.

In order not to hear these final moans Tiphaine listened to the laughter of the child. Once more a prolonged cracking, a last effort of the machinery, and then all was over; the clock lived no longer; but Guillemine was laughing still.

And so, when this famous clock was shown some years ago at Epinal, it was said—on the authority of competent persons who had studied the mutilated mechanism—that the masterpiece of Severien Tiphaine was a failure and had never worked.

ANNA SHORT.

Digitized by Google

A ROMANCE OF LAND AND SEA.

By WILLIAM WESTALL.

Author of "With the Red Eagle," "The Phantom City," "Nigel Fortescue," etc., etc.

PRINCIPAL CHARACTERS.

Major Wyvenhoe, commander of an expedition which went out from England to help the Venezuelans in their struggle for liberty.

Captain Cautley, who is in charge of the ship which took the expedition out.

John Ready, the servant of Wyvenhoe.

General Arismendez, ex-Governor of Pampatar and Vice-President of the Venezuelan Republic.

Don Iago Santleo, and Antonio Bonanza, two Venezuelans who are friends of Wyvenhoe.

General Urdenetta, Governor of Pampatar, a bitter enemy of Wyvenhoe.

Bolivar, Supreme Chief of the Venezuelan Republic.

Tamanac, an Indian Cazique, and great friend of Santleo.

CHAPTER XVII.

Calabozo is Taken.

On the day after my interview with Bolivar and Urdenetta intelligence reached headquarters that the Spaniards were making ready to evacuate Calabozo, on which the Chief decided to storm the town at midnight, and preparations to that end were straightway made.

The plan of attack was simple and seemed feasible. While a picked body of infantry attacked the south, east, and west sides, General Paez and his llaneros were to ride round to the north and hinder the enemy from retreating in that direction, if they should attempt to retreat.

As the walls were low and the barriers weak, and the Spaniards, besides having no other artillery than a few light field-pieces, were numerically inferior, no great difficulty was anticipated in scaling the ramparts and forcing the gates. Moreover, as they were not expecting an attack they would be taken by surprise and probably offer only a feeble resistance.

So at least the Chief thought and his officers hoped. To me, personally, he was as courteous as usual, and seemed not to have taken offence at my refusal of Urdenetta's embrace, perhaps because he had need of my services. Be that as it might, he kept me so fully occupied that I had no opportunity of speaking to Don Iago (whose battalion formed part of the attacking force) until late in the day, and even then we were able to exchange only a few words.

In order to avoid alarming the enemy, great efforts were made to preserve silence, officers being forbidden to shout and privates to speak, and there was, of course, to be neither bugle sounding nor drum beating.

We had no moon, but the stars, shining brilliantly in a clear sky, did nearly as well.

At eleven o'clock, the three columns of attack being under arms and ready to advance, Paez and his horsemen started for the north gate But until he sent word that he had taken up the position assigned to him we were not to move.

Everything appeared to be going well; so far there had been no hitch and officers who had been sent to reconnoitre reported that a quietness as of death reigned in Calabozo.

"Caramba! I believe they are asleep," quoth one of them. "Don Simon has Morillo in the hollow of his hand."

"Yes, I think we have caught him napping this time, and if we destroy his army to-night there will be nothing to prevent our marching in triumph to Caracas," said Bolivar complacently.

"And a grateful people will crown their liberator with laurels," added the courtly officer.

"And also, I hope, my brave army which has deserved so well of the country, and then I shall sheathe my sword, resign my offices and retire into private life, happy in the thought that Venezuela is independent and free. But it is time we heard from General Paez. Ah, here comes a horseman, one of his aides, probably."

It was Bonanza who presently pulled up in front of Bolivar.

"What news, Captain?" he asked.

"Bad news, Señor General. Morillo has anticipated us, slipped away with the main body of his command, but Don José has attacked his rear-guard and will no doubt drive it back into Calabozo."

On this there followed the most startling outburst of oaths and exclamations I had ever heard. The names of all the saints in the calendar were taken in vain, millions of devils were invoked, and Morillo and the Gods were reviled from the crowns of their heads to the soles of their feet.

It was certainly very provoking and I shared in the general disappointment. Two hours, perhaps one hour, would have made all the difference. Had the head of the Spanish column been attacked as it emerged from the north gate nothing could have prevented the entire force from being dispersed or destroyed. Bolivar, with whom the fault lay, seemed vexed and mortified past speaking, but presently

Digitized by Google

recovering his equanimity, stilled the storm by ordering an immediate advance.

It was not necessary to scale the walls, the gates were opened from within, and after a short, albeit sharp struggle, the Spanish rear-guard, composed chiefly of Creoles and half-breeds, laid down their arms and sued for mercy. Some were bayonetted, and had not the Chief ordered the survivors, numbering about eight hundred, to be spared, and imprisoned in the churches, all would have been summarily dispatched.

Then the town was sacked, as a matter of course, though fewer excesses were committed than might have been expected, considering the character and composition of the patriot army, and the Chief having determined to follow Morillo and bring him to an engagement, we marched northwards on the following afternoon leaving in the town a strong guard under the command of Captain Sherwood. When we were *en route* Bolivar mentioned that he was making yet another attempt to induce the Spanish general to consent to an exchange of prisoners.

"It would be very well if you could, but won't your envoy be treated as Bonanza was treated?" said I, fearing that he was going to send Don Antonio a second time.

"I shall send no more flags of truce, Señor Wyvenhoe. Early this morning I released twelve of the officers and twenty of the privates whom we took last night, and sent them to Morillo with a letter requesting him for the last time, in the name of civilisation and humanity, to agree to an exchange."

"You released these people without conditions?"

"Without conditions, just in order to show Morillo that I am in earnest, and shall faithfully carry out any agreement to which we may come."

"You have acted nobly, Señor General, and I cannot think that Morillo will refuse a proposal so well meant and so handsomely made," I said warmly, for I felt that he had done the right thing.

"We shall see. Urdenetta and the other generals were all against it, and I have promised, if it fails, to let them for the future deal with captured Godos as they think fit. Had I not been very determined, they would have killed every prisoner in Calabozo before we left."

I confess that Don Simon puzzled me. I knew that he had been, and could be, both wantonly cruel and basely treacherous; yet here he was doing his utmost, in spite of his generals, to put an end to the system of reprisals which had so long prevailed, at a moment, too, when, having more prisoners than the enemy, he would lose by the exchange. He was so strange a compound of good and bad qualities that I could not be sure whether he was acting out of policy or humanity, but I thought then, and I think still, that humanity and a desire to stand well in the opinion of the civilised world, were his predominant motives.

Moreover, his manner to me was so friendly and sympathetic that I began to think I had wronged him in my mind, that he had either forgotten or forgiven my feud with Urdenetta and cherished no evil designs against me. Nevertheless I had my doubts, for I had been warned by one who knew him better than I did that those whom Bolivar disliked had most to fear when he was the most kind.

Tovas dismounted, and using a drumhead as a desk, prepared to write.

Towards evening, when we were within a league of Rastro, whither the royalists had retreated, the advanced guard came to a sudden halt, on which the Chief and his staff rode to the front to ascertain the cause of the stoppage.

"What is it, what has happened?" he demanded of General Zaraza, who commanded the advanced guard.

"Look!" answered Zaraza sternly.

Across the road, before the head of the column, were lying, stiff and stark, twelve patriot officers and twenty privates, prisoners taken from us by the Spaniards, all with their skulls split or their throats cut.

It was Morillo's answer to Bolivar's overtures. The only exchange to which he would consent was an exchange of dead rebels for living royalists.

"What do you think of this, Major Wyvenhoe?" exclaimed Don Simon indignantly. "I have known, ever since we first conversed on the subject, I have inferred it from your manner, read it in your face, that you deem us no less cruel than the Spaniards, that if we renounced reprisals so would they, and as you think, so think our enemies and, I daresay, some of our friends in Europe and the United States. Well, I have tried, not for the first time, honestly and generously, to make a beginning, and this is the way in which I am met. I shall try no more, and in murdering these thirty-two poor fellows, Morillo has sealed the fate of the eight hundred prisoners we took last night. You have writing materials, Captain Tovas" (one

Digitized by Google

After being told to report myself to Urdenetta and join my regiment I took my leave.

of his aides.) Tovas, knowing what was expected of him, dismounted, and using a drum head as a desk, prepared to write and the Chief dictated a peremptory order to Captain Sherwood for the immediate execution of every royalist prisoner in Calabozo.

"Now," said he, when he had signed it, "shift your saddle to one of the led horses, ride back to Calabozo, and see for yourself that the order is obeyed. The scouts report that the Godos are continuing their retreat. You will find us at Rastro, where we shall halt for the night."

This incident made a deep impression on the troops. Before time the Spaniards had returned evil for evil, now they returned evil for good; accommodation or truce with enemies so truculent and ferocious was hopeless and would never again be attempted. More than ever it was war to the knife, all vowed vengeance and so incensed were the men that after a short rest they wanted to go on.

Bolivar being nothing loth we followed on the tracks of the flying royalists throughout the long night and the next day's heat with scarce a halt, except where we came to water, when the men would rest a few minutes, quench their thirst, take a bite of something, and then of their own accord rise and resume their usual swinging pace with all the fierce resolution of Indians on the war path, and most of them were more or less Indians.

We found Morillo's army posted in a wood near Sombrero, and there followed a short, yet sanguinary and indecisive engagement; for, though our fellows fought resolutely, there is a limit to human endurance; and when the Spaniards, who had been resting while we were marching, again fell back, we had to forego pursuit, the foot-soldiers being worn out and the cavalry horses so used up that they could hardly move, much less carry their riders into action.

A rapid pursuit is only a degree less demoralising than a retreat. Many of the men, overcome by the heat, had fallen out, all were footsore, many of the horses lame, and the pack mules, the reserve ammunition, and other supplies toiling miles in the rear. A long rest was absolutely necessary, and, despite the Chief's desire to push on, two days passed before we were able to make another move.

During the halt two things happened, one of which augured ill for the army, the other for myself.

On the ground that his cavalry would be of no use in the hill country, whither Bolivar proposed to follow Morillo, General Paez declined to go further; also, he gave the Chief some good advice, which it would have been well if he had followed, saying that in the level country the superiority of the patriot cavalry generally decided the day, whereas among the mountains, where horsemen were helpless, the numbers and better discipline of the royalist infantry would give them the advantage and insure them the victory.

"That is why Morillo keeps retreating," added Don José, "and instead of following and fighting him on ground of his own choosing you would do better to fall back and bring him to a decisive engagement on ground of your choosing. Anyhow, my fellows won't leave the llanos, where they are invincible, to be massacred in some mountain pass."

But to this sage counsel Bolivar would not listen, and when he asked my advice and I sided with Paez he seemed very angry, and it was probably the reason why he chose that particular time for dismissing me from his staff and appointing me to the command of the Cazadores of the Apure, a regiment of Urdenetta's division, though I have no doubt the measure had already been decided on and would have taken place in any case.

True, I got a step in rank, but as I told the Chief I would rather serve under him as major than under Urdenetta as colonel.

"You think the general will annoy you, but he won't, and you have only to apologise for your rudeness to be on the best of terms with him," was the answer.

"When General Urdenetta apologises for putting me under arrest at Margarita I will make the *amende honorable* by accepting his embrace," I rejoined.

"I might order you to apologise. However I won't do that, the apology would not be sincere. All the same you will be expected to obey the general's orders, and do your duty as if you and he were the best of friends."

"So long as I remain in the service, general, you may be assured that I shall do my duty."

"So long as you remain in the service! Allow me to remind you, Señor Colonel, that your remaining in the service depends on my pleasure, not on yours."

This meant, of course, that my resignation, if I tendered it, would not be accepted.

"Unless you are released from it by death, for I am sure you would not desert to the enemy," added Bolivar after a moment's pause, at the same time giving me one of his suspicious side glances.

"Desert to the enemy," I exclaimed hotly. "Do you really suppose——"

"Oh, don't be angry. Of course you are quite incapable of entertaining any such idea, and I should be very sorry if from any cause whatever, we were to lose your services, which are highly appreciated, as well by Urdenetta as myself."

"I thank you for your good opinion, Señor General, and you would add to the obligation by informing me who has dared to suggest that I am capable of such infamy as desertion to the enemy."

"It has not been suggested, only as you know, Morillo is offering inducements to the foreign officers in my army to take service in his, and all I meant to say was that whatever anybody else might do you would never betray the cause to which you have sworn allegiance. Perhaps I did not lay sufficient emphasis on the 'you.'"

He had laid no emphasis on it at all, and I felt sure that, believing I might desert to the Spaniards out of revenge for the way in which he was treating me, and to avoid serving under my enemy, he had made the remark as a feeler.

The warmth with which I took it probably surprised him and to make amends he remarked with a smile:

"I thought I was paying you a compliment."

Digitized by Google

"As you are good enough to say so I accept it in that sense, nevertheless it is a compliment which I had rather been spared," I replied, and after being told to report myself to Urdenetta and join my regiment took my leave.

The rupture with Bolivar was complete. I had served him faithfully, often at the hazard of my life, without pay or expectation of reward, yet he had deliberately and of malice aforethought inflicted on me the greatest humiliation in his power, for I know of none greater than being compelled to serve a man whom you hate and despise. So keenly, indeed, did I feel it that I was only restrained from refusing the so-called promotion and offering my resignation by the certainty that the doing so would render my second condition worse than my first.

I should not better myself by being tried by court-martial on a charge of insubordination, separated from my friends, and sentenced to a term of imprisonment in some noisome prison, there, in all probability, to perish of privation and disease.

So I pocketed the affront and waited on Urdenetta, who received me with formal politeness; but his eyes bespoke enmity, and I knew as well as though he had said it in so many words that he would do me an ill turn if he could. His speech on introducing me to my regiment was brief and to the point: "Your new colonel, Don Ruperto Wyvenhoe."

The Cazadores of the Apure were of various breeds, sizes, and colours, altogether a very mixed lot and only half clad, yet a fair sample of the bulk of the army; but since I had seen how they could march and fight, my respect for the patriot levies had increased, and better disciplined, armed, and led, they would have been a match for Morillo's choicest troops. Even to their lack of garments, grotesque though it made them look, I had become reconciled. In countries where it is always warm, clothing is superfluous and other things being equal, an army that requires neither shirts nor shoes has a distinct advantage over armies that require both.

Don Iago's battalion of blacks formed part of Urdenetta's division, and it was a great satisfaction to have my old friend for a comrade; in certain eventualities it might be a great help. But Bonanza remained with General Paez. We parted with regret and many expressions of mutual esteem, as also of hopes that we might meet again, though for my part, I doubted whether they would be realised.

Bonanza, like Santleo, took a serious view of my breach with Bolivar and my strained relations with Urdenetta.

"It is bad enough to lose the Chief's favour and protection, but it is a great deal worse to be handed over to the tender mercies of your enemy, and such an enemy as Urdenetta. Not that he is likely to worry you in small matters. Men of his stamp don't tease their victims, they destroy them, and nothing is more certain than that he has resolved on your destruction. In what shape the stroke will come, nobody knows, I don't suppose he knows himself, and against an unknown danger it is impossible to guard. However, you seem, like myself, to have a good many lives," added Bonanza, with one of his merry laughs, "and I have not the least doubt that with the help of Don Iago and your patron saint, you will escape this peril as you have escaped many others. Keep up your spirits, and if by any chance you get the ruffian in your power, don't spare him."

This, albeit well meant, was not comforting, yet I did not let Don Antonio's forebodings disquiet me, preferring rather to follow his advice by keeping up my spirits.

I made the best d'spositions I could, and led my men on.

Tamanac remained with Don Iago, who continued to treat him as an honoured guest, found him a horse and gave him a lance, both of which the Cazique knew how to use. He was also a fine archer, and an unerring rifle shot, and could throw the lasso as well as a llanero.

When I asked Santleo again whether Tamanac had brought good news he said, "Yes," but in a tone which signified that it was not quite so good as he had expected, and I inferred from one or two rather enigmatical remarks which he let drop that he had some intention either of resigning his commission or applying for leave of absence, with what object he did not say, though it could only be that he might return to his own people. But as we were beginning what was virtually a new campaign Bolivar would grant leave of absence to none of his officers, much less accept resignations.

Since leaving Sombrero we had not come in contact with the enemy, but it was known that between us and Caracas were two armies, one led by Morillo, the other by his second in command, General La Torre. Bolivar's plan was to get between them and, while La Torre was held in check by the cavalry under Zaraza and Zedeño, fall on Morillo with his infantry. The better and more rapidly to carry out this scheme, our division was ordered to proceed by another road and rejoin the main body at a point further north, which had been agreed upon by Bolivar and Urdenetta, with whom, of course, went Don Iago and myself.

We set out after siesta—the heat of the day being always passed in sleep, bivouacked on the banks of a meandering stream, and resumed our march an hour before sunrise on

Digitized by Google

the following morning. So far we had met with no opposition, every village we passed was deserted, either because for their lives, or in obedience to orders from Caracas. This, and seeing nothing of the enemy, made our leaders, who always trusted a good deal to Providence, more careless than was their wont, the most obvious precautions were neglected, and we went on as confidently and as little apprehensive of danger as though there was not a Spaniard in the land.

After marching some three hours we entered a quebrada, neither very narrow nor very steep, yet still in military parlance a defile, whose sloping sides were partly under cultivation, partly timbered. On the bluff at the north end of this defile was a large village overlooking the road, parallel to which ran the bed of a wide though almost dry river.

Here General Urdenetta decided to halt for breakfast,

Urdenetta's orderly entered the patio and handed me a letter.

without, however, sending a single horseman to reconnoitre or attempting in any way to ascertain whether the place was occupied or deserted, the inhabitants friendly or hostile. The advanced guard, a squadron of cavalry, went on laughing and singing, closely followed by a battalion whose unloaded muskets were slung across their shoulders, and were entering the village when a hot fire was opened on them by invisible foes.

Many of the dragoons were killed and their horses wounded, and the panic-stricken survivors wheeling round, dashed among the infantry in the rear, thereby throwing the entire column into confusion. Had the Spaniards charged, there would have been a regular *sauve qui peut*. Fortunately, they did not; in a few minutes the fugitives were rallied and order restored, and Urdenetta ordered the Cazadores to take the village at the point of the bayonet, which was more easily said than done, the Spaniards being posted in the houses and behind the bushes and trees.

However, I made the best dispositions I could and led my men on.

They responded to my call and showed a good deal of courage, but it was too much of a passive order. Though they were exposed to a murderous fire to which they could make no effective reply I could not induce them to make a rush for it. How I escaped Heaven only knows. Two horses were shot under me within ten minutes, one bullet carried away a spur, another grazed my cheek, a third my sword arm.

It was too hot to last, the men began to waver, retreating step by step, and finally broke and fled, though if we had been properly supported I think we should have won, and so I told the general when he reproached me with what he was pleased to call my failure.

His face bespoke both anger and disappointment, and I thought that his annoyance was due in a great measure to my not having been killed.

Urdenetta had neither received a military training nor possessed military aptitude, but he well knew that unless the village were taken we should be unable to rejoin Bolivar, in which event Bolivar's plan of campaign would be ruined and, probably, his army destroyed.

"The position must be carried, cost what it may. You have seen more of it than anybody else. What would you advise?" he asked me.

"Attack in front as before, and at the same time threaten the enemy's rear by sending a strong detachment along the bed of the river. The Spaniards are in no great strength, and the chances are that when they see the position is going to be turned they will retreat."

"Why did you not suggest that before?"

"Because when his general gives a peremptory order it is an officer's duty to obey it without either making remarks or offering suggestions, and if I had done otherwise I should rightly have incurred your displeasure."

Urdenetta replied with a scowl and a muttered curse, yet condescended to act on my advice, with the result I had anticipated. So soon as the Spaniards saw they were in danger of being outflanked they cleared out, but our weakness in cavalry both in quality and numbers forbade pursuit.

Most of the young men belonging to the village went off with the troops; all who remained, both old and young, were, by Urdenetta's orders, imprisoned in the church. Very little information could be got out of them, only that a regiment had come the night before from the direction of Maracay and taken possession of the village.

As we were well up to time and for some reason best known to himself the general wanted to make a long march on the following day it was decided that we should pass the night where we were, and together with Santleo and several other officers I was quartered in a house with a spacious patio and verandah.

Here we lunched, for it was long past breakfast time, and John Ready, who was an admirable caterer, provided us with the best meal we had enjoyed for a long while. We had coffee, arepas (hot maize cakes) chicken broth, roast monkey and several bottles of wine which John had found hidden under a pile of rubbish in the cellar.

After luncheon we prepared to indulge in a siesta and I had just lighted a cigar and betaken myself to a hammock when Urdenetta's orderly entered the patio and handed me a letter which I opened with languid curiosity, little thinking that it would alter the course of my whole life.

Thus the letter ran:

The general has decided that all the prisoners are to be shot. The execution is to take place in an hour, and the firing party, a detachment of the Cazadores of the Apure, will be commanded by Colonel Wyvenhoe.

URDENETTA.

"I think there is some mistake. I shall go with you to headquarters and have it rectified," I remarked to the orderly who was waiting for an answer.

Then I showed the letter to Don Iago, saying *sotto voce*, in English, "I shall refuse, of course, and if I do not return you will know that I have been put under arrest."

"And if you are put under arrest you will be condemned to death; but die you shall not, rather will I kill Urdenetta with my own hand," replied Santleo in a fierce whisper.

(To be continued.)

Digitized by Google

SHORT STORIES ABOUT DUSTMEN.

We devote, every week, two pages of *Short Stories* to pithy, humourous anecdotes similar to those which appear in these columns. A prize of £1 1s. will be sent to the reader who submits the best storyette this week, and a copy of "Tandra," by Andrew Quantock, to each of those whose attempts are used. The anecdotes may be either original or selected; in the latter case the source *must* be stated. The prize of One Guinea offered for the best Storyette in this competition has been won this week by Mr. J. D. Watts, "Kildare," Lower Edmonton. Attempts this week must deal with Stories about BABIES, and must reach the Storyette Editor, *Short Stories* Office, Henrietta Street, Strand, London, W.C., by Monday, October 22nd. Post-cards only, please.

Good Wine Needs No Bush.

Two dustmen, who had been lucky enough to discover a sovereign in their load of dust, decided to wet the find, and accordingly repaired to the nearest pub.

They decided to have something good to celebrate such an auspicious occasion, so Bill called the barmaid, and asked for "a bottle o' that stuff, like wot the swells drink. Port, ain't it?"

She served them with a bottle, which they proceeded to empty, with very wry faces.

"Rum tastin' stuff, ain't it?" said one.

"Yes; an' wot a funny colour! S'pose we try another," said Bill.

"'Ere, guv'ner!" to the proprietor, who had just come into the bar, "let's 'ave another o' them bottles o' port."

"Who served you with the first one?" asked the boss.

"Why, the barmaid," said Bill.

"Where did you get that bottle of port you served just now?" asked the proprietor of the girl.

"At the end of the first shelf," answered the girl.

"Why," said the boss, "that was ketchup!"

J. D. W.

All She Wanted.

A DUSTMAN was one day passing by a block of flats with his cart. On one of the highest storeys he saw a woman gesticulating to him.

He wearily plodded up the intervening four storeys and at length reached the landing where the woman was standing, with a yelling urchin by her side.

To his disgust he was greeted with the following:

"I say, Mr. Dustman, isn't it right, that, if my little boy don't stop crying, you'll take him away with you in your cart?"

H. R.

Not Equal to the Occasion.

THERE is a dustman in London whose knowledge and use of strong language is the wonder of all who know him.

One day he was driving a waggon of refuse up a steep hill when the tailboard came out, and the rubbish rolled out down the slope.

The neighbours assembled, expecting to hear something more than usually choice.

After a brief interval of silence, the dustman mopped his forehead with his handkerchief and remarked:

"My friends, this is an occasion to which I am quite unequal."

W. J. B.

He Didn't Say "Thank You."

I WAS passing through a street near my home when my attention was drawn to two sweepers who were holding a strong argument with a gentleman whom they had accidentally bespattered with mud.

"What do you mean, you two dirty scoundrels, by sticking me up with mud?" said the gentleman, brandishing his umbrella in their faces.

"Beg yer pardin, sur, it was an accident," said one.

"Accident, be hanged," said the gentleman, "I can't go about like this with no brush to brush it off."

"If that's all yer want we'll oblige yer," and in less than two seconds the gentleman was being brushed down with the sweepers' brushes.

The gentleman struck out with his umbrella and went off up the street saying unkind things.

"Well, there's gratitoode for yer," said one sweeper.

"Ay, Bill," said the other, "he's forgotten to say 'Thank you, gentlemen.'"

J. W. V. H.

A *Lesson* in Carefulness.

SHUVLITUP, the dustman, called as usual one morning at the house of Mrs. Carefulone, and also, as usual, Mrs. C., who never tipped him, followed Shuvlitup out to the dust-bin in the backyard and watched every shovelful of ashes as he dug it out of the bin and threw it into his big bucket, to Shuvlitup's great indignation.

"You dustmen often find valuable articles in the dust-bins, don't you?" inquired Mrs. Carefulone, suspiciously.

"Well, mum," said Shuvlitup, "servants an' 'ouse-keepers is orful keerless, not to say 'stravagant, an' we do find vallyble things in the ashes sometimes. Frinstance, larst time I was 'ere I found two cinders, three rags, an' a 'am bone wiv a bit o' meat on it. The cinders could 'ave bin burnt, the rags sold, an' the bone might 'ave bin boiled an' made a nice little basin of soop. You reely must be more keerful, mum."

W. J. O.

"Dusto."

AN Irishman was clearing the dustbin of a reverend gentleman the other day, when the cleric thought fit to address some remarks to him on his spiritual welfare.

"Do you ever think of the time when you must die, Pat?" asked the clergyman.

"Sure, and I do that," replied Pat, "for I often say to myself, 'Pat, my boy, you'll feel at home when you hear the parson say, 'Dust thou art, to dust thou must return.'"

A. E. K.

Digitized by Google

A Natural Weakness.

The dustman was on his daily rounds and happened to have got a new horse in his cart.

The lady of No. 9 was passing in, and noticed it; also that it frequently wagged its tail.

Full of curiosity—as ladies generally are—she asked the dustman for an explanation of this curious habit of his horse.

He didn't appear to be in an explanatory mood, and silently emptied the contents of the "bin" of No. 9 into his cart, and was passing on to the next house, when she repeated her query, remarking it was "so funny."

Looking back over his shoulder, the dustman said, with, maybe, a touch of sarcasm in his voice:

"Well, I dunno, mum, 'cept it's fur the same reason as ladies' tongues wag—a kind o' nat'ral weakness."

D. P. R.

Misplaced Sympathy.

Walking up a suburban road recently, I saw a dustman take up a small photograph from the refuse in the cart, gaze at it intently, and then draw his arm across his eyes.

"Poor fellow!" I thought, and approached him. "Ah, my friend, beneath your rough exterior lies a noble nature. No doubt that photo has touched a tender chord in your heart to make you weep."

"Cord, guv'nor? I ain't got no cord in my 'eart or rope neither, an' I reckon you'd adverbially weep if an adjectival bit of ash got in your eye. As for this 'ere picture," indicating the photograph, which was of a small boy, "it ud take summat more 'n this ugly little kid to start me a snivelling."

E. C. L.

The Benefit of Education.

Donald Morrison was the only dustman employed by a village in the north of Scotland, and was generally reckoned as being somewhat "soft."

Early one morning he found a horse's shoe among some rubbish he was removing, and was examining it very closely, when the parish minister's son, a very conceited and forward youth, came sauntering along. Seeing the dustman examining the shoe, he said to him:

"What are you looking at that for, you silly?"

"I'm no' very sure what it is," answered Donald.

"Do you not know that that is a horse's shoe?"

"Eh, what?" said Donald; "it's guid tae hae learnin'; for I didna ken whether it cam' off a horse or a mare!"

J. C.

Why He Had the Wheelbarrow.

One Sunday morning recently a dustman, going up a street in Wigan, met another dustman dressed in his "Sunday suit" of black cloth; but pushing in front of him a heavy wheelbarrow, though it contained nothing in the shape of a cargo.

"Hello, Jack," said the first, "what are ta doing wi' t' barrow now?"

"Well," was the reply, "I've lost t' dog, and my chum Bill's away, and a chap looks such a fool walking out by hissel'."

He had taken the wheelbarrow for company.

H. C. G. S.

PEARSON'S
New Morning Paper.
1d. 2 The 1d. 2
The Paper for Home Reading.
The Paper for the Housekeeper.
The Paper for the Busy Man.
The Paper for the City Man.
The Paper for the Sporting Man.
The Paper for EVERYBODY.
Daily
THE MOST ORIGINAL, UP-TO-DATE, ACCURATE AND BEST NEWSPAPER
Published in this Country.
Published SIX days a Week, NOT once.
1d. 2 Express 1d. 2
ON SALE EVERYWHERE.
ORDER A COPY NOW.

A SPLENDID NOVEL. SIXPENNY EDITION.
The Invisible Man
By H. G. WELLS.
Author of "The Time Machine," "The War of the Worlds," etc.

Price 6d.
POST FREE 8d.
C. ARTHUR PEARSON LIMITED, Henrietta Street, W.C.

An Interesting Book.
CONSULT THE ORACLE;
or,
HOW TO READ THE FUTURE.
Crown 8vo. Price, 1s. Post Free, 1s. 3d.
Some of the Chapters are:
Chap. I.—The Meaning of your Dreams.
Chap. III.—Omens, Charms, and Spells for Lovers.
Chap. VII.—Judging Character by the Hands and Fingers.
Chap. XV.—Married Life Begun as it Should Be.
Chap. XXIV.—Table-Turning.
Chap. XXVIII.—Mystery and Danger of Mesmerism.
Chap. XXXIII.—Things Seen by Second-Sight.
Chap. XXXIX.—Looks showing your Character.
C. ARTHUR PEARSON LIMITED, Henrietta Street, W.C.

Digitized by Google

PEARSON'S WEEKLY

FOOTBALL SKILL COMPETITION.

£100 PRIZE AWARDED EVERY WEEK.

The football matches named below will be played on Saturday, October 20th. To the competitor from whom we receive the correct result of all these matches we will pay the sum of ONE HUNDRED POUNDS. If no competitor gives all the results correctly, the HUNDRED POUNDS will be awarded to the person or persons most nearly correct. In the event of more than one competitor sending in the same result, the prize will be divided.

FOOTBALL COUPON No. 2. Matches to be played on Saturday, October 20th.

Matches to be Played on Saturday, Oct. 20th.	Free	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
1 Derby County v. 2 Sheffield United																			
1 Notts County v. 2 Liverpool																			
1 Sunderland v. 2 Manchester City																			
1 Preston North End v. 2 Aston Villa																			
1 Stoke v. 2 Blackburn Rovers																			
1 West Bromwich Alb. v. 2 Notts Forest																			
1 Small Heath v. 2 Woolwich Arsenal																			
1 Newton Heath v. 2 Walsall																			
1 Queen's Park Rang. v. 2 Tottenham Hotspur																			
1 Hibernians v. 2 Queen's Park																			

The clubs engaged in each match are numbered 1 and 2. To fill in the above coupon, insert in the space provided the number of the club selected to win. To predict a draw, put X. THE FIRST COUPON IS FREE. A penny stamp must be inclosed for each coupon used in addition to the free one. Nine extra coupons may be used for Sixpence, and eighteen extra coupons for One Shilling.

I send in this coupon as a competitor for the prize advertised in this paper, and subject to the conditions printed on this page:

Name and address.....

THINGS TO REMEMBER.

1. Coupons may be sent either from "Pearson's Weekly," the "Curiosity Shop," or "Short Stories."
2. All coupons must reach us not later than Friday, October 19th, first post.
3. Competitors should cut out the whole coupon, score it as directed, put their name and address in the space provided, and send to "FOOTBALL, No. 2," Pearson's Buildings, Henrietta Street, W.C.
4. All coupons are at senders' risk, and if they go astray, from whatever cause, we do not accept responsibility.
5. Competitors must attach their private address to their attempts. No prize will be sent to any post-office, refreshment rooms, or other places at which letters are called for. Attempts bearing such addresses will be disqualified.
6. It must be taken as a condition of the competition that anybody competing therein agrees to abide by the Editor's final decision.

Digitized by Google

THE ✣ IRON ✣ IDOL.

THE nose of the big troopship was turned towards Old England as the mighty engines propelled her swiftly and powerfully through the water of the Arabian Sea. The brown-faced Fusiliers lay about the decks, chatting with their comrades or wives, playing with the children, or dozing away the hot afternoon.

Suddenly a commotion was heard below, men shouting in alarm.

"What the dickens is that?" exclaimed the ship's captain.

"Whatever is going on below there, Hamilton?" simultaneously cried the colonel of the Fusiliers to the adjutant. The answer came in an alarming manner.

Up from below rushed the sentry who had been posted at the door of the magazine. Round the waist he ran, eyes furious with baffled rage, thrusting with his fixed bayonet at some imaginary or invisible enemy which seemed to elude all his angry efforts to stab it. Round the waist he ran, back and forth, up the ladder on to the forecastle, down on to the waist again, up on to the quarter-deck, here, there, round and round, thrusting savagely with his bayonet, while the women and children ran shrieking hither and thither out of his way, and soldiers leapt aside as he came rushing towards them in pursuit of the invisible foe.

"He's mad!"

"No, he's drunk!"

"Who is it?"

"It's Jack Fann! Look out!"

"Trip him up! Knock him down! He'll kill somebody!"

"Chase him! Chase him!"

And now the infuriated sentry was once more rushing across the waist up on to the forecastle. Reaching the bows, he thrust his bayonet furiously at his invisible quarry, seemed, as ever, to miss it, dropped his rifle, and springing on the bows, clutched wildly at the eerie enemy, and before the foremost of the soldiers who in their turn were now pursuing him could grasp his ankle, leapt down into the sea and vanished for ever. All stood petrified, but only for an instant. Engines were reversed, buoys flung overboard, and boats lowered. But all to no purpose.

Private Fann had gone for ever from the roll of the Fusiliers.

"Mad, poor fellow!" was the universal verdict.

"And yet he was never in hospital for sunstroke, was he, Wilson?" asked the colonel.

"Never, colonel," replied the surgeon-major.

"It was like this, sir," said Sergeant Smith, in reply to the colonel's investigations into the strange affair. "Private Fann was sentry at the door of the magazine. He was posted at two o'clock and had been at his post an hour when he suddenly rushed into No. 7 Mess, seeming to be chasing something just like you saw him up here, sir. He ran about the mess for a minute or so and then rushed up on deck, and you saw the rest yourself, sir."

"Poor chap," said the colonel.

"Bob!" whispered Private Brodribb to Private Satan that night as they lay in adjoining hammocks.

"Yes, Sam."

"D'ye knew what he was chasin'?"

"What who was chasin'?" asked Private Satan.

"Why, poor Jack, of course. Who else would I mean?"

"Well, who was he chasin' then? I didn't see nothin' to chase, any more'n anybody else. He was mad, wasn't he?"

"You fool! He was chasin' that beastly idol!"

"What!" cried Satan, springing up in his hammock.

"The iron idol!" repeated Brodribb, hoarsely.

"What d'ye mean?" gasped Satan, the darkness hiding his ashen face.

"What I say," replied Brodribb. "I knowed what it was as soon as I saw poor Jack rush into the mess, stabbin' at the air with his bay'net. Somethin' tole me what he was chasin'. I turned cold all over when I saw him lookin' so mad, stabbin' and thrustin' and runnin' and when I saw him rush up the ladder, I knowed what was goin' to happen. I knowed it was leadin' him to his death. I knowed it was drawin him overboard. And, mark me, Bob, it'll do the same to me yet, I feels it in my blood. I'm a doomed man, Bob, and so are you. D'ye remember what the yeller priest said about runnin' us to death? Oh—oh! why did I meddle with the beastly thing?" And Private Brodribb groaned aloud.

"Oh 'Eavens!" gasped Private Satan, fearfully. "I never thought of the idol. And now it'll be runnin' me to my death, too. Oh, dear! dear! I wish I never touched it!" And Private Satan wrung his hands and snivelled in his hammock.

The Fusiliers were back in the old home quarters at Southshot.

"Hey! hey!" shrieked the messenger boy who had for ten minutes been watching admiringly the sentry on the barrack gate pace his short beat. "Soger runnin' away! Soger desertin'! Guards turn out! Guards turn out!"

The sergeant of the guard came to the door of the guard room.

"Soger runnin' away!" screamed the boy, excitedly.

The sergeant rushed to the gate and looked up the street. The sent y who had been posted at the barrack gate was running up the street.

"Well I'm jiggered!" ejaculated the sergeant, "deserting in broad daylight and in full kit!"

Back he rushed to the guard room.

"Private Stairs, mount guard at the gate! Corporal Hughes, take Dare and Williams and chase Private Brodribb. He's deserting! Sharp!"

Out ran the corporal and his two men. But even as they reached the gate, in rushed the sentry Private Brodribb. With his fixed bayonet at the charge and eyes glaring angrily he ran across the barrack square towards the officers' quarters, thrusting his weapon repea edly in front of him as though trying to transfix some invisib'e, escaping thing.

Digitized by Google

Straight into the officers' quarters he dashed, into the mess-room where the officers sat at lunch. Round the long table he ran twice, stabbing the air in front of him and grinding his teeth in baffled fury; then out, along the corridor; into the quartermaster's room and out again; up the stone staircase into B Company's room; back again and out on to the verandah, followed now by the whole of the officers and a mob of the men.

"Sam Brodribb's gone mad!" was the cry.

To the furthest end of the narrow balcony ran the sentry in his baffled chase of the invisible quarry, making a terrific lunge which sent his bayonet against the stone wall, snapping the steel like matchwood. With a cry Brodribb dropped his rifle and leaping on the edge of the balcony rail in a wild endeavour to grasp the unseen foe, fell twenty feet on to the stone flags in the square below. A score of men rushed to him, but his neck was broken.

"Carry him to the mortuary," ordered the colonel, and the body was conveyed thence to await the surgeon's examination.

The officers and men stood about in groups, discussing the affair, for everyone was struck by the singular similarity which it bore to the circumstances attending the death of Private Fann a few weeks previously.

Suddenly Private Satan emerged from one of the barrack rooms on to the parade ground and staggered, rather than walked, towards the group of officers. He was a young fellow of eighteen and had joined the Army as a bandsboy four years before. His face was white as death and a wild fear was in his eyes as he looked all about him. Going up to the colonel he said, hoarsely:

"I w-w-want my discharge, sir."

The colonel stared. The idea of a man asking for his discharge in such an informal manner! Then the wild terror in Satan's appearance struck him.

"Why do you make that request here?" he asked.

"'Cos I'm afraid of my life!" cried Satan, wildly. "I'm afraid of everything. I wish I was locked up in a lunatic asylum where I'd be safe. Oh, dear! I wish I didn't go with Fann and Brodribb that day. Oh, that orful idol! He'll be runnin' me to my death next!" And Private Satan flung himself down on the dusty parade ground and burst into moans and sobs.

The officers flashed looks of sudden intelligence at each other.

"Private Satan!" said the colonel, sternly, "get up, man! Get up instantly!"

Satan obeyed, moaning and looking about with hunted, terror-stricken eyes.

Round he ran, thrusting savagely with his bayonet.

"Do you know anything about the deaths of Privates Fann and Brodribb?" asked the colonel.

"I knows what they died of," snivelled Satan, "they was—"

"Come to my room," interrupted the colonel.

"Hamilton and D'Arcy, please come, too." And the colonel strode to his room, followed by the major and adjutant, with Private Satan in the rear.

"Sit down, Private Satan," said the colonel. "Now, what do you know about Fann and Brodribb?"

Private Satan drew his handkerchief from his left coat sleeve, wiped his eyes, and replacing the handkerchief, began:

"You remember the iron idol behind the bars of the fakir's tomb in the jungle at Thayetmayo, sir? The one you was always warnin' us not to meddle with?"

"Yes, I remember it perfectly. It was built into the wall of the tomb and protected by an iron grating," said the colonel.

"Well, sir, a month before we left Thayetmayo, me and Sam Brodribb and Jack Fann was strollin' about near the tomb. We'd 'ad a drop of toddy, just enuf to make us lark about reckless like, and when we came to the tomb Jack Fann said:

"'Tell you what, chummies. Three shies a penny at ole physic.'

"And he up with a stone and shied it at the idol. Me and Sam Brodribb joined in, although we knowed you'd punish us if you heard of it, sir, on 'count of the natives thinkin' it a saint. A devil I think it was, now. I wish I'd left it alone," and Satan began to weep afresh.

"Come, come, be a man. Go on with your story," said the colonel.

"Well, sir," continued Satan, "we pelted the idol with stones, the three of us, but not a blessed stone could we throw through the bars, 'though they was three inches apart. Something seemed to turn 'em all aside, and made us fair mad at last.

"'Hang your grinnin' mug!' said Jack Fann, 'you won't be hit, won't you? Have him out, lads. Down with the bars!'

"We was so mad at not bein' able to shy through the bars that we pulled down branches and forced the bars out. Jack Fann put his hand in and grabbed the idol.

"'Come here, you ugly brute,' said he, shakin' it by the throat.

"He was just goin' to dash it down on the ground when we heard a orful screech behind us, and the old yeller priest what lived in the hut near the tomb—you remember him, sir?"

Digitized by Google

"He grabbed it as if it was a life-line chucked to him."

"Perfectly," said the colonel.

"Well, he comes rushing up, screamin' like mad.

"'What ho! Yeller Jack!' sez Fann, 'you wants it, do you? Will you 'ave it now or wait till you gets it?' And he dodges round the tomb with the priest after him, tryin' to grab him and get the idol back.

"'Now! Bob!' sez Jack, and he chucks the idol to me and the priest chases me. Well, we kep' the game up till the ole priest was fair winded and fell in a heap by the side of the tomb. I was holdin' the idol then.

"'Let the pore ole beggar 'ave it now, Bob,' sez Sam, and I chucked the idol at him.

"He grabbed it as if it was a life-line chucked to him and him drownin'. Then he gets up, and clawin' his right hand towards us he pushed the grinnin' iron idol into our faces.

"'As you have treated me,' sez he, 'so shall he treat you.' And he pointed to the idol. 'But you,' sez he, 'shall be run to death.' And then he folds the idol in his gown and goes off to his hut.

"We laffs and goes back to barracks and thinks no more about the bizness excep' as a good joke among ourselves, for we was afraid to tell of it 'cos we knowed we'd get it hot from you, sir, for interfering with the natives' religion. We was afraid, too, of the ole priest comin' and tellin' you, sir. But it seems he did'nt.

"The night after Jack Fann died"—Private Satan shuddered and looked fearfully about the room—"Sam Brodribb sez to me:

"'Bob, it was the idol he was chasin'!'

"'Oh, horrors!' sez I, and I turned cold to the marrer at the thought.

"'I knows it,' sez Sam, 'I feels it in my bones. You remember what the yeller priest said about our bein' run to death? Well that's what happened to Jack. And it's what'll happen to me. And it's what'll happen to you, Bob Satan. We're doomed men, Bob,' sez Sam.

"And since then I've lived in 'ell," said Private Satan, wringing his hands. "Wherever I am I expect to see that awful idol beck'nin' me to chase him. He ran Sam to death to-day, and now I'll be next." And Private Satan buried his face in his hands and groaned in utter despair.

The three officers looked at each other gravely. They had each spent years in India and knew enough of that land of mystery to treat Satan's story seriously.

"And you wish to purchase your discharge, Satan?" said the colonel.

"Yes, sir. No, sir. I doan' know what to do," groaned poor Satan despairingly.

"Well, return to your quarters now, and I'll think matters over," said the colonel, and Private Satan rose, saluted, and retired dejectedly.

"Queer story, major," said the colonel.

"Heard queerer ones," returned the major, "and they were true."

"Wish they'd left the thing alone," said the colonel. "I always hated that idol somehow. It looked so human."

"What is to be done about Satan, sir?" asked the adjutant.

"Upon my word I hardly know," said the colonel. "What can we do? We can't tie him up with ropes to prevent an invisible Burmese idol leading him on a chase to his death. Better let him buy out, I suppose. However, we'll see what frame of mind he's in to-morrow."

But next day the subject of Private Satan, although uppermost in the minds of the three officers, had to be held over owing to a sudden call for the regiment to furnish a strong draft for South Africa.

* * * * *

A group of colliers sat on the hillside a couple of miles outside of Southshot in the cool of the summer evening.

"Well, now," remarked one, "that soldier down there is enjoying himself all alone and no mistake."

"Ketchin' butterflies, ain't he?" said another.

"Looks like it. But my gosh, how excited he's gettin' over it. Look how they're dodgin' him! And yet I can't see a sign of a blessed butterfly!"

"I say," put in an older man, rising to his feet, "he's pritty reckless where he's going! He's runnin' full pelt for the old shaft. Hoy!" he roared.

But the scarlet-coated figure rushed on unheeding towards a disused old pit shaft, level with the ground and covered with a deceitful bramble growth.

"Good gracious!" shrieked the collier, "he's gone!"

And followed by his companions, he rushed to the shaft-head. But the soldier had fallen three hundred yards into the cold, black waters that filled the old workings and flowed swiftly for miles underground.

And such was the death of Private Satan.

W. J. Ormiston.

Digitized by Google

A WOMAN'S PRIVILEGE.

AWAY up in the north countree, under the shadow of a long range of purple-brown hills, lies the pretty rural village of Shelsdon.

Not a hundred yards from the finger-post at the four cross roads, and immediately facing the village pump, stands the old toll-house, in which lived Widow Clark and her niece, Phœbe Turner.

Phœbe had lived at Shelsdon with her Aunt Clark since she was thirteen, and nine years had transformed the awkward, colty-looking girl into a lithe, supple, and decidedly pretty young woman. March had gone out with a roar, and April had come in with a smile.

Phœbe was sunning herself on the doorstep. From time to time she cast a hasty, inquisitive glance up the road. On Monday the last "Cinderella" of the season had taken place at the Market Hall, Bessborough. Bessborough was the county town, and from the High Cross at Shelsdon to the Market Hall at Bessborough was reckoned two miles.

Some anonymous admirer had sent Phœbe Turner a ticket for the dance, and asked her to wear cherry-coloured ribbons in her hair.

Phœbe had gone to the ball and worn the ribbons. This morning, as she gazed up the road towards Bessborough, her pretty face wore a discontented and somewhat peevish expression.

"Toosday, Wednesday, Thursday," she muttered, walking down to the edge of the footway. "'Twas Thursday as he said."

The miller's team from Hillingham were slaking their thirst at the water trough. It was the black team which had gained a prize at the county show, and a little knot of admirers were gathered round it. She stood watching the animals with a listless pre-occupied air till the waggoner set them in motion and scattered the crowd. Then she turned back towards the house.

"I'm gatten main tired, O' Shelsdon, I am," she murmured, lips pouting and eyes glistening. "'Tis nobbut blither an' blether wi' all of 'em. Job's allus goin' to do summat gran', but hoo's done nowt yet: an' course I maun sit mum till he likes t' whistle an' heed to nobbody's chirpin' but his'n. Aye! 'tis the men will put on you, abooye a bit—if yo' lat 'em. But I did think as Mr. ——"

Suddenly the girl stopped. She had caught sight of a well-known figure emerging from the big iron gates of Shelston Manor. It was the postman. An eager, expectant look leapt into her eyes. She walked forward a few yards to meet him. The man handed her a letter.

Phœbe glanced at the envelope, and the light in her eyes went out.

* * * * *

Phœbe was standing at the little table in the parlour with the letter in her hand. Once or twice she glanced at it in a half-contemptuous sort of way, finally throwing it down with a gesture of scornful impatience. It was the unexpected which had happened.

Phœbe had been counting the days since Monday. "Somebody" had promised her a letter on Thursday; but Thursday had come without bringing the letter. Fate, indeed, had played a trick on her.

"'Tis nobbut th' owd song fro' Job," she whined fretfully. "'Tis allus the same toon as he plays, an' I'm fair sick o' list'nin' to ut!"

She flung herself into the big armchair. Her eyes were misty with tears, her lips quivered with vexation.

"He canna have forgotten, sure-lie," she said, playing with the corner of her apron.

Five minutes passed. Her eyes wandered to the table. She leant forward, stretched out her hand, and picked up the neglected letter. Still she delayed to open it. Twice she let it fall while she sat absorbed in herself, seeing nothing about her, but following some will-o'-the-wisp fancy which had started across the waste spaces of her mind.

"Hey, dear!" she said presently, shaking herself together, "I be gatten the blues I do think," and tearing open the envelope with a petulant little movement she began to read the letter. The next minute she was calling up the stairs:

"Auntie! Auntie! 'Tis come. Job's sent for me, sure 'nuff. I'm to start o' the nineteenth! Dost hear? Be sharp down. I've suthin to show 'ee—suthin as'll mak thee stare till tha winna b'leeve thee can see straight!" And, running back to he parlour, the girl picked up a slip of pink-coloured paper which had been folded inside the letter.

"Well, naa, that's real nice of him," she murmured. "Hey! but Job's none such a bad lot, after all; an'—I really—do—luv—him," she added, her eyes still fixed on the bit of pink paper.

Suddenly she lost sight of it. She was in Bessborough Market Hall. It was the night of the Cinderella Ball. She was sitting out a dance with Mr. Frank Eversley,

Digitized by Google

and certain words which had been whispered in her ear while she leisurely consumed the ice-pudding and other trifles which her cavalier had brought her recurred to her so vividly that she blushed at the recollection, even, as she had blushed when she had felt the warm breath of the speaker hot upon her cheek.

"Job's been yawin' about so long," she said to herself in justificatory tones; "sure, he canna' blame me if a gentleman as meets me in th' lane, wi' nobbutt mysel' to speak to, akses if he may walk wi' me to th' end on't. 'There'll be dozens of 'em,' said he, 'ready to snap 'ee up, when I'm not to-forrard to keep un aff.' He know'd it then, he did. He shu'd ha' sent sooner. How many years, I won'er, does a man expect a woman to sit mum at the stile a-waitin' for him?

"Would he be mad now if that wench o' Maybury's towd him that somebody sent me a ticket for the ball, and that I danced fower times with somebody? Well, 'tis nobbody but Job's ownsel's to blame. He shu'd ha' sent sooner, he shu'd."

She glanced again at the slip of coloured paper held between her fingers, and as her eye rested on it her heart melted towards the old love, who was divided from her by the whole width of the Atlantic.

"Poor old Job!" she murmured regretfully; "poor old Job!"

At this moment Widow Clark came into the room.

"Well, child, what hast gatten? Is Job foun' a fortin?" And the old lady laughed dubiously.

"When tha's done laughin', auntie, I'll show thee suthin' as'll mak thee begin agen," said Phœbe, who had hidden her hands behind her back.

"There!" she cried, suddenly spreading out the bank-draft on the little table; "look at that! That's what I've gatten: 'On demand pay to Phœbe Turner, or order'—I doan know what that's putten for—'the sum of Twenty Pounds.' Read it, aunt; read it thasel'."

She thrust the slip of pink paper into the old lady's hand, and went skipping about the room.

"Well," said Widow Clark, looking at her niece, "I allus did say yo'd better be born lucky than rich."

"An' I'm to go in the *Sardinian*, on the nineteenth," cried Phœbe, clapping her hands. "Sit down, auntie, sit thee down, while I finish th' letter."

A sheet of paper was lying on the floor. Phœbe had brushed it off the table in whirling round the room. She picked it up and began reading. By the time she got to the signature, the Bessborough Ball had faded from her mind; and her heart had gone back to the honest laddie who had left Shelsdon two years ago, to make a home for her 3,000 miles nearer the sunset.

"Well, well! won'ers 'll never cease. To think o' Job Tharn makin' his fortin'," was Widow Clark's comment as she left the room.

In the ill-written, ill-spelt letter of the old love, with its handsome inclosure for outfit and passage, the mercurial Phœbe found present compensation for her disappointment in not hearing from the new. She dutifully determined straightway to forget Mr. Frank Eversley, only son of the wealthy miller at Hillingham, and forthwith began to set about making preparations for the journey.

When the Bessborough postman handed in a letter in the evening addressed in a smart, neat hand, to "Miss Turner," Phœbe took it diffidently, slipped in into her pocket stealthily, and determined to destroy it at the first opportunity.

"I'll put un in the fire, I will. That's what I'll do wi' un."

But the letter was tumbled out of her pocket a few hours later when searching for some trifle before going to bed.

"Well, naa!" she exclaimed in tones of wonderment, a conscious blush overspreading her features at sight of it. She regarded the envelope with curious attention.

"I won'er what's in it?" she murmured, turning it over in meditative fashion. There was a monogram on the back. Phœbe had never received such an aristocratic-looking missive in her life before. The embossed letters in blue and gold seemed to fascinate her. Her resolution was obviously wavering. She sat down to think.

Over the washstand she had pinned a motto: "Do nothing rashly," she repeated, as the words caught her eye.

"'Tis plain as day I maun read the letter. It wur doin' rashly to take up with Job, an' prumise him all as he liked t' ask for. Of course," she ran on, "I needn' answer it—and then——"

Phœbe sighed. The prospect did not seem to offer much that was consoling. All this time the letter lay in her lap, her fingers fumbling it nervously. She was still casting about for an excuse to silence her scruples.

"Sure-lie a fren' can write to me if he wants to," she continued, toying with the letter, "and after him asking permission, too; 'twould be a sin not to read it. Job never said as I was to read no letters but his. Of course, I maun read it. 'Tis my letter, an' how'll I know what to do wi' him else?"

Phœbe read the letter—read it twice over—and for half-an-hour, by the little watch which hung on the wall, sat with it open in her hands. Then she got up, replaced it carefully in the envelope, and put it—back in her pocket.

* * * * *

At the lumber mills on White Oak River, Province of Quebec, Canada, the chips were flying, the saws whirring, and the air pungent with the aroma of fresh-cut pine. A man in a short jacket and long boots strode into the sawing shed, whistling a stave of "Annie Laurie."

The man driving the big "circular" looked up.

"Wal, Job, lad," he inquired, while his rugged features shaped themselves into a smile, "hast got th' cage 'bout fixed for that purty singin' bird what yo' catched owr yonner?"

"Owd Zac's putten the las' coat on this mornin'. The fixin's'll be up termorrer, an' by Sad'day, bless yo', she'll be fit for a princess. Ev'rything spick an' span, right an' reddy—bootiful as paint an' fit's a fiddle."

"Wal, mate, her pictur's that of a sonsie lass, an' she's wuth workin' for if she's waited two years for her man. There's many 'ud a sprung to the saddle an' ridden away. Lasses be kittle cattle. Yo' con never mak' sure of 'em when thee bain't fulin' roun' wi' 'em."

Jem Garrett and Job Thorn were partners running the lumber mill at White Oak. Garrett was a tall, bronzed, and bearded man of five and fifty "fur Lancasheer," who seven years before had buried his wife at the foot of the Rockies, and lost nearly all he possessed in an Indian raid on the Bow River. At Maple Creek he had stumbled across Job Thorn, took a liking to the lad, and the pair had chummed together ever since.

The men had occupied their leisure in building a

Digitized by Google

pretty log house. There was a flower bed in front of the door, and a trellised veranda, which was continued round the sides, added a further attraction to the modest little dwelling. A panel inserted in the topmost bar of the white painted gate bore the word "Shelsdon" written in letters of brightest blue.

This was to be the home of Phœbe Turner, when that much-expected young person should assume the name and responsibilites of Mrs. Job Thorn.

And now at last the hour had struck, the "cage" was ready, and the "bird" was on the wing.

"Good-bye, lad, good-bye, an' joy be wi' thee," said Garrett as he shook Job by the hand on that eventful Saturday morning. "Yo'll hear th' cow-horn's min' soon's you turn Clem's Corner. The boys ha' been practising for a week."

* * * * *

In the wee sma' hours of Saturday, April 25th, the R.M.S. *Sardinian* was steaming up the St. Lawrence. She had made a phenomenal passage. At breakfast everybody was congratulating the commander on breaking the record. The passengers began mustering on deck.

By the round-house a young man and woman were engaged in animated conversation.

"Oh! Franky dear," she was saying, "of course, I b'lieve ut. But promise me again—promise never, never to lea' me. If he shud be at the wharf I think I shud die. Oh! 'twas madness dear, as prompted yo' to come—I owt never to have towd thee, I s'pose; but ——"

She gave a deep sigh and looked absently towards the strange new Canadian shores.

"Frank," she said suddenly, turning her eyes full on him. "I'm trustin' all to yo' dear. Yo'll——"

"Of course I will, darling. There, don't worry," interrupted the young man.

"Yo' canna' think what a dre'ful bad fright I got the mornin' as we left Liverpool. When I saw yo' standin' there by the smoke-room door I was just ready to sink thro' the deck. Oh, dear!" with another long sigh, "I thowt 'twas all 'flam' what tha' said. I thowt tha' did'n really mean it——an' I doan know now whether I be mos' glad or sorry.

"I s'pose 'tis hard on Job; but," looking at him fondly, "I'm fain to tak' thee, dearie, sin' tha's crossed th' water to be wi' me."

"And quarrelled with the governor, upset the mater, and—why dost ta knaw, my lass," he dropped into dialect now and then to humour her, "that my folk wunnot guess where I am till they get a cable."

"Frank, dear," she murmured, gazing passionately into his face, "I know yo' luv me—luv me; yes, more than yo' can tell. I knew ut weeks before yon happy night i' Bessboro'. Dost remember a walk thro' Hillingham Lane when th' snadraps wur a comin' oot?"

He put his arm about her and cooed softly in her ear. She let her head fall upon his breast, smiling up at him with ineffable content.

"We was happy then, Frank," she said shyly.

"And you're happy now, dear, eh?"

A slight shiver convulsed her frame.

"Job," she stammered, "doan 'lat me see him. I doan want t' see him," then her voice broke and the tears began to fall.

"Was ever such a silly little goose! In an hour

For any occasion

that requires a sustaining and nourishing food in the smallest compass, one readily taken and easily digested and assimilated by even the most feeble constitution, Bovril is without a peer.

For travellers deprived of regular meals, Bovril is an invaluable standby; it strengthens and fortifies the system against attacks of disease; it invigorates and builds up in convalescence.

BOVRIL

Digitized by Google

dear, we shall be at Quebec—nearly twenty-four hours before we're expected."

"What shall we do, Frank?" she asked timidly.

"Do? Get married as soon as we land. I know a dozen places where we can get the job done in five minutes for a dollar."

She glanced at him anxiously.

"Tied up, fair and square, Phœbe—tight as Book and bishop can bind us."

"An' then, dear?" the slightest suspicion of a quiver agitating her voice.

"Just you leave that to me, my pretty."

"Job won't be able to——"

"Don't bother this charming little head about Job." He was stroking the rich brown tresses which hung thickly about the little head. "You're my property now."

She huddled closer to him.

"I've written a letter for Mr. Thorn. There's a bank draft inclosed for that money, and I've told him that you've simply exercised a woman's privilege, and changed your mind."

* * * * *

Two days after the phenomenal run of the *Sardinian* had been cabled to England there was a big blaze at White Oak, and next morn ng Job Thorn was missing, while the pretty log-house which had stood in the clearing was discovered to be in ashes.

* * * * *

Mr. Frank Eversley yawned, stretched himself, and throwing back the well-poised, carefully-brushed head he was so proud of, stared blankly up at the boarding-house ceiling. In front of him lay a letter received that morning from England. It bore the Bessboro' postmark, and was directed in a familiar hand, that of Mr. Eversley senior. It was the second communication of a similar kind which the post had brought within a month.

The writer intimated that, while willing to make reasonable excuse for a young man's folly, it would be a gross neglect of duty on the part of a father not to put his foot down firmly when he found his son "plunging," in a mad attempt to recover gambling losses on the turf. "To go off in a 'pet,'" the writer went on, "with only half-a-dozen lines left behind, to say that they would hear from him later on, was both cruel to his mother and disrespectful to his father; but, after fifteen weeks, it was surely time the breach was healed. His debts had now been paid, and there was no reason why he should not return home. Squire Fotherby, up at the Hall, was always wanting to know whether the lad would be back in time for the pheasants."

"It's a beastly nuisance!" ejaculated Frank Eversley, watching a fly progressing slowly across the yellow plaster. "A beastly nuisance. I must get that attorney fellow, Hueffler, to put it through for me. Of course, I always knew it would come to this. But I don't find the job so easy now the hour's struck."

He mused awhile, drawing down his brows.

"I ain't half sorry now that she fired up like a furze-bush the other day, about staying on at the boarding-house. It'll make the road a bit smoother—for me.

"When was I going to make a home for her, eh? Job, she said, had got the house ready before ever he sent for her; but she'd been married now over thirteen weeks, and still wanted a home. H'm!

"Married? Well, it's convenient for me that she thinks so! Yes, Hueffler's the man for this job. I'll leave a bit of paper for her, and get 'Dukey' to break it gently."

* * * * *

"No occasion, Mr. Eversley, for you to be troubled in the matter at all," said "Dukey" (Marmaduke) Hueffler, the boss attorney of Watersville, State of Indiana. "Just sign these papers and make an affidavit, and we can get a nullity pronounced in the Third Court on the ground of informality. The lady, I presume, will not contest it. You can slip away quietly, and after you're gone we'll serve her with the papers. There'll be no time lost in getting a decision; and by next mail we'll communicate the result."

* * * * *

"Phœbe, dear," said Frank Eversley, hurriedly. The bell was ringing for dinner, and the boarders were hastening to their places. "I had a letter this mor ing which makes it imperative for me to return to England for awhile—a business letter," he added shamefacedly. She looked at him steadily.

"You won't mind ——"

"You don't mean to come back to me," she interrupted sharply; her woman's instinct reading something in his face, which her keen eye saw there. The bell stopped ringing.

"Come down to dinner now, and I'll explain afterwards," he urged.

But Phœbe had gone back into the room and closed the door with a bang.

* * * * *

Twelve months later a weary-looking man, in a coarse serge suit, was passing down the Bowery in New York City. A woman, meeting him, suddenly rushed off the sidewalk and threw herself in front of an approaching tramcar. In an instant the man had dashed after her. Covering her face with her hands, the woman sobbed hysterically. The man, trembling in every limb, bore her to a place of safety. Not a word was spoken, but the "touch-electric" revealed to Job that he held Phœbe clasped within his arms.

* * * * *

"Ha! thee heerd th' noos?" asked one gossip of another meeting one morning in early June under the shadow of the High Cross opposite the toll-house at Shelsdon.

"Job Tharn an' Phœbe Turner be gotten married."

"Never!"

"Aye! 'tis jes' true. 'Tis Job hissel' who sends th' letter."

"Well! after that, I'll nobbut say as sky woan fall."

"Aye, they've takken ther time to fin' ther tongues."

The brief paragraph which had appeared in the *Watersville Sentinel* had never given Mr. Frank Eversley a moment's uneasiness. The obscure western print was never likely to be seen by English eyes.

The paragraph ran:

"Mr. Frank Eversley, of this town, has obtained a divorce from his wife. The knot seems to have been tied very loosely by some person not properly qualified to perform the ceremony."

For a few weeks Job Thorn and Phœbe Turner filled every mouth in Shelsdon; but before harvest-end fresh food for gossip had been found in the announcement that a marriage had been arranged between Frank Eversley, esquire, of Harleyford Mills, and Emma Fotherby, only daughter of Squire Fotherby, of Hillingham Hall.

Hupert Bartlett.

Digitized by Google

SULPHOLINE LOTION,

For clearing the skin from Spots, Blemishes, Redness, Roughness, giving a Beautiful Complexion and pleasing appearance.

SHILLING BOTTLES.

A SUM of from 12s. to 25s. per week can be earned in spare hours or evenings by either sex everywhere.—Send addressed envelope for particulars to Box 24, Eclipse Works, 89 Aldersgate Street, E.C.

TOO STOUT

I was for years; by chance I came across a simple home remedy that reduced me from 17st. to 10st. 12lb., and I will willingly send particulars free to any sufferer enclosing stamp. Mrs. L. E. FELL, 195 Oxford Street, London, W.

Free

From the Antexema Co., 83 Castle Road, London, N.W., if this paper is named, a booklet on the Skin and a FREE SAMPLE of

"Antexema."

It is absolutely the most wonderful Skin Cure that has ever been discovered. It gives immediate relief from itching and burning and cures all skin diseases and every form of

Eczema.

1/1½ BOTTLES, post free for 1/3.

WHY BE FAT?

When a lady, who has discovered a simple means of Self-Cure will be happy to send particulars of same to any sufferer from this distressing complaint. Free on receipt of stamped addressed envelope. ADDRESS:

Mrs. TREVOR WELLS,
63 *HIGH HOLBORN, LONDON, W.C.*

POST FREE THREE STAMPS

A Treatise on the Modern and Successful Treatment of Nervous Diseases and Exhaustion, by local absorption.

Fully up to the advanced ideas on the subject.
THE MARSTON CO.,
59 and 60 Chancery Lane, London, W.C.

HAVE YOU TRIED KEATING'S LOZENGES FOR YOUR COUGH?

ANY DOCTOR WILL TELL YOU "there is no better Cough Medicine."—One gives relief: if you suffer from cough try them but once; they *will* cure, and they *will not* injure your health; an increasing sale of over 80 years is a certain test of their value. Sold in 1s½d. tins.

VARICOCELE.

Every man suffering from Varicocele and the allied troubles, should send for treatise, describing their Causes, Symptoms, Results, and Successful and Painless Treatment without surgical operation or the use of cumbersome trusses and electrical appliances. Will be sent sealed, post free, three stamps.

S. S. MURRAY,
7 Southampton Row, London, W.C.

NOSE

MACHINES. LEES RAY, S. S. Dept., South Castle St. Liverpool, is a specialist on Ugly and Red Noses. Send stamp for particulars of his patent scientific Nose Improvers. Red Nose Cure, medically approved, 3/9. Outstanding Ear Machines 11/6.

DRUNKENNESS

CURED. This can be done with or without patient's knowledge. Send me a stamp and I will tell you how. (Send no money.) Address, in confidence, Mrs. C. H. (Room 8), 105 Oxford Street, London, W.

ALL FAT PEOPLE

can safely **Reduce Weight and cure Corpulency permanently** by taking **TRILENE TABLETS** (Regd.) for a few weeks. They are small, agreeable, harmless, and never fail to IMPROVE both HEALTH and FIGURE without Change of Diet. An English Countess writes: "*Your Trilene Tablets act admirably.*"

Send 2s. 6d. to **THE TRILENE CO.**, Sole Proprietors, 66 Finsbury Pavement, London.

SAMPLES OF TESTIMONIALS.

Princess Liechtenstein writes from Landsberg, Austria: "Pray send your excellent tablets directly." Mr. Canham, 87 Alexandra Road, Norwich: "Tablets cured my wife of extreme stoutness; it has never returned." Mrs. H. Cox, 28 Watnall Road, Hucknall Torkard, writes: "The Tablets reduced me 1½ stone." Mrs. S. Alexander, 102 Dixon Street, New Swindon, says: "They reduced me 2lb., and I am cured." Mrs. Darnley-Smith, of Lendscove Vicarage, Ashburton, says: "Tablets have reduced me very much." Mrs. Crossley, of Rose Hill, Torver, Comston, says: "I weigh much less and can breathe so much easier; I am delighted."

THE
BEST OF ALL BEVERAGES
AND THE
CHEAPEST.

GOOD!
IT'S
MASON'S
Extract of Herbs

8 Gallons Prime Beer for 6d.

Sample Free for 9 Stamps.
AGENTS WANTED EVERYWHERE.

NEWBALL & MASON,
NOTTINGHAM.

"WORTH A GUINEA A BOX."

BEECHAM'S PILLS

FOR ALL

BILIDUS & NERVOUS DISORDERS,
Sick Headache, Constipation, Wind and Pains in Stomach, Impaired Digestion, Disordered Liver, and Female Ailments.

SALE OVER SIX MILLION BOXES YEARLY.

In Boxes, 1s. 1½d. and 2s. 9d. each, with full directions.

Prepared only by the Proprietor,

THOMAS BEECHAM, St. Helens, Lancashire.

Sold by all Druggists and Patent Medicine Dealers everywhere.

Digitized by Google

THE BRAIN GYMNASIUM.

In these competitions a prize of £2 will be awarded each week to the competitor whose attempt we receive giving the correct solutions of all the puzzles. If more than one is absolutely correct the prize of £2 will be given to the first correct attempt dealt with.

If no lists of absolutely correct solutions are sent in the first prize will be awarded to the competitor whose attempt is first dealt with showing the fewest mistakes.

Each week we shall award in addition to the above, either ten of our silver-plated pencil-cases or ten popular novels, to be distributed amongst the competitors whose attempts are absolutely correct and have failed to win the first prize, or, if no complete lists of correct solutions are received, to those whose attempts show the fewest mistakes.

Write all your solutions on one sheet of paper, putting the number against each. Post the batch in an envelope marked "Brain Gymnasium," to reach the Editor, SHORT STORIES, 18 Henrietta Street, Covent Garden, W.C., by first post on Monday, October 29th, 1900.

Readers are invited to submit puzzles, acrostics, conundrums, word-squares, etc., for publication on this page. A penknife will be given to each reader whose attempts are used. All attempts must be vouched for as original, and, of course, it is distinctly understood that the sender of a puzzle must neither compete in the competition nor divulge to anyone the solution. Any reader found infringing this rule will be severely dealt with.

No. 241.

A DOCUMENT: a personal pronoun; a verb; a vowel; an excrescence; joyful; a building material.

The equivalents of these name a great statesman.

No. 242.

RE-ARRANGE the following letters, so as to form a double-word square, the connecting word of which is a means of travelling:

A B EEEEEE II L MM NN OOOO RR SSSS TTTTTT.

No. 243.

A FLOWER; an imitation of gold; an actor; what children dislike; a comfort; to irritate; a task.

My initials and finals express respectively what the reader of this page does, and what he likes to do.

No. 244.

My 8, 4, 9, 3, grows in every garden.
My 2, 10, 11, 7, 8, is to permit.
My 5, 2, 6, is a game of cards.
My 1, 4, 11, 10, is what most cyclists carry.

I am a word of eleven letters, and give the name of a well-known man.

No. 245.

THE equivalents of the following each contain three consecutive letters, which, put together in the same order, give a well-known proverb:

A foreign coin; bearing; a Surrey town; a stride; snakes; forwarded; an English health resort; spare time; immaculate.

No. 246.

THE social scale is of no avail,
To all my FIRST is a dower,
And the female, likewise the male,
Are in FIRST of equal power.

In physical skill my SECOND will
Make proficient all who essay,
And the ladies, again, of nought complain,
As in SECOND they have their day.

But to come to the test, my WHOLE is the best,
Especially when a prize it may render,
And the answer you'll find is the work of the mind
Of the masculine or feminine gender.

RESULT OF BRAIN GYMNASIUM.

Nos. 217 to 222.

THE first prize of £2 has been awarded to Mr. Charles Stephens, of 28 Sandringham Road Fratton, Portsmouth, whose solution was the first correct one dealt with.

A copy of "The Legacy of Hate," by Theo Douglas, has been sent to the following:

W. J. Barter, Douglas Street, Cork.
Miss M. Smith, Alma Road, Sheerness.
H. B. Thompson, Bracknell, Berks.
Miss L. Kellehar, Bannockburn Road, Plumstead.
S. Harrall, Station Road, Plumstead.
H. Cammack, Radcliffe Street, Liverpool.
Mrs. Bailles, Kingsland Road, N.E.
J. M. Child, Clarence Street, Derby.
E. G. Luck, Hazlebury Road, Fulham.
Miss May Seccombe, Balmoral Road, New Brompton.

SOLUTION OF BRAIN GYMNASIUM.

Nos. 223 to 228.

No. 223. Wey, yew, Wye.

No. 224. Silence.

No. 225. "A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush."

No. 226.

```
L impl D
b O ro U s
he N e it
mi LD ew
p ige O n
N otio N
```

No. 227. DONKEY.

No. 228.

```
M a Y
O rang E
N u N
E ch O
Y a M
```


SHORT STORIES ADVERTISEMENT RATES.

Single column, per inch, per insertion	£0 10 0
Double " "	1 0 0
Full page inside, facing page of matter, either white paper or 2nd or 3rd page of cover, or back page, per insertion	10 0 0
Half-page " " "	5 0 0
Quarter-page " " "	2 10 0
Eighth-page " "	1 5 0
Front page, whole " "	12 10 0
" half " "	6 5 0

All spaces above one-eighth of a page are charged at per page rate.
Series discount: 5 per cent. for 13, 10 per cent. for 26, 15 per cent. for 52 insertions.

Black blocks are charged 25 per cent. extra. All advertisements are subject to approval. All copy must be sent in by Noon on Tuesday, Oct. 23rd, if intended for the issue on sale Nov. 6th, and dated November 10th. The Proprietors reserve the right to hold over or suspend the insertion of any advertisement without prejudice to other insertions on order. All communications should be addressed to the Advertisement Manager, "Pearson's Weekly" Offices, Henrietta Street, London, W.C.

Printed and published by C. ARTHUR PEARSON Limited, Pearson's Buildings, Henrietta Street, London, W.C.

Digitized by Google

JOHN NOBLE'S CUSTOMERS

Are sending letters by every post to say that "The Costumes and Manties now being sent out from Brook Street Mills, Manchester, are

BETTER VALUE THAN EVER."

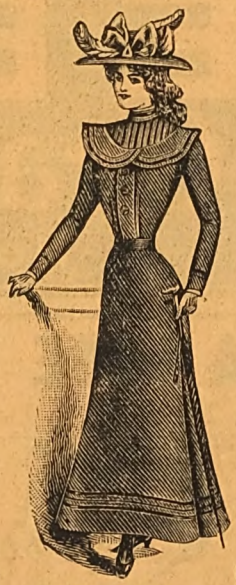
All orders despatched by Parcel Post without delay. Mourning Orders sent off at One Day's Notice.

JOHN NOBLE HAS A SPECIAL STAFF OF SKILLED MILLINERS.

THE NEW FASHION CATALOGUE
Post Free.

AUTUMN & WINTER DRESS FABRICS.

A Large Box of Patterns of the Latest Novelties and of Standard Fabrics lent to select from, and sent Carriage Paid to any "Short Stories" reader.



Model 255.
FASHIONABLE COAT AND SKIRT.

Consists of double-breasted Tailor-fashioned Coat, stitched round collar, cuffs and edge **10/6** with White or Black as desired. Skirt of latest shape with box-pleat back. Produced in John Noble Cheviot Serge or Costume Coating. Price **10/6** complete; carriage, 6d. extra. Skirt alone, **5/6**; carriage, 5d. extra. HAT trimmed as sketch, **8/6**; carriage 6d.

Model 256.

Made in John Noble Cheviot Serge or Costume Coating, consisting of Blouse Bodice, with velvet revers, prettily trimmed black and white. Plain fashionable Skirt, with one box-pleat **10/6** Price complete, only **10/6**; carriage, 6d. extra. Skirt alone, **5/6**; carriage, 5d. extra. HAT, as sketch, **7/6**; carriage, 6d. extra.

Model 296.

Smartly made Dress in Cheviot Serge or Costume Coating. Bodice trimmed Ribbon Velvet and well lined.

Lengths and Prices:

36	39	42	46	50 ins.
9/9	**10/6**	**11/6**	**12/6**	**13/6** each

Carriage, 6d. extra.

Model 339.
LADY'S CAPE. SPECIAL VALUE.

Well-made Cape, in good black cloth, trimmed on collar and down fronts black fur. A comfortable garment of **8/6** good appearance and the best value on the market. Price only **8/6**; carriage, 6d.

Well trimmed Toque, **6/11**; carriage, 6d.

PATTERNS SENT POST FREE
of the two good durable cloths in which costumes are made.

A FULL DRESS LENGTH of Costume Coating or Cheviot Serge (6yds. 52ins. wide) for **7/6**. Carriage 8d.

Colours: Black, Navy, Brown, Myrtle, Fawn, Khaki, Grey, and Royal Blue.

Sizes in stock of Ladies' Costumes are 34, 36, 38 ins. round bust (under arms); Waist, 24, 26, 28 ins.; Skirts being 38, 40, 42 ins. long in front. Any other size made to measure, **1/6** extra.

Readers will oblige by kindly naming "SHORT STORIES" when writing to

JOHN NOBLE LTD.,
Dept. No. 16,
Brook Street Mills, **MANCHESTER.**

THE JOHN NOBLE KNOCKABOUT FROCKS FOR GIRLS

Thoroughly well-made in strong Serge, with saddle top, long full sleeves and pocket.

Lengths and Prices:

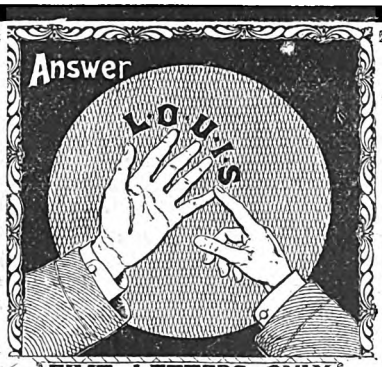
21	24	27	30	33 in.
1/6	**2/-**	**2/6**	**3/-**	**3/6** ea.
36	39	42	45 in.	
4/-	**4/6**	**5/-**	**5/6** ea.	

Carriage, 4d. extra.

Cap, as sketch, **1/-** Postage, 2d.

Digitized by Google

HOW DO YOU SPELL VELVETEEN?



FIVE LETTERS ONLY.

Don't Forget this when you buy.

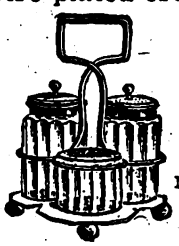
EVERY YARD IS STAMPED

L-O-U-I-S.

ZEBRA Grate Polish

No Hard Work.

MASTERS' Electro-plated Cruets.



No. 32W

BREAKFAST CRUET.
Electro-plated on Nickel Silver, Price 1 /-.

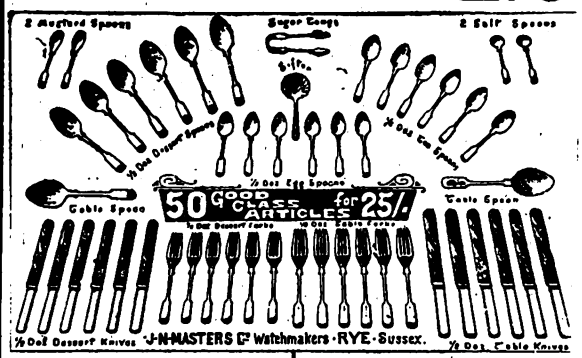
No 3: W

BREAKFAST CRUET.
Cut Glass Bottles, Electro-plated Stand, Price 10/6.

"4 Albany Place, Montpelier, Bristol.
"9 1/1900.

"Dear Sirs,—I herewith acknowledge receipt of cutlery received last evening, which gives entire satisfaction. I am, indeed, pleased with same, and shall do all I can to recommend you to my friends.
"Yours truly, A. SAVAGE."

A FREE TRIAL FOR 2/6



WE will send post paid, to any reader of *Short Stories* one of these monster 25/- parcels containing 50 articles on receipt of 2/6.

IF you do not approve of them we will return your 2/6 in full.

IF you approve of them, you send us 2/6 on receipt, and 5/- each month for four months=25/-.

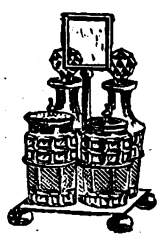
BUT when you see the parcel, should you prefer to send the balance at once, send only 10/6 more, as we allow 3/- discount to those who pay cash.

OR you may send 22/- at once, and if you do not approve of the parcel we will refund the money if returned within seven days.

LIST OF CONTENTS.

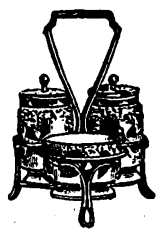
	Prices separate. s.	d.
6 Good Quality White Bone-Handled Table Knives	3	6
6 ditto Dessert Knives	3	0
6 Good Quality White Metal Table Forks	5	3
6 ditto Dessert Forks	3	9
2 ditto Table Spoons	1	9
6 ditto Dessert Spoons	3	0
6 ditto Tea Spoons	2	0
1 pair ditto Sugar Tongs	1	0
1 only Sugar Sifter	1	6
6 ditto Egg Spoons	1	6
1 pair ditto Salt Spoons	1	0
1 pair ditto Mustard Spoons	1	0
50 Table Articles, value	29	0

MASTERS' High-Class Cruets.



No. 50W

LUNCHEON CRUET.
4 Bottles, Cut Glass, Electro-plated Stand. Price £1 1s.



No. 2W

BREAKFAST CRUET.
China Bottles, Electro-plated Stand, Price 7/-.

CATALOGUE containing 1208 illustrations of Watches, Clocks, Rings, Chains, and all kinds of Jewellery, Gladstone Bags, Walking Sticks, &c., &c.
POST FREE.

J. N. MASTERS LTD., WATCHMAKERS, JEWELLERS, &c., RYE, SUSSEX.

Digitized by Google

£100 A WEEK IN FOOTBALL PRIZES. See PEARSON'S WEEKLY.

SHORT STORIES

A WEEKLY MAGAZINE FOR HOME AND TRAIN

No. 617. FOR WEEK ENDING OCTOBER 27TH, 1900. [ONE PENNY.

JUST LOOK HERE!

6,000,000

Boxes Yearly.

Which means *Every Time the Clock Ticks* ELEVEN BEECHAM'S PILLS *have reached their destination.*

FOR HALF A CENTURY

BEECHAM'S PILLS

Have been "Globe-Trotting" and have worked their way into the innermost parts.

It's well to know a GOOD THING when you see it.
It's better to have a GOOD THING when you can. BEECHAM'S PILLS should always be handy, and handed down to posterity as

WORTH A GUINEA A BOX.

Advertisements should be sent to "Short Stories" Advertisement Department, Henrietta Street, London, W.C.

Digitized by Google

"HAIR LIKE AN ENGLISH WOMAN."

That is the generally expressed desire of a foreigner. To have hair like an English woman. Hair is a woman's chief adornment, but hair to be nice must have nice treatment. Hair must be stimulated to live.

Continual brushing does this, and nothing else does it as effectually. Our grandmothers, and even our mothers, knew this so well that hair brushing was one of the most important features of their toilet. Half an hour at night and half an hour in the morning were thought none too long a time to devote to this. If this attention cannot be given, recourse must be had to a stimulant, and as a stimulant for the hair there is none so safe and so effective as the discovery of Mr. Geo. R. Sims, called by him "TATCHO," which is the Romany word for "genuine."

Geo. R. Sims' Hair Renewer "Tatcho."

"TATCHO" is a brilliant spirituous liquor, the colour of whisky, free from all grease. A sprinkle of a few drops on the scalp and five minutes with the brush daily works marvels with every head of hair, but more especially with those that have not received their quantum of care.

If you value your appearance—and who does not?—get a bottle of "TATCHO" to-day. The result will surprise you and be intensely gratifying.

"TATCHO" will stop the hair falling, and will make it beautiful in texture and double in volume.

"TATCHO" gives vitality to the hair at once, and after a few days of treatment its youthful brightness; and what is more, this vitality and brightness may be retained.

Mrs. BROWN POTTER, whose beautiful hair is the envy of her sex, uses nothing but "TATCHO."

Geo. R. Sims' Hair Renewer, "Tatcho," is obtainable of all perfumers, 2/9 & 5/- per Bottle; or can be had direct in plain wrapper on sending 2/11 or 5/3.

ADDRESS

The Geo. R. Sims Co.,

81c Great Queen St., London, W.C.

SAMPLE TRIAL BOTTLES 1/6 TO-DAY.

Sent post free in plain package, twenty-one stamps.

Shilling packets

Kaputine "the" safe Remedy for Headache

WARNING. *Instead of using the common White Headache Powders, which generally consist entirely of a crude drug, which has been condemned as dangerous by the medical papers, insist on having a bona-fide anti-quack remedy, recommended by such eminent medical authorities as Dr. RAMAGE, L.R.C.P., Dr. THURSTIN, L.R.C.P., late Dr. BOYD-WILLIAMS (Liverpool), the Editor of the Medical Journal, "Health," etc., etc. The name of this safe remedy is KAPUTINE.*

ALL LEADING CHEMISTS SELL IT, OR CAN GET IT FOR YOU IN A FEW HOURS.

Sold by BOOT'S, TAYLOR'S, DAY'S, WHITE'S and other Stores. Most Co-operative Stores sell it.

PACKETS, 1/-. SAMPLES ONE PENNY.

or KAPUTINE LIMITED, HUDDERSFIELD, will send it FREE for 12 stamps.

WORTH A CROWN A DOSE.

VARICOCELE.

Every man suffering from Varicocele and the allied troubles, should send for treatise, describing their Causes, Symptoms, Results, and Successful and Painless Treatment without surgical operation or the use of cumbersome trusses and electrical appliances. Will be sent sealed, post free, three stamps.

S. S. MURRAY,

7, Southampton Row, London, W.C.

HAIR DESTROYED

Permanently by using my Depilatory, the only effectual remedy known. Painless to the skin and painless in operation. Those ladies who have been disappointed with worthless preparations should give it a trial. By its use no one need suffer from the annoyance any longer. Easy to apply and guaranteed to—with one application—remove every Hair, and in a short time absolutely Destroy the Roots. Hundreds of Testimonials. Full particulars sent free on receipt of stamped envelope.—Address, Mrs. J. E. TERRY, 46 Sternhold Avenue, Streatham Hill.

TOO STOUT.

I was for years; by chance I came across a simple home remedy that reduced me from 17st. to 10st. 12lbs., and I will willingly send particulars free to any sufferer enclosing stamp. Mrs. L. E. FELL, 195 Oxford Street, London, W.

ESTABLISHED 1851.

BIRKBECK BANK.

Southampton Buildings, Chancery Lane, London.

2% on CURRENT ACCOUNTS, on the minimum monthly balances when not drawn below £100.

The BIRKBECK ALMANACK, with full particulars, post free.

FRANCIS RAVENSCROFT, *Manager.*

SEVEN PRIZE MEDALS.

C. BRANDAUER & Co's CIRCULAR POINTED PENS

These series of pens neither scratch nor spurt. They glide over the roughest paper with the ease of a soft lead pencil. Assorted sample boxes, 6d., to be obtained from all Stationers. If out of stock, send 7 stamps direct to the works, Birmingham.

Advertisements should be sent to "Short Stories" Advertisement Department, Henrietta Street, London, W.C.

Digitized by Google

SHORT STORIES

No. 617.] [ONE PENNY.

For the Week Ending Oct. 27th, 1900.

A FEAST OF FICTION

HIS MYSTERIOUS CORRESPONDENT.

"MISS MARSHFIELD," said the junior partner of the great firm of Vaughn, Cleveland, and Vaughn, "I want you to do me a favour."

He was sitting on a corner of his desk, hands in pockets, and swinging one foot, rather impatiently his secretary thought.

"Well, I shall be pleased to. What is it?"

"Have you read any of those letters signed Nevada in the 'Metropolitan?'"

"Nevada?" Miss Marshfield considered for a moment, then replied: "Yes I have. Why do you ask?"

"Well, you have excellent taste in literature. Don't you consider them remarkable?"

"Why, I don't know that I do, though they are fairly good, I believe."

"Ah, you are penurious with adjectives, I recollect. Now, I think they are far above the average, and I should like to discover the identity of this Nevada. She interests me intensely."

"You think Nevada is a woman, then?"

"Why, yes, I should judge so. Shouldn't you?"

"I haven't given the subject much thought."

"Oh, I'm reasonably sure it's a woman, and what I want of you is to discover her for me."

Miss Marshfield looked her astonishment, and asked:

"Why not try it yourself?"

"I have tried, and failed ignominiously. The unspeakableness of the sphinx is garrulity beside the silence those publishers have chosen to wrap about Nevada, and there seems no way of breaking it."

"But the silence is probably according to the instructions of Nevada herself. so how can I hope to break it?"

"Why, that's what I can't exactly see. I thought perhaps your woman's wit would suggest a way. You seem to be on a friendly footing with literary people; you might get some information from that source."

"You are wrong about my footing with literary people. I know very few, and am afraid I cannot be of the least use to you in this matter."

"What a wet blanket you can be on occasion. Miss Marshfield, I insist on being shown the respect due to the tail of this firm. Won't you please turn round again for a moment?"

"There's a large grist of letters to-day," she reminded him, turning partially about.

"Yes, yes, I daresay, there generally is; but, Miss Marshfield, I'm not joking about this thing. I want to know the author of those letters—man or woman."

All rights reserved.]

Digitized by Google

"The question of sex does not influence your desire for acquaintance, then?"

The secretary's penetrating gaze was fixed on her typewriter, and she asked the question with apparent carelessness.

"Not at all; though, as I told you, I feel reasonably sure it is a woman."

"But granting that, you cannot feel reasonably sure

"HAVE YOU READ ANY OF THOSE LETTERS SIGNED NEVADA IN THE "METROPOLITAN"

she is a person you would wish to know. She may be a nobody notwithstanding those articles."

"Not likely, I should say. Such talents as hers don't go a-begging. You know there is no caste in genius."

"No? I am glad of that."

"You speak as though you had been doubtful on the subject."

"Not in my own mind; but I don't know what might be your opinion."

"I see you are not inclined to be enthusiastic with me over this new writer. The simple truth is that he or she, whichever it may be, has cast a spell upon me. I never saw such imagery, such magic with words."

For a member of a firm dealing in machinery and requiring a practical knowledge of business, Russell Vaughn was about as unpractical a man as could have been found; that is to say, he would have been if he had given his imagination free rein and followed after the things which most allured him.

But the mind of Vaughn, the elder, was fervently set on seeing his favourite son in his own place at the head of the firm, and Russell was pre-eminently a dutiful son. He had sat at the desk on which he now reclined for ten years, and the constant effort to discipline his faculties down to the basis of machinery had worn indelible little grooves between his eyebrows.

He had been a deep student, was still a deep student, so far as his duties would permit. The powers alone knew in what firmament he might have shone had he not sprung from a commercial race, with whom precedent was immutable law. His grandfather had dealt in machinery, likewise his father, so he, too, dealt in machinery, though under silent protest.

Previous to being taken into the firm he had spent several years in foreign travel, and these had been the happiest years of his life. He had recorded their experiences in a small volume, written in a whimsical style, which publishers seemed to find "not available," for after two or three trials of them he had concluded to "climb up some other way," as he laughingly expressed it to his secretary. The book was brought out at his own expense, and, though it had not become famous, had received many favourable press notices and been warmly welcomed by people not too much sated with travel to look at it through his fanciful eyes.

Miss Marshfield had read it and given it an honoured place in her library. She had spoken warmly of many things it contained as agreeing with impressions of her own formed amid the same scenes, and this served to strengthen the friendship which had grown up between them during the three years in which she had been with the firm, a friendship platonic to all appearances.

Of the two, the stenographer had the greater adaptability. In the three years she had mastered the details of their immense trade, and her keen insight and quick memory were relied on by all three partners.

"Talk about a woman being illogical," said the elder Vaughn, "that young woman in the office is worth a dozen rattle-pated dudes," and in proof of his appreciation her surroundings were comfortable to a degree bordering on luxury.

"Such magic with words," echoed Miss Marshfield thoughtfully. "Have you considered that there is apt to be a wide breach between the personality of an author and his writings?"

"No, I had not thought of it—not particularly."

"I could point you to many notable examples."

"Oh, yes, I daresay there are examples, but you must admit that in a world the size of this there are examples of almost everything."

"I did not mean to imply a rule, of course, but I think genius is often like a bright-winged spirit confined in a house of very common clay. Your Nevada might prove a disappointment if you succeeded in finding her. Better be content with the articles and not seek to know the author. You might otherwise be poorer by the loss of an illusion."

She looked at him with a laugh in her eyes, and resolutely struck the keys of her typewriter.

"You mustn't bother me any more," she asserted. "I am behind with my work as it is."

"I ask for assistance and you give me axioms," he retorted. "Nevertheless, I am not discouraged. Your opinions are usually worth looking into, but this is too gauzy."

"Go on," she said over her shoulder; "never mind my opinions, but when you find yourself disenchanted don't forget that I warned you."

This ended the discussion for that day, and during many following days Vaughn never mentioned Nevada. Then one morning he came into the office looking unusually cheerful, threw off his coat, and began tossing about the mail on his desk in an absent-minded fashion. His secretary said nothing, rightly opining that he would soon disclose the cause of his satisfaction. Presently he paused in the act of opening a letter, and said:

Digitized by Google

"I feel greatly elated this morning. Can you guess why?"

"I am not good at guessing."

"Well, then, I shall have to tell you. I've found Nevada—or rather, I've been able to communicate with her through her publishers, and the result is that she has consented to correspond with me as the boys trade jack-knives, 'out o' sight an' unseen.'"

"Indeed. How did you manage it?"

"By means of my prestige as the author of 'From Sea to Sea,' which is the first intimation I ever received that I had any such prestige. I played the card in desperation and it won. Quite romantic, don't you think?"

"Well, rather, if Nevada is a woman. Have you ascertained that?"

"No, I don't know yet, but I shall soon learn. It won't be possible to keep me mystified long. But all thought of that aside, I am promising myself untold pleasure from this correspondence. An interchange of ideas with a writer so versatile as Nevada is one of the keenest pleasures in life."

"I don't know anything about that, never having had a regular correspondent."

"H'm."

Vaughn went on with his work after this careless comment. He was not more than ordinarily selfish, but it never occurred to him that his secretary might possibly have a personal feeling with regard to this correspondent. If she had, however, it would not have been suspected from her manner.

Some days after this conversation he pulled a letter out of his pocket, and handing it over to her, said:

"Now tell me what you think about Nevada being a woman."

Miss Marshfield took the letter, smoothed it with her long slender fingers, and asked:

"Do you think this perfectly fair?"

"Certainly—why not? It would be a sin to keep such a letter as that to myself."

"Why do you adopt the pseudonym of Darwin?" she asked presently.

"Oh, for no reason, only it was the first that occurred to me. You see I was to use one and not to seek to penetrate hers."

"Hers? You are sure it is a woman, then, at last?"

"Can you doubt it after reading that letter? I think she is certainly a woman, and a young one at that."

"Oh," said the secretary drily, "and beautiful, too, no doubt. You seemed to have gathered a large amount of information from this letter, while I see absolutely nothing in it which betrays either age or gender. In this day of vigorous writing it is impossible to tell who is behind an article, whether man or woman, but if I were to judge by one or two expressions here I should say that the writer ought to be a big-bearded man."

"Oh, Miss Marshfield, positively you are the last person I should have accused of jealousy."

* * * * *

For a year this romantic correspondence went on, growing constantly more absorbing to Russell Vaughn, and it appeared, from the frequency of her letters, the same to Nevada.

On the days Vaughn received one of these letters he was absent-minded to a marked degree, and the burden of responsibility for that day rested on the stenographer, but she uttered no complaint, merely reminding him occasionally of neglected duties.

Sometimes he would spring suddenly to his feet in an abstracted mood and pace the office floor, sometimes stand before a window and gaze long out over the adjoining vacant lots where were piled a few pieces of old machinery. His secretary watched him narrowly at these times, and one day when she called his attention to something which needed it he turned abruptly and said:

"Miss Marshfield, there's no doubt about your being a treasure. You are the one who should be junior partner here. Upon my word, I'm good for nothing."

Then the slight, black-gowned figure had turned towards him.

"Let me advise you," she said. "I think you had better give up this correspondence of yours; it is doing you no good. Better drop it and forget it, and attend to business."

"Drop it! You don't know what you are saying. Have you any idea what part this friendship has come to play in my daily life? Now don't, please, set me down for a drivelling idiot. I am not going about with my heart on my sleeve telling everyone what Nevada is to me, but there's something about you which invites my confidence notwithstanding that your criticisms have been rather acrid. I would give ten years of my life for the privilege of seeing Nevada's face, of hearing her talk as she writes. Why, did I show you her letters on Egyptology? I thought I knew a few things, but

"HE HAD SPENT SEVERAL YEARS ON FOREIGN TRAVEL."

Digitized by Google

she makes me blush for my ignorance. Egypt! The very name is a mine of mystic delights under her facile pen. Scoff at me if you will, Miss Marshfield, you with your cool wit and calm judgment, but I would willingly exchange my best prospects in machinery for a voyage down the N le with Nevada as a companion."

Miss Marshfield was rather paler than usual, but she only said quietly:

"And she eludes you persistently?"

"Yes, and I can't see why. I have done my best. I have brought all the power there is in the world to the siege, and unfortunately words are my only available weapons. She promises an interview sometime in the future, but continually puts me off. She has seen me, too, which doesn't seem all round fair."

Miss Marshfield looked at him with mirth in her eyes.

"What now?" he exclaimed in a vexed tone. "Look here, Miss Marshfield, you're getting far too much fun out of me. I see my garrulity needs muzzling. It doesn't seem like you, though; I thought you'd have some sympathy."

"And so I have, but I can't help contemplating the possibility of your correspondent being some leathery old woman whose romance is all in the past, and who is amusing herself by warming it over the flame of your young passion. Of course she couldn't show herself, because that would mean—curtain."

"You are talking most unheard-of nonsense for you. No leathery old woman would write with such fire and eloquence. She is young and enthusiastic. You have not seen all her letters."

"No? You might have shown them to me."

She looked hard at him as she spoke, and he actually blushed under her scrutiny.

"Ah, I see," she went on mercilessly, "Nevada has been making love to you."

He neither acknowledged nor denied, but turned abruptly away for the first time in their acquaintance angry with her.

"Supposing," she went on as if she had not noticed, "that you meet your Nevada, and find her, though attractive to the eye, unlovely in character, would her genius obliterate the effect?"

"Utterly impossible for a person who writes like that to be spiritually unlovely."

"There you are in error. Neither bad nor good qualities are absolute in real people. Nature has its moods and tenses, and I have been told that writers as a class are especially susceptible to them; in fact, that it's a very good rule to know your pet author at a respectful distance."

"Well," said Vaughn, trying to throw off his sullenness, "you may be perfectly right—I daresay you are, but all this is too complex for me. I am not an adept in analysing character, and to tell the truth, don't think I care to be. Not, however, that I mean to disparage the habit. Probably it is a very good one, only not congenial to my tastes."

"No," said Miss Marshfield, thoughtfully, "it is not congenial to your tastes. You care so much more for ideals than for actualities."

Vaughn had been standing with his back towards her looking out of the window. Suddenly he wheeled about and stood beside her desk.

"Miss Marshfield, I should like to know why you couldn't have been Nevada."

"Why do you say that?" she ejaculated in surprise.

"Because a passion for you would be the very safest thing I can imagine."

"We must do our best in the calling whereunto we are called," she answered. "It is not always given us to choose, and really, Mr. Vaughn, I can't think that I should have been any more worthy of your respect if I had written those letters."

"Respect? No, certainly not, but there is a world-wide difference between the feeling of respect and——"

"Infatuation with a myth. Yes, you are right. You see I understand these things for I have been something of a hero-worshipper myself. I can remember ever so many gods I had in my childhood, and with one or possibly two exceptions they all proved of the earth—earthy. They made me miserable, too, until I came under the care of the best woman who ever lived. She taught me that all humanity is human, and ideals seldom or never attained."

"You are speaking of your foster-mother, are you not?"

"Yes, she was the wisest woman I ever knew. She taught me how to conquer the ills of life."

"Miss Marshfield, it occurs to me that I must seem very puerile and silly to you."

"No, indeed. If I have said anything to imply that, forgive me—I never meant it. I do think, though, that it's best to have no enthusiasms; they leave such heart-aches in their wake. Hardly anything in life comes up to the expectations of an impulsive person, while if we expect little or nothing the good that comes to us seems a full measure. Have you not found it so sometimes?"

"Now that you mention it I believe I have frequently; but where, let me ask, did you get all this wisdom? One does not learn these things by being told them."

"I have lived a great deal of it, and the rest I have seen others live."

"You say your friend taught you to conquer the ills of life. Now, how for instance would you overcome the fate which held you bound to duties of a prosaic sort when you were continually longing to shake them off and fly to the other end of the earth?"

"I should patiently bide the shaking-off time. You know 'all things come to him who waits,' though my experience proves that they are not always satisfactorily attained."

"Not always, no; but how can a fellow tell that they won't be till he tries?"

"I have often thought," said the secretary, musingly, "that it is a great pity to spend the best years of one's life in accumulating the means of subsistence. If the needs of civilisation were fewer it would materially decrease the miseries of the world."

"For my part," said Vaughn quickly, "I could be content with the Indian's blanket, or a yellow robe and begging bowl. There are infinite possibilities in the latter. Give me the freedom of the globe and civilisation may have its fol-de-rols."

Six weeks after this conversation found Vaughn with still no clue to the identity of his correspondent. All her letters reached him through her publishers, but they were gradually growing less frequent and colder in tone. It was very strange, he thought, for it had not been long since in one of those thrilling epistles which so elated him she had exclaimed:

"Almost thou persuadest me, Darwin, that the only things desirable in this world are you, a moonlight night, and the Nile; but yet wait a little longer. You shall see my face—I swear it."

Now it seemed she was trying to get rid of him without fulfilling this promise.

Miss Marshfield watched his growing disinclination

Digitized by Google

for business with annoyance, and finally she said to him:

"Mr. Vaughn, you are not well."

"I?" he returned in surprise. "Oh, yes, I am always well." A moment after he added: "Queer my father said something about that, too, but I have never been ill in my life, and certainly am not now."

She said no more, but watched him furtively as he sat over his work, the two little wrinkles in his forehead drawn into a positive scowl. She noticed that he was sallow, thinner in flesh than usual, and that his eyes bore evidence of insomnia. The afternoon light fell across him, and for the first time his secretary was fully conscious of the change in him. Involuntarily she let her hands slip from the keys as she uttered an exclamation of alarm.

Vaughn looked up and met her gaze. There was something in it besides alarm, too—something that astonished him. It seemed like a look of tender pity, but he thought it hardly possible that he could have read it aright.

Supposing he had. He felt almost suffocated for a moment, and as Miss Marshfield dropped her eyes and coloured slightly, he sprang to his feet and asked if the room wasn't uncomfortably warm. She made some unintelligible reply, and he lowered a window; then, instead of resuming his chair came and stood beside her while her nimble fingers played rather nervously over the keys. At length he spoke.

"Your eyes would entice the truth out of a confirmed liar, Miss Marshfield. I may as well tell you the whole sickening story, though of course you'll say it was to be expected. She's given me the sack—without even the common decency of saying good-bye. She's been trying it for a long time, and now she's done it. Very shabby of her, don't you think?"

"It undoubtedly seems shabby treatment from your point of view, but it was the most merciful thing she could do."

"Because why?"

"Because that correspondence was unfitting you for business and making you more visionary and idealistic than ever, which wasn't at all necessary."

"You speak with your accustomed plainness."

"Yes I am in earnest, but I hope you are not offended."

"How should I be—with you? When you have not been giving me good advice—which, by the way, I wish I had taken—you have been doing my neglected work. I have no reason for complaining of you, at all events. Things have turned out about as you predicted. She can't be a person of good principles—she must be a flirt. She—she must have found somebody else."

"Oh, let us cover her with the mantle of charity, and suppose her nothing bad but only wrinkled and ugly. She couldn't help that, you know. The transcendent love you offered her would have tempted any woman——"

"How do you know I offered her transcendent love?"

"I have heard you talk of her several times."

"Come, Miss Marshfield, spare me. I'm ready now to assent to all the spiteful things you've said about her. I do hereby solemnly swear that to the best of my knowledge and belief she's a big-bearded man; that in addition to, and notwithstanding that, she's a leathery old woman who has been amusing herself with my feeble-mindedness, and warming over her stale romance at the expense of my idiotic passion."

"Did I really mention feeble-mindedness?"

"Oh, you might as well. But this isn't wading through that pile of letters. Some one has got to take a trip, and owing to my father's fancy that I have been confined too closely of late, it's been decided that I am

CAME AND STOOD BESIDE HER WHILE HER NIMBLE FINGERS PLAYED RATHER NERVOUSLY OVER THE KEYS.

the one. My father, you see, doesn't know about Nevada."

"No," said Miss Marshfield, scarcely heeding the latter part of his remark. "Shall you be gone long?"

"Two or three weeks, I think," he replied, and became absorbed in his reading.

At six o'clock they had finished, and then, as she was donning her street clothes, Vaughan remembered certain things it was necessary to talk over in view of the intended trip. So they lingered by the fire without lighting up because it was pleasanter to talk in the twilight.

The business affairs they discussed were not of vital importance, but the secretary seemed not to notice that, and the junior partner talked on leisurely, rocking his office chair. The firelight played over their faces, and through the uncurtained window shone the first refulgence of a full moon.

This was the window which commanded a view of the lots with their lumber of old machinery. There was no snow, and over the motley array the moon poured a silvery flood, lending it a weird interest it was far from possessing by daylight. The sharp angles and ugly protuberances of the pile were softened by the hazy

Digitized by Google

glow that made the shadows seem to hide strange things—mystical things—things which belonged to the land of dreams.

The spell of the hour was upon these two as they sat there by the fire, and neither was willing to break it. They talked in low tones, with throbbing pauses between their inconsequent sentences.

Presently Vaughn leant forward to poke the fire, and when he settled back again he was nearer to Miss Marshfield than before—so near that his left hand easily reached and clasped her right, which lay on the arm of her chair. She did not attempt to withdraw it, but made some irrelevant remark to which he returned a vague reply. She looked at the coals, but his eyes were on her face.

"Miss Marshfield." The name was uttered very softly, and he bent closer still. "Could you ever—would it be possible——"

Her look stopped him. She had turned on him those speaking eyes which sometimes seemed to belie the calmness of her demeanour, and there was no mistaking their expression this time. He had understood as well as if she had put it into words.

Thoroughly agitated, he rose, and standing behind her chair laid his hand on her shoulder as he said unsteadily:

"Miss Marshfield, you force me to believe in the luck of fools. In a natural course of events you would despise me. Thank Heaven for the unnatural. Don't speak, please. I'm afraid of your speech; it might contradict what your eyes have told me, and it's too good to be contradicted."

He had bent lower until his dark locks mingled with hers.

Miss Marshfield did not speak, she was shaking with silent laughter.

"What is it?" he asked. "More fun at my expense? My dear girl, I can't blame you, but I have a strange feeling that it is your image I have had in my heart all the time, and never a dream of a myth. Explain that, will you?"

Then Miss Marshfield spoke, and this was what she said:

"Darwin, almost thou persuadest me that the only things desirable in this world are you, a moonlight night, and the Nile."

"What!" exclaimed Vaughn, straightening up, well-nigh paralysed. "How do you know she said that?"

"Because she and I are one."

Impetuously he whirled her chair about until she faced him.

"You are Nevada!"

"Yes. Is it incredible?"

"Only in the light of your outrageous equivocation."

"Oh, I didn't equivocate much, it wasn't necessary. You were very easy prey, Darwin."

"Was I indeed? But this minute I recollect a dozen awful fibs you told me about Nevada. For instance, you said——"

"Yes, I know. I'll admit my course was a little irregular, but you see I was all the time easing my conscience with the promise of an explanation. It was very exciting, and I admit that temptation made me carry it too far. Forgive me, pray. I have never romanced before, but you wrote such letters—ah, such letters, Darwin. You are a past master in love-making. I don't think I could have concluded to give up the correspondence so soon but for the effect it was having on you."

"I was something undone, that's a fact. And to think it was you all the time. Do you remember when I asked why you couldn't have been Nevada? You might have told me then."

"But I was somewhat piqued to see you so coolly setting me down as inferior to your correspondent. It was evident your plain secretary had not the ghost of a chance."

"So then you wanted me to fall in love with my secretary?"

"Perhaps I did. The possibility never presented itself to you, however."

"Oh, Miss Marshfield, I have always adored you, as you well know, but somehow it seemed to me that you were not the sort of woman to respond. Many a time I have said to myself, 'Miss Marshfield is a delightful chum, but she wouldn't listen to a love story.'"

"I think the very gods would listen and capitulate to such a story as you have to tell. What then could be expected of me whose wild desire was with you in Egypt, even when you thought me most prosaic?"

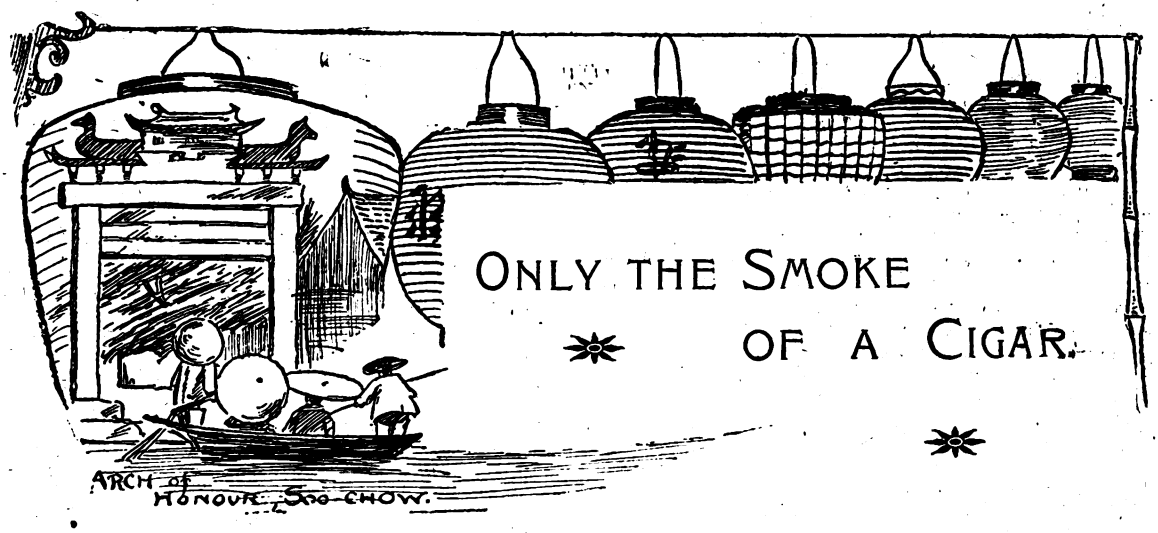
The two chairs were close together now in the shadows which the firelight was throwing into fantastic shapes.

"The wonder of it!" said Vaughn. "Miss Marshfield, invaluable Miss Marshfield, who will keep me sober and sensible whether I will or no, and Nevada, the mate of my soul. Oh, Nevada, we shall float down the Nile together. In fancy I see already the dark-gliding waters and the glint of the moonlight on the pyramids."

PARMA GENTRY.

I THINK THE VERY GODS WOULD LISTEN AND CAPITULATE TO SUCH A STORY AS YOU HAVE TO TELL.

Digitized by Google



ONLY THE SMOKE OF A CIGAR.

Ay de mi! We call ourselves free and independent beings, and yet the faintest scent or sound, or fleeting glance of places long unseen, has power to bear us on waves of memory, whether we would go or not. The cigar I am smoking this evening is one of a kind I have not smoked for years. Memories lie rolled in its fragrant leaf: its curling smoke wafts back my thoughts to the time when I was living in a far off country; to the days when I and my wife were young, and the children who have grown up and gone out into the world, were only "the dearest little things" that ever we set eyes on.

Our big cattle farm lay in a wild and lonely part of Natal. Fine grass-land undulated into the misty distance of the horizon, or was broken by the grand wall of the Cathamba mountain range. At our feet ran the river, placid at times, at times tumultuous, as beseems a river fed by sudden thunder storms and excitable mountain streams. "And like the river ran the life"; bright pictures float upwards in the air to-night, soft lights and shadows fill their canvas.

There was one storm that, breaking over our family life and into its quiet days, made a great impression on my mind. I write of it after the lapse of many years. My wife had at the time a good trustworthy nurse, and this girl's father was desirous that she should leave service and come home, where a rich suitor awaited her. Between dislike for this individual and love for our children, Annie was reluctant to leave us. She lingered on from week to week, and put off her parent with various excuses. I sometimes wondered whether behind them all there was not a real heartfelt reason for remaining in service. I had seen Annie talking to some young fellow, one of my farm labourers, in the moonlight, when the little ones were asleep, and it was possible that she preferred him to the moneyed man. Some women will not consider life prospects from a sensible point of view. My wife at last told Annie that she must leave us.

"You know that you are wanted at home," she said, "and I have suited myself with another nurse; and I think she is a good girl, although my children do not take a fancy to her."

"I'm going, ma'am, I know I must leave," answered Annie; and a few days after this, without a word, she went.

Shall I ever forget that day? It was a perfect morning, meeting-time between spring and summer. The white syringa blossom strewed the garden path; the great wild roses that had lately been threading their milky way in the hedge, and hung wreathed among high branches where nature's hand had flung them, all had faded, and the country was richer in colouring and less fairylike than it had been in the first bright advent of spring, crowned with her peach-blossom and feathery buds. We went out that morning into the garden to see Annie off, and wish her well. She walked along the path under the shadow of the orange trees, and out into the brilliant sunshine, turned at the gate for a last look at us, and then started into a fast run, having some miles to go before reaching home, and thinking nothing of the baking heat of the sun. So passed away Annie the nurse from our sight.

The new nurse had a terrible time all that day long. Nothing could persuade the children that she had not supplanted Annie wilfully and maliciously. First they scolded the girl, then attacked her with fat little doubled-up fists, and finally "sent her to Coventry," and became deaf and dumb to all matters that concerned her. The mutiny was at its worst, and we were about to meet their naughtiness with strong home-rule measures, when there came a knock at the door. I opened it myself, not being given to much ceremony in those days, and found some boys waiting on the step.

"Sir," said the biggest, "we've come for Annie; father sent us."

"For Annie? Why she left this morning."

"No, sir," said the spokesman, with a startled look.

"But she did, indeed. Your sister left us this morning."

"She never came home; we have come straight from there," answered the boy; and, after saying this, he looked down and raised his eyes no more from the ground.

"Run back, boys, and see if she has not come by now. No doubt she looked in at her friends on the way."

At my words the party ran off, leaving me perplexed at Annie's conduct. I strolled down alone to a favourite haunt of mine, the garden by the river, and overlooked the men at their task. Only one of them laboured on in silence. He was a little way from the others, digging up a piece of ground in preparation for seed sowing. He started at my approach, and answered questions on garden matters very vaguely, and with a far off, unfathomable look in his eyes.

"You are making a crooked thing of that bed, Tom,"

Digitized by Google

I said. "Leave it alone, now, and I will come down early in the morning and help you with it."

"Very well, sir," he replied, in the low constrained tone of a person anxious not to lose a word of some interesting conversation; and yet his comrades were merely joking together, and giving each other a word now and then.

"Do you hear thunder? Is rain coming?" I said looking at his anxious face.

"No, there will come no rain for some days," he answered low; and then shouldered his spade, and went with the others to the tool-house. The hill-tops were rosy in the sunshine when I went down to the garden, next morning, and a glorious freshness was in the air. Of the men, Tom was the only one down, and he was waiting for me, line in hand. How strange he looked, standing as quiet and still as the tree near him, yet with yesterday's strange attraction to some invisible thing strong upon him, and with yesterday's expression intensified in his face. It might have been taken as a study of the face of a Sibyl listening absorbed to the words of her oracle.

"Are you ill, Tom?" I inquired, looking closely at him.

"No, sir."

"Then take the string over yonder, and look sharp about it. I want to ride over and see if Annie the nurse has turned up yet."

He looked up at me with a strange wild glance, and then in silence obeyed. We were just finishing the work when he sprang from his knees, and called out in a loud voice:

"There, I knew it! They've found the body."

Then indeed it was my turn to grow pale and look anxious in the ghastly light of a sudden suspicion that flashed across my brain.

"What," I asked, "in Heaven's name do you mean?"

"Do you not hear the death-cry? They've found her—they've found her!"

It slowly, painfully was borne into my mind that I was in the presence of a murderer. I could not doubt it as I looked at Tom, but surely he was no common specimen. There he stood opposite me, not noticing me, careless of danger, and calling upon his victim by all the passionate love-names that could rise to the lips of a broken-hearted man.

As I stood gazing on him in silence, the awful sound of the death-wail, faint and distant, fell on my ear, the sound that Tom's sense of hearing had received with such suspicious acuteness.

"Tom," I faltered, "foul work has been going on, and you have been concerned in it."

"Ay, sir, I killed her," he said aloud, and, as it seemed, defiantly.

"Great Heavens! And you can stand there and so heartlessly confess the crime?"

"There's nought more to do or say. All's done, sir. I killed her. This hand shed her blood. I——"

"Hush, Tom!" I exclaimed hurriedly, for the cheery voices of the other men could now be heard over the hill, and I feared Tom would commit himself before them. After all, he might be innocent, and the cause of his wild words be grief. His manner was very strange. Had sorrow turned his brain, or was he really a criminal? He must be protected from himself until I knew more of the circumstances of the dreadful events, so I hastily sent him away from the garden.

"Take that basket up to my workroom, and wait there for me," I said, raising my voice and speaking as though displeased.

A quarter of an hour later I joined him, and shut the door on our two selves.

"Now, Tom, tell me what all this means, and try and control yourself, and speak the truth," I said.

He stood silent for a while, and then began his tale, and poured into my ears a tragedy of love, jealousy, and passion. Annie had given him reason, as he thought, to believe that she would marry him. He had imagined that she meant to run away from home and the rich suitor provided for her, and marry the man of her choice.

"And so she did intend to do, as I believe; but not—not with me. Yet she was so kind and soft to me, sir, that I cannot tell. Even now, when her body lies deprived of life by this most hateful hand, I cannot answer the question. Did she love me or that other person? She had given me no promise—it hardly seemed that we needed that. To be with her was enough for me; I did not look on to the future."

Tom paused, for a moment his excited mind seemed to forget the horror of the present in the dream of remembered joy.

"Tom," I said gently; and, with a start, he resumed:

"That day she quitted your service, I watched her leave with her little bundle on her head. Singing through the fields she went, and I left my work and ran to join her by the path that would meet hers. I saw her cross the brook, but—not alone. A man had been before me, and had already met her, and the two sat down and stayed a long time on the bank of the brook."

"Strange, and she seemed so anxious to reach home," I muttered.

"Ay, strange, sir; and it seemed so to me. Mad jealousy filled my veins, each moment made me wilder. I flew down upon the two as if I were a tiger, not a man; and he the coward, fled. And she, my innocence, my love, faced me, we had words, and they only fired me more and more. How can I speak of it? Before I left the spot her life-blood dyed the waters of the stream."

The next day Tom went to the magistrate, and gave himself up as Annie's murderer. He was committed to take his trial at the next assizes; but when the time came for the next assizes the prisoner was far away. He died one evening as the sun went down—of love and a broken heart; but then (O shade of Rosalind) this poor lover was not one of this tough and calm-hearted nation—for Tom and his love, Annie the nurse, were Zulus.

K. G.

NOW ON SALE.

No. 7 of

"The Curiosity Shop."

The Illustrated Companion to "PEARSON'S WEEKLY."

ONE PENNY WEEKLY.

THE CURIOSITY SHOP contains: Absolutely new and fresh articles. Bright and originally-conceived pictures. Strong and well-seasoned fiction. Nothing that you can get anywhere else.

Unlike all other curiosity shops, the contents of this one are changed every week, and you can buy every article and picture in the shop for one penny.

Digitized by Google

PEARSON'S WEEKLY

FOOTBALL SKILL COMPETITION

£100 PRIZE AWARDED EVERY WEEK.

The football matches named below will be played on Saturday, October 27th. To the competitor from whom we receive the correct result of all these matches we will pay the sum of ONE HUNDRED POUNDS. If no competitor gives all the results correctly, the HUNDRED POUNDS will be awarded to the person or persons most nearly correct. In the event of more than one competitor sending in the same result, the prize will be divided.

FOOTBALL COUPON No. 3. Matches to be played on Saturday, October 27th.

Matches to be Played on Saturday, Oct. 27th.	Free	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
1 Bury v. 2 Sunderland																			
1 Notts Forest v. 2 Everton																			
1 Stoke v. 2 Sheffield Wednesday																			
1 Manchester City v. 2 Derby County																			
1 New Brighton Tower v. 2 Burnley																			
1 Woolwich Arsenal v. 2 Grimsby Town																			
1 Blackpool v. 2 Small Heath																			
1 Tottenham Hotspur v. 2 West Ham United																			
1 Reading v. 2 Bristol City																			
1 Queen's Park Rang. v. 2 Millwall																			

The clubs engaged in each match are numbered 1 and 2. To fill in the above coupon, insert in the space provided the number of the club selected to win. To predict a draw, put X. THE FIRST COUPON IS FREE. A penny stamp must be inclosed for each coupon used in addition to the free one. Nine extra coupons may be used for Sixpence, and eighteen extra coupons for One Shilling.

I send in this coupon as a competitor for the prize advertised in this paper, and subject to the conditions printed on this page:

Name and address.....

THINGS TO REMEMBER.

1. Coupons may be sent either from "Pearson's Weekly," the "Curiosity Shop," or "Short Stories."
2. All coupons must reach us not later than Friday, October 26th, first post.
3. Competitors should cut out the whole coupon, score it as directed, put their name and address in the space provided, and send to "COUPON, No. 3," Pearson's Buildings, Henrietta Street, W.C.
4. All coupons are at senders' risk, and if they go astray, from whatever cause, we do not accept responsibility.
5. Competitors must attach their private address to their attempts. No prize will be sent to any post-office, refreshment rooms, or other places at which letters are called for. Attempts bearing such addresses will be disqualified.
6. In the event of a tie the prize will be divided.
7. It must be taken as a condition of the competition that anybody competing therein agrees to abide by the Editor's final decision.

Digitized by Google

NEW SERIES.

THE ADVENTURES OF AN ACTOR.

II.—A Pantomime Side Light.

"STANLEY, are you quite sure you love me?"

"Quite, quite sure. But, Dolly, why are you always asking me that question?"

"Because you men are so unreliable. You think you are in love and are quite honest when you say so, but you wake up one day to find that you only dreamt of love, that it was infatuation."

"But you women are just as bad. You think you're in love when you are not."

"No, a woman loves differently, Stan; man's love is a seed that has to be sown every year, but a woman's love once sown lasts for ever."

"I say, Dolly, you are very hard on us men."

"I try not to be, but it is hard work, Stan. Of course, there are many exceptions."

"And we are going to be exceptions, eh, Dolly?"

"I hope so, dear."

The speakers were Dolly Bainton, from the Gaiety Theatre pantomime, and Stanley Allercroft, a bright fair-haired, fresh faced youth, who had just left college. He was silent for a moment, gazing with smiling eyes down at the picture before him.

A picture indeed was Dolly Bainton, with her soft black curly hair, her pale face, and eyes as black as sloes. She reminded one of a Dresden china figure, she was so beautifully and delicately moulded, so neat and pretty. With him it had been love at first sight. When he first witnessed the pantomime, the moment she appeared before the footlights he had lost his head.

Since then he had been a nightly attendant at the Gaiety Theatre. He had made friends with the comedians, and an introduction to his heart's idol was soon forthcoming. Eight weeks passed and found them engaged.

"But why this learned lecture on man's failing and women's virtues," he asked at length.

"Because I love you so much," she said putting her arms round his neck, "and because I fear to lose you. I want you to be quite sure. I could bear to lose you now perhaps, but I could not later. If you regret, Stanley, I give you back your word."

"Don't talk rot, little one, are we not engaged?" he replied, kissing the emerald ring on her finger. "And to-morrow I am going to take you and introduce you to my mother, but you must not be serious like this, it does not suit you, you must be your old merry self."

"Oh, I'll be merry enough to-morrow, if you like. I'll turn cartwheels on the lawn, if it so please your highness. I had better give your mother a taste of my tom-boy airs, then she will know what to expect in the future."

Stanley laughed, and as Lil, Dolly's friend, who shared her rooms now came in, the conversation changed. They sat down and began to talk excitedly about a prank they were going to play on one of the girls who was overburdened with vanity.

Dolly was a very imp of mischief and dearly loved a practical joke.

The next day found Stanley and Dolly in the train on their way to Beachampton, a pretty house in the country, where Mrs. Allercroft lived.

The first sight that caught Mrs. Allercroft's gaze, as she stood at the window, expecting them, was Stanley and Dolly having a race up the drive. She clasped her hands in horror, and looked nervously round to see if any of her guests were looking on.

Her greeting to Dolly was very pleasant and quiet. She hoped she would spend a pleasant day with them.

"Oh, you bet," said Dolly with candour. "Whenever I go out I always make up my mind to have a high old time, don't I, Stan?"

"I am afraid you will find us rather quiet here."

"Not a bit! I should soon wake you up if I were here long."

Stanley looked on and smiled, he admired her easy ways and sometimes alarming directness.

Dolly found everything delightful in the old house, from the late Captain Allercroft's room of war trophies to the family portraits and the cases of old china. The big St. Bernard, Carlo, was soon a great friend of hers, as was its owner, Colonel Baker, Mrs. Allercroft's brother. At dinner she kept the men amused and the ladies shocked, by tales of professional life.

"It seems a terribly depraved life," said one old spinster,

**Who the—? What the—? If you please, sir,
What d'ye mean by TWENTY TEAZER?**

Digitized by Google

who had been bottled up and on the shelf for many a year, "I really think I would rather be a gipsy or a common tramp."

This annoyed Dolly, and, without thinking, she said:

"Rats, we call a spade a spade, and as long as people are good-hearted and true we mix with them, and are friends as long as they want us to be."

"Perhaps you *prefer* to associate with bad people," said the old lady, ruffled and letting her temper get the best of her.

"No, but I prefer honesty to hypocrisy," said Dolly with indignation. "It's tommy rot to talk like that."

Dolly's expressions caused consternation among the ladies, and Mrs. Allercroft tried to smooth matters, by saying:

"But of course you will leave the stage now?"

"Never," replied Dolly. "I wouldn't leave it for a hundred men. I should feel like a lark with its wings clipped."

"But, my dear child, I cannot allow you to remain on the stage when you marry my son."

"Oh, you will soon get used to it, and he does not mind. Do you, Stan?"

Stanley, with some hesitation, said he did not.

Just then the big St. Bernard dog pushed his heavy head against Dolly's arm and her knife fell clattering to the ground.

"Confound it," she said on the impulse of the moment, and seeing her mistake, blushed and added, "oh, I beg pardon."

The look of horror on the ladies' faces amused her so much that she had to cram her handkerchief into her mouth to keep from laughing.

It was always a joke against Dolly that a glass of wine loosened her tongue, and she had had two. She told them all about the pantomine's last big supper and the funny speech made by the principal comedian, when he was half seas over.

"What did you say he was?" asked a dame.

"Squiffy," said Dolly.

"And what may that be?"

"Now no 'hank.' You know."

"Indeed I do not."

"Well, tipsy, in plain English."

"Oh, how horrible."

"Oh, that was nothing to what they were at three in the morning."

"My dear child," said Mrs. Allercroft, "you don't mean to say that you stayed out till three in the morning."

"Stanley was there, and I daresay all of you have gone home later from a ball, many a time in your lives."

Shock upon shock Mrs. Allercroft experienced during dinner—she was glad when the meal was over.

In the afternoon Dolly came rushing up to Stanley with her hat on.

"Colonel Baker is going to show me the greenhouse, won't you come?"

"I will directly, only mother wishes to speak to me, you go on, I will join you. I say, Dolly!"

"Yes, dear."

"Why did you tell them so much at dinner?"

"Why there was no harm in it, was there?"

"No, only I wish you hadn't."

"Doesn't your mother know how we live? Haven't you told her what our life is?"

"You see, Dolly, mother does not understand things as we do."

"Well it's never too late to learn. You know I can't sail under a false flag, Stan. There cheer up, solemn face, you look as if you had swallowed half-a-crown. Meet you on the Rialto. Don't be long," and so saying she flew off.

"I say, Colonel Baker, were you very shocked at what I said at dinner?"

"No, I enjoyed your prattle immensely."

"No, I mean the swear word."

"Um, it did come into our midst a bit like a cannon ball," said the Colonel laughing again at the memory of it.

"It was funny to see their faces, wasn't it? You know I don't think there is any more harm in saying 'confound it,' than in saying 'bother,' they both mean the same thing, and you bet they've all said it some time in their lives."

"That's not the point, little one, the sin is saying it in public."

"Can't see the difference myself."

"But those old ladies cannot understand your open-mindedness."

"You don't think any the worse of me for it, do you?"

"Not a bit, my child, you are a fresh little flower I have not met for many a long day."

After their visit to the greenhouse, Dolly lured the stately old Colonel on to a game of "hide and seek." Under her bright influence he was like a big schoolboy. Carlo was used as a bloodhound to track the fugitive down. It was Dolly's turn to hide.

I will puzzle them now, she thought, as she slipped into the conservatory and hid behind the door. The sound of voices reached her, but she was looking intently through the glass panes watching the Colonel and Carlo hunt round the shrubs for her, and did not pay heed to them until she heard her own name mentioned.

"Youth and high spirits are no excuse, my son, for insulting my old friend, Miss Mitchell, shocking us all at table, and swearing like a common street girl," Mrs. Allercroft was saying.

"Mother, this is too much, you shall not speak of her like this. You don't understand her."

"No, Stanley, I don't want to if this is the way she behaves, and I never shall. Stanley, I am an old woman and know many things you do not, I ask you, can I invite our friends to meet her here to be outraged and insulted."

"Mother, you speak too strongly."

"No, my boy, I do not. On this I am determined; you choose between me and Miss Bainton."

"Mother, you don't know what you are saying," said Stanley now angry and thoroughly roused.

"Yes, Stanley, I do. Oh, my boy, I am only thinking of you and your happiness. You are young and youthful eyes cannot see that this woman has plotted to secure you. It is a fine thing, indeed, for a girl of no family to marry you, wealthy and well-connected. My boy, if you do this you will break my heart. Does this girl, whom you have only known for eight weeks, drive me for ever from you? Stanley, you must choose between us. Is it she or I?"

"Mother, you are cruel and unjust, I cannot and will not give her up."

"Is that your final answer?" asked Mrs. Allercroft sobbing.

**Some smart joke or witty wheeze—er
Hangs around this TWENTY TEAZER.**

Digitized by Google

"My final answer."

Stanley left the room, banging the door as he went, leaving his mother weeping bitterly. Dolly stood like one stunned. She had not wanted to hear their conversation, but the horror of it had rooted her to the spot. Half dazed, she crept out of the conservatory and made her way to the summer house, her face pale and drawn and her heart full of pain. When the Colonel and Carlo found her there he was surprised to see big tears rolling down her face.

"Found you at last, you little imp. Why, my dear child, what is the matter, have you hurt yourself?"

Dolly tried hard to brush away her tears and be cheerful, but miserably failed. She burst into sobs, and laying her head on the good old Colonel's shoulder clung to him, and poured out her piteous tale.

"Am I such a very wicked woman?" she asked, when he had to a certain extent pacified her.

"No, no, my child," said the old fellow, nearly crying himself. "My sister is perfectly ignorant of the world, she has lived in a narrow groove, overawed by the Church and Clergy all her life. She has very wrongfully misjudged you, but she shall not continue to do so, I promise you. I will bring my influence to bear upon her."

"No, Colonel, don't do anything please. I will give Stanley his promise back and never trouble her again."

"Now, my child, you must not do anything rash."

"Please don't try and persuade me for my mind is made up. You must not ask me to part mother and son."

When she left that evening she put up her face to be kissed by the Colonel, and whispered:

"It is good-bye."

He protested vehemently, and said he would bring everything right, but she shook her head sadly, and in a minute they had disappeared down the drive.

Lil was out when they arrived at her rooms, so Dolly said at once:

"Stanley, your mother does not like me."

"Nonsense, Dolly, whatever——"

"Now, you know you cannot look into my eyes and tell me she does. Stanley, I ask you for the truth, and only the truth."

Stanley hesitated for a moment, and then said very quietly and sadly:

"No, she does not."

"Then, dear, we must say good-bye."

"Dolly, what are you——"

"Hush! You are her only child, are you not?"

"Yes."

"I cannot part a mother and son."

"It would not be that."

"Yes, it would, Stanley. Your mother is a resolute woman."

But Stanley would not hear of their parting he vowed and declared he would bring his mother round and that all would be well.

A fortnight passed since the date of these events. It was the last night of the pantomine. Dolly was jubilant for Stanley was sure to come down to-night. Since that evening he had brought her from his home he had been up in London, passing his examinations, and had been too busy to write her more than a couple of short notes the whole time.

Dolly was sitting in her dressing-room, waiting for the overture to finish, when Lil rushed in with a letter. "Here, Doll, here's a 'billy duck's' for 'oo," and was gone again like a flash of light.

The letter was a long one from Stanley and led gradually up to these lines:

"Of all the e things I have been thinking and I fear we cannot hope for happiness with so much against us. I remember some words of yours the day before I took you to Beachampton. You said, 'You men honestly think you love when you say so, but wake up to find you dreamt it, that it was only infatuation.' Dare I tell you I have dreamed and am now awake. You gave me back my promise, do you still do so? Don't you think it will be for the best that——"

Dolly could read no more, the words ran into each other, the room swam round her, and with a moan she fell senseless to the ground. What irony is in the fact that at this moment Stanley was hurrying to the station. He had just left the post office where he had been sending off a wire which ran thus: "Forgive my letter. I did not mean it. I was driven to it. Will arrive at Theatre 9.15 p.m."

When Dolly opened her eyes she saw Lil bending tenderly over her bathing her face.

"It's nothing, dear," she answered to Lil's anxious questions. "Don't be frightened, it is one of my old heart attacks. Only weakness, and I must be strong, strong."

As Dolly went on the stage with a bound a mighty cheer arose from the house and it was long before she could utter a sound. Everyone vowed there was no merrier, brighter figure in the pantomime that night than Dolly Bainton. Everything was excitement and Lil rushed about like a madcap. She had flashed into Dolly's room with a telegram, but Dolly was not there and the excited Lil soon covered that wealth of heartease with bouquets of lilies and passion flowers, fairer flowers, perhaps, but bearing no balm to a wounded heart.

It was nearly ten o'clock when Dolly went on to sing the choicest item of the evening, her pretty "coon" song. Only one verse had she sung when her eyes caught sight of a pale face up in the dress circle.

Could it be true? Was she dreaming? She caught her breath painfully, and clutched her heart, in which it seemed a cold knife had entered. Everything went black, the lights of the house and the sea of heads went out, only one pale face could she see staring down at her with frightened eyes.

The double shock proved too much, and with a loud cry she fell forward on her face. Women screamed, the music stopped, the curtain was lowered and she was carried into the green-room where everyone crowded round her.

They made way for the doctor, who was luckily in the theatre. He shook his head when he examined her, and said:

"Failure of the heart, I fear there is no hope. You tell me she was subject to these attacks."

They made way again when Stanley came rushing in with a horror-stricken face.

"Dolly, Dolly, my love, speak to me, speak to me," he cried frantically, taking her in his arms.

The doctor laid his hand on Stanley's shoulder, and said gently:

"She will never speak again, her lips are sealed for ever."

DOUGLAS VIGORS.

[Next Week: "AT THE NAG'S HEAD."]

Great Scott! Likewise Julius Cæsar!
Who the dickens is TWENTY TEAZER?

Digitized by Google

HOW SNOOKS GOT OUT OF IT.

"If you will take my advice," said Mr. Wilding, making a last noble but futile effort to balance the ivory paper-knife on the tip of his first finger, "you won't go to the Brownrigs' ball."

"And why not?" asked his companion irritably.

"Well, I really wouldn't, you know," said Mr. Wilding, giving up his struggle with the impossible and laying the refractory paper-knife upon the table, "for a variety of reasons. Girls play the very mischief with you, and you know what trouble it gave me to get you out of your last scrape. There are four Brownrig girls, aren't there? And they are all pretty?"

"I don't see what that's got to do with it," said Snooks sulkily. "There's safety in a multitude. I can't marry them all, can I?"

"Happily, no! Though, if the laws of your land did not forbid it, I am inclined to think you might try to accomplish even that. Still, be advised, Snooks, and be conspicuous by your absence at the Brownrigs' 'small and early.' Papa Brownrig, when incensed is not nice, and you know you are decidedly smitten with Miss Katie."

"No, I am not," said Snooks, with decision. "Not a bit of it! Though, I allow she is a handsome girl, and has lovely eyes. Hasn't she, now?"

"I don't know. As a rule I never look into a woman's eyes. I consider it a rudeness as well as stupidity," said Wilding earnestly, telling his lie without a blush. "Never mind her eyes. If," warningly, "you must go to this ball, at least try to forget she has eyes at all. If you don't, you will propose to her, to a moral."

"One would think I was a raw schoolboy," said young Snooks wrathfully. "Do you think I can't look at a woman without committing myself? Do I look like a fool?"

Whatever Mr. Wilding thought at that moment, he kept it to himself. Before he spoke next, he and his conscience had agreed to dissemble.

"My dear fellow, do not let us even hint at such a thing," he said amiably. "I only meant you were slightly—very slightly—susceptible, and that Miss Katie has a certain amount of pleasing power, and that I positively would give up this ball if I——"

"Are you going?" broke in Snooks impatiently.

"Well yes, I daresay I shall look in about twelve."

"Fact is, the fellow wants to spoon her himself, and don't see the force of being cut out," said he to himself, complacently, as he ran down the steps of Wilding's stairs.

Beyond all question the Brownrigs' ball was a decided success. The rooms were filled to overflowing, the staircases were choked, the heat was intolerable. Sir Thomas and Lady Higgins had actually put in an appearance after all, and the supper, if uneatable, was, I assure you, very expensive. No pains or money had been spared; everything was what the mistress of the house called "rug regal;" and all the Miss Brownrigs looked as charming as any one could desire.

There were four of them. There was Katie, the second daughter—Snooks' friend, and the possessor of the lovely eyes. And they were lovely, large, and dark, and true and tender, like the North, according to the Laureate! "black as sloes," said her fond if slightly oppressive mother, and of the languid melting order.

Then there was Hetty, the eldest girl, who, if her eyes were not so dark as midnight, had at least the dearest little nose in the world. A pure Greek feature, perfect in every respect, ignorant of colds in the head, that made one long to tell her (only she would have blushed, they were all nicely brought up) about Dudu, and her Phidian appendage.

Then came Georgie—"George the third," as she was playfully termed in the bosom of her family—who, if she had neither nose nor eyes like her sisters, had certainly a prettier mouth than either. A sweet little kissable mouth, that pouted and laughed alternately, and did considerable execution.

And finally there was Lily. A tall pale girl, with blue eyes, a finely cut chin, and a good deal of determination all round.

Katie's eyes were larger, darker, and (when she looked at Snooks and thought of his thousands) more melting than ever that night. Her dress, if slightly *bizarre*, was intensely becoming.

Snooks, for the first half hour, kept himself bravely aloof from her fascinations, declined to notice her reproachful glances and languishing oglings for reward, and was wretched.

Finally being driven into a corner during a fatal set of Lancers, he met her eyes, saw and was conquered. She would dance the next with him? Yes (coldly). And the next? Yes (more gently). And the ninth—he can see she is disengaged for it? Yes (this time quite warmly).

An hour later the deed was done. Some capital champagne, a dark avenue (I believe there were some Chinese lanterns there originally, but a kind wind had blown them out), and a soft little hand slipped into his, did the work; and Miss Katie had promised bashfully, but with unmistakable willingness, to be the future Mrs. Snooks. Whether it was Snooks or the property pertaining to Snooks she most affected, deponent sayeth not.

When, however, her betrothed found what he had done, and remembered his former words, and all the awfulness of parental wrath, his heart failed him. He went, as he usually did when in sorry case, in search of Wilding; and having discovered him, took him into a side-room, and shutting the door confronted him with a rather pale face.

"Those eyes were too many for you," said Mr. Wilding calmly, after a deliberate examination of the disturbed face before him. "I told you how it would be."

"That's the sort of thing any fellow might say," returned Snooks pathetically. "I didn't think you would have been so aggravating. And just when you see I'm down on my luck too. Yes; I've been and gone and done it."

"'Mother will be pleased!'" quoted his friend and

Digitized by Google

law adviser, with a shrug. "So, by-the-bye, will be your father. They both regard nothing so highly as birth. I suppose Miss Brownrig can lay claim to some decent breeding?"

"The old chap is a cornchandler, you know that; at least, he used to be," said Snooks, with a heavy groan.

"Oh, indeed! And a very charming business too, I have no doubt. Leads up to quite a train of ideas. Corn wheat, staff of life, quaint old mill, and rustic bridge in the distance; miller sitting on it. I wonder," dreamily, "if Brownrig ever wore a white hat? And if so—why? Don't all speak at once. Well, well, she is a very pretty girl. Such eyes, you know! I really congratulate you my dear fellow."

"Wilding," desperately, "can't you do something? I—I don't know how it happened. It was the champagne, I suppose, and of course you know she is pretty: but I don't want to marry anyone, and I know the governor wouldn't hear of it."

"He will have to hear of it now, won't he?" asked Wilding unfeelingly.

"He would go out of his mind if such a thing were even hinted to him," declared Snooks wildly. "Try to help me out of it, Wilding, can't you?"

"I don't see what there is to do, except marry her, I only hope Lady Snooks and Miss Cornchandler will get on. And you should think of her beauty, you know; doubtless it will console you when Sir Peter cuts you off with the customary shilling."

"I suppose I had better cut my throat and put an end to it," said Snooks dismally, and then—overcome, no doubt, by the melancholy of this suggestion—he breaks down and gives way to tears.

"I say, don't do that you know," exclaimed Wilding indignantly. "Weeping all over the place won't improve matters, and will only make you look a worse fool than Nature intended, when you go out of the room. If you have put your foot in it, at least bear misfortune like a man. Look here," angrily, "if you are going to keep up this hideous boohooing I'll leave the room, and you too, to your fate. It's downright indecent. They will hear you in the next house if you don't moderate your grief."

As the nearest house was a quarter of a mile off, this was severe.

"I shouldn't care if they heard me in the next town," said Mr. Snooks, who was quite too far gone for shame.

"There is just one chance for you, and only one," said Wilding slowly. "I have an idea, and you must either follow it, or—go to the altar."

"I'll follow anything," eagerly. "What is it?"

"You have proposed to Miss Katie," solemnly. "Now go, and *propose to the other three!*"

As Wilding gave vent to his idea he turned abruptly on his heel and left the room.

"I'll do it," said Snooks valiantly, drying his eyes and giving his breast a tragic tap, "whatever comes of it."

Going into the hall, he saw Hetty standing near an entrance; a little way beyond her was Katie, conversing with a tall and lanky youth. Not daring to glance in the direction of the latter, who plainly expected him to come straight to her on the wings of love, he turned and asked Hetty to dance.

They danced, and then (it was a custom with the ball-goers in that mild suburban neighbourhood) he drew her out under the gleaming stars and up the dark avenue that a few minutes since was the scene of her sister's happiness.

There he proposed in due form, and was again accepted. Hetty's conduct, indeed, was a degree more pronounced than Katie's, because she laid her head on his shoulder, and he felt he was by all the laws of sentiment bound to kiss her. Her nose looked lovely in the pale moonlight; so I daresay he did not find the fulfilling of this law difficult.

After that he had some more, a good deal more—champagne; and then he proposed to Miss Georgie, who also consented to be his.

There now remained but one other step to be taken. He crossed the room, and asked the youngest Miss Brownrig to dance. He was getting rather mixed by this time, and was on the very point of asking her to marry him instead, so customary had the question grown to him now.

Miss Lily, however, declined to dance, on the plea that she was tired, and could exert herself no more that night.

With questionable taste he pressed the matter, and begged her to give him one, just one. At this she told him frankly she did not admire his style of dancing, which ended the conversation. So he asked her to come for a stroll instead; and having arrived at the momentous spot, delivered himself of the ornate speech that had already done duty three times that night. I forget what it was, but I know it wound up with the declaration that he adored her and wanted to marry her.

"It's extremely good of you, I'm sure," said the youngest Miss Brownrig calmly. "But, uncivil as I fear it must sound, I don't want to marry you."

"Don't you, by Jove!" said Snooks hastily. "Well, that's awfully ki— No, no!" pulling himself up with a start; "I don't mean that, you know; I mean it's awfully horrid, you know. In fact," warming to his work through sheer gratitude, "you have made me miserable for ever; you've broken my heart."

"Dear me, how shocking!" said Miss Lily frivolously. "Let us hope Time will mend it. I'm not very sure you did not speak the truth at first. I really believe it is kind, my refusing you. And now, Mr. Snooks, if I were you I should go in and say good-night to mamma, because you have been having a good deal of papa's champagne, and it is trying to the constitution."

Snooks took the hint, bade farewell to Mrs. Brownrig who, to his heated imagination, appeared to regard him with a moist and motherly eye, and, taking Wilding's arm drew him out of the house.

"Well?" said the latter interrogatively.

"I don't know whether it is well or ill," returned he gloomily. "But I followed your advice, and proposed to them all."

"And they accepted you?"

"The most of 'em. But Lily, the youngest, she——"

"I always said she was a sensible girl," put in Mr. Wilding *sotto voce*.

"Did you?" with much surprise. "Well, she refused me; sort of said she wouldn't have me at any price. So you see you were wrong!"

"I always knew she was one of the most intelligent girls I ever met," Mr. Wilding repeated, in a tone so difficult that his companion for once had sufficient sense to refrain from demanding an explanation.

**Halt! Attention! Stand at ease, sir,
Make way, please, for TWENTY TEAZER.**

Digitized by Google

The next morning, as Katie Brownrig turned the angle of the hall that led to her father's sanctum (whither a sense of filial duty beckoned her) she almost ran into the arms of her three sisters, all converging towards the same spot from different directions.

Simultaneously they entered Mr. Brownrig's study. (He called it a library; but that word is too often profaned for me to use it, so I shall draw the line at study.) But to return. Miss Lily, being the youngest, was of course the first to raise her voice.

"I had a proposal last night, papa, and I have come to tell you about it," she said, in a tone replete with triumph.

It is so sweet to the mind of youth to outdo its elders. But, "on this occasion only," the elders refused to be outdone. They each and all betrayed a smile of inward satisfaction, and then they gave way to speech.

"No!" they said, in a breath. They did not mean to doubt or be impolite; they only meant surprise.

"The curate," said Hetty in a composed but plainly contemptuous whisper. It was a stage whisper.

"Old Major Sterne," said Miss Georgie, promptly.

"Perhaps Henry Simms," suggested Katie, with some sympathy.

Then turning to her father she said, with a conscious blush. "It is very strange but I too had a proposal last night."

"And so had I!" exclaimed Georgie and Hetty in a breath.

"Eh?" said papa, pushing up his spectacles. He was fat and podgy, with sandy hair and a flabby nose.

He was a powerful man too, and one unpleasant to come to open quarrel with.

Proposals in the Brownrig family were few and far between—in fact, curiosities—and so much luck, as the girls described, falling into one day overpowered him.

"One at a time, my breath is not what it used to be," he said, addressing Katie. (If he had said breadth, it would have been equally true, as his mother—if she was to be believed—always declared he was a lean baby.) "May I ask the name of your lover?"

"Mr. Snooks," said she, with downcast eyes and a timid smile.

She took up the corner of a cherry-coloured bow that adorned her gown, and fell to admiring it, through what she fondly believed was bashfulness.

"Impossible!" exclaimed Georgie angrily.

"What a disgraceful untruth!" cried Hetty rudely. "Mr Snooks proposed to me, to me, last night, and I accepted him."

"What is it you say? Oh, I am going out of my mind; my senses are deserting me," said Georgie, putting her hands to her head with a dramatic gesture. "Or is it a dream that he asked me to marry him, and that I too said 'yes.'"

"I seldom visit the clouds," said Lily, with a short but bitter laugh. "And I certainly know he made me a noble offer of his hand and heart; both which treasures I declined."

"Where?" demanded the other three, as though with one mouth.

"In the laurel avenue!"

At this they all groaned aloud.

"Perfidious monster!" said Hetty from her heart.

"Am I to understand," began Mr. Brownrig, with suppressed but evident fury, "that this—this—unmitigated scoundrel asked you all to marry him last night?"

"If we speak the truth, yes," replied the girls dismally.

"He was drunk," said papa savagely.

"I can't believe it," said Katie, who was dissolved in tears—in fact, 'like Niobe, all tears'—by this time. "Nothing could be nicer than the way he did it. His language was perfect and so thoroughly from the—heart."

"He addressed me in a most honourable, upright, and Christian fashion," said Hetty. "I am sure he meant every word he said."

She was thinking uneasily of that kiss in the moonlight.

Could any one have seen her? Was old Major Sterne anywhere about at the moment?

"I certainly considered his manner strange, not a bit like what one reads," said Georgie honestly; "but I thought of the title and the property, and I said yes directly."

"I thought him the greatest muff I ever spoke to," broke in Miss Lily, with decision. "I refused him without a moment's hesitation, and told him to go home. I'm sure it was well I did. I dar say if he had stayed here much longer, he would have proposed to mamma next, and afterwards to the upper housemaid. I agree with you, papa, the champagne was too much for him."

"I—I think he is fond of me," said Katie in a low and trembling tone.

Her fingers are not playing with the cherry coloured bow now, but her eyelids have borrowed largely of its tint.

"Don't be a goose, Katie," said the youngest Miss Brownrig kindly but scornfully; "you don't suppose any of us would marry him now, after the way he has behaved. Do have some little pride."

"Perhaps he is mad," said Hetty vaguely.

Just at this moment as a salve to her wounded vanity, she would have been glad to believe him so.

"No, my dear," declared Lily calmly, "he has no brains worth turning."

"He said something, papa, about calling to-day at four o'clock," said Katie very faintly.

"Then I shall sit here till four," returned Mr. Brownrig in an awful tone. "I shall sit here until five; and then I shall get up, and go out and find that young man, and give him such a horse-whipping as I warrant you he never got before in all his life."

"Don't be too hard on him, papa," intreated Katie.

"I shan't, my dear, but my whip will," said papa grimly.

* * * * *

So he waited until five; he waited till half-past five; and then he took up a certain heavy gold-knobbed whip that lay stretched on the table as though in readiness, and sallied forth in search of Snooks' rooms. And he found them, and Snooks too—in bed, suffering from a severe catarrh, caught, I presume, in the laurel avenue.

And no man knows what he did to Snooks. But at least it gave him an increased desire for his bed, because for a fortnight afterwards he never stirred out of it.

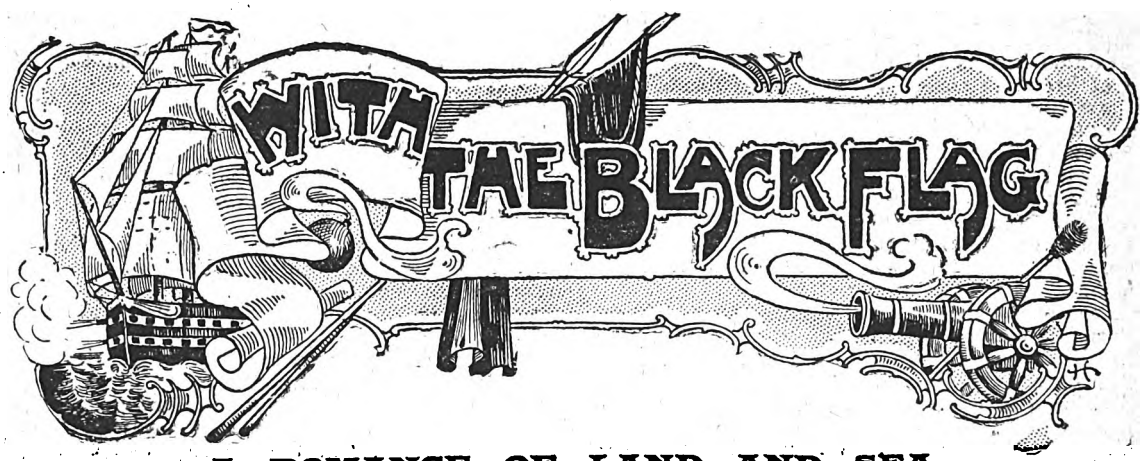
* * * * *

When Mr. Wilding heard of all this, I regret to say he gave way to noisy mirth in the privacy of his chambers; and was actually caught by his washerwoman—who peeped through the keyhole—performing a wild dance in the middle of the floor.

MRS. HUNGERFORD.

What oh, she bumps! Well, why not seize her?
It's good—you bet—this TWENTY TEAZER.

Digitized by Google



A ROMANCE OF LAND AND SEA.

By William Westall.

Author of "With the Red Eagle," "The Phantom City," "Nigel Fortescue," etc., etc.

PRINCIPAL CHARACTERS.

Major Wyvenhoe, commander of an expedition which went out from England to help the Venezuelans in their struggle for liberty.

Captain Cautley, who is in charge of the ship which took the expedition out.

John Ready, the servant of Wyvenhoe.

General Arismendez, ex-Governor of Pampatar and Vice-President of the Venezuelan Republic.

Dons Iago Santleo, and Antonio Bonanza, two Venezuelans who are friends of Wyvenhoe.

General Urdenetta, Governor of Pampatar, a bitter enemy of Wyvenhoe.

Bolivar, Supreme Chief of the Venezuelan Republic.

Tamanac, an Indian Cazique, and great friend of Santleo.

CHAPTER XVIII.

I am Imprisoned, but Escape.

As I saluted General Urdenetta he gave me a stare of insolent inquiry.

"Excuse me for interrupting you, Señor General; but I have just received this," I said, producing the letter.

"I meant you to receive it, and I mean the order to be obeyed," he answered harshly and peremptorily, but as (though I suspected my fate to be sealed) I had resolved not to throw away a chance by unnecessarily provoking him, I replied quietly:

"But do you mean that I must personally command the firing party?"

"Of course I do. Why not?"

"It is unusual for the colonel of a regiment to command a firing party."

"Unusual it may be, yet not against regulations, and I think I heard somebody say not long ago that when his general gives an order it is an officer's duty to obey it without making remarks."

"If it be a possible order, certainly."

"I do not understand you, Señor Colonel."

"These prisoners are civilians, some old and infirm, others mere boys, and being neither an assassin nor an executioner it is impossible for me to take any part in putting them to death."

"I call you to witness, gentlemen, (turning to his aides) that Colonel Wyvenhoe not only refuses to obey my order, but says I am a murderer."

"Pardon me, Señor General, I did not say what you are, I merely said what I am not."

"But if I have these treacherous peasants executed, you will regard me as a murderer."

"I have not said so; but if I commanded the firing party I should unquestionably regard myself as one."

"So you absolutely refuse to obey my order?"

"Si, señor. I absolutely refuse to imbrue my hands in the blood of these poor people, who, so far as I know, are innocent of offence."

"*Cuerpo de Dios!* Innocent of offence! Are they not sympathisers with the Godos? Their young men, after firing on my troops, have fled, and as I cannot lay my hands on them I shall make an example of their relatives. Nothing you can do will make the slightest difference in my resolve or their fate. Do you still persist in your refusal? I ask for the last time."

"I still persist in my refusal."

"Then you must take the consequences. Consider yourself under arrest."

"As you please. At my quarters?"

"No, sir; here. I shall have you tried by court-martial on a charge of rank insubordination, and insulting your general by imputing to him an intention to commit murder."

A fierce reply rose to my lips; but remembering that he might have me executed instanter, and being disposed to live as long as I might, I said again, "As you please, sir," and remained standing until Captain Comacho, one of the aides who, as I could see, was disgusted with Urdenetta's brutality, invited me to sit down, and gave me a cigar, which I accepted with a "Gracis, Señor Capitan," and a smile of affected unconcern.

Meantime the general convoked a court-martial before which I was shortly arraigned. The provost-martial prosecuted and the witnesses against me were the general and the members of his staff who had been present at the interview. As I could not deny their statements I asked them no questions and clenched the matter by repeating my resolve not to obey the order.

How doth the little busy bee, sir?
That's nought to do with TWENTY TEAZER.

Digitized by Google

On the other hand, I made an energetic defence, protesting that there was no law whereby a foreign officer who had merely undertaken to serve the Republic in a military capacity could be required to act as an executioner, also that the order was not only illegal, but outrageous.

To which the president answered that my observations, being insulting alike to the country and the general, aggravated my offence, and after a few minutes consideration, the court found me guilty and passed sentence of death, which Urdenetta at once confirmed.

"You have brought this on yourself," he said in my ear with a smile of malicious triumph. "I offered you my friendship, but you preferred my enmity. You know now that I am not to be insulted and defied with impunity. But to show you that I can be magnanimous, I will let you live until we leave this place, which will be at three o'clock to-morrow morning. Is there a carcel (dungeon) here (to one of the officers)?"

"Si, Señor General, a small one."

"The smaller the better, provided it is strong enough to hold the prisoner. Take him there, give him something to lie on. See that he is well guarded, there must be two sentries, one to stand by the door, the other to patrol the building, both to be relieved every two hours; and nobody must be admitted to the prisoner without a written order signed by myself. See to this, Captain Comacho."

And then he turned away and I was escorted by a corporal and four of Urdenetta's guard to the carcel—a little single-roomed building with thick walls and a thatched roof; a dark, filthy hole, swarming with cockroaches and other abominations, which had evidently not been occupied for a long time. Comacho, a good fellow, who made no secret of his sympathy, and promised to tell Don Iago what had happened, had the place cleaned out; and it was well he did, for under a pile of rubbish in one corner a couple of rattlesnakes were found and promptly killed. Then, after seeing that I was provided with a cobija, a chair, and a pitcher of water, and giving me a bundle of cigars, he left me to myself.

Time dragged with me.

How other people feel when they are cast into prison I don't know. My first impulse was to consider whether it would be possible to get out. Windows there were none, only three round holes, through which, albeit I might get my head, I could not possibly get my shoulders, and, as I have said, the walls were thick.

There remained only the door, which, though originally strong, was considerably decayed, and the hinges were deeply pitted with rust. If it had opened from the inside instead of the outside, and there had been no sentries, I might have tried to force it—of course, after dark; but the sentries were there, the door did not open from the inside, and I soon came to the conclusion that escaping by my own unaided efforts was impossible.

I knew that Santleo, John Ready and the Cazique would leave no stone unturned to help me, but how they could do so was not obvious. It were useless to appeal to Urdenetta, and as nobody could see me without his written permission, which neither Don Iago nor John Ready was likely to obtain, they would be unable to communicate with me. This, however, was of less importance as I saw no way, even if I got out, of evading my guards and running the gauntlet of the pickets and outposts.

There seemed to be nothing for it but resigning myself to my fate—if I could. To be killed in action is the fortune of war; and when I entered the Venezuelan service I took the risk of being captured and executed by the enemy. But being butchered by a Venezuelan general for refusing to murder civilian peasants was a chance which I had not taken into account, and a fate to which I found it hard to reconcile myself. My predominant feeling was of rage against Urdenetta, and I almost hoped that Don Iago would execute his threat of making an end of him—if he could do so without making an end of himself, which was not likely.

I have heard say that, for the victim, the time between the sentence of death and its execution passes on the wings of swiftness, that the seconds become minutes, the minutes hours. I did not find it so. Time dragged with me. My mind was in a turmoil, for albeit my courage did not fail me, I recoiled from the death to which I had been so wickedly doomed. Moreover, I had not quite succeeded in giving up hope, and the resulting suspense was so maddening that there were moments when I regretted not having provoked Urdenetta into ordering my immediate execution.

My musings were interrupted by a fusillade, followed by piercing shrieks, the wailings of women and the moans of wounded men.

Three more shots, and silence.

Urdenetta's infamous order had been executed and more than twenty boys and old men, some on crutches, one blind, put to death.

I stamped and swore in impotent rage. If the murderer had been within reach of my arm he had died. But I could do nothing, and overcome with horror and the sense of my own helplessness, I threw myself on the cobija and covered my face with my hands.

Night fell. It was six o'clock, and there were left to me only nine hours of life. I should never see the sun, never see dear old England again, for at length I had abandoned hope and made up my mind to the worst,

**In padded cell! Ha! Ha! You see, sir!
What you've done with your TWENTY TEAZER.**

Digitized by Google

resolving to die bravely as became a christian and a soldier.

I was in this mood when the door opened and one whose features I could not distinguish entered the carcel, carrying in one hand a lantern, in the other a basket.

"The Señor Colonel's supper," announced the sentry, then shut the door.

"Your supper and something else, sir," said the man in English.

"John Ready! Thank Heaven!" I exclaimed, springing to my feet. "The man of all others I wanted to see before I die. But I want no supper, what have you brought me else, John?"

"Hope, and these."

And with that he took from under his jacket a double-barrelled pistol and one of those long two edged Spanish knives, known as *cuchillos cachiblancos*.

"This may be useful," I said, "but a crowbar had been more to the purpose."

"None could be got without exciting suspicion, and, while those two fellows are there, forcing the door from within is out of the question. What sort of door is it?"

"The wood is rotten and the hinges rusty. You and another might force it in with a push of your feet or a thrust of your shoulders."

"Good! That is what we thought."

"You have a plan, then?"

"We have thought of two. One is to burst the door in after disposing of the sentries."

"By killing them?"

"No, by stunning them with the butt ends of our pistols. But unless they were both struck down together, which in the dark might be difficult, there would be cries and a struggle, and smashing the door would make too much noise. Don Iago thinks the other plan is more likely to succeed."

"And that is?"

"To wait till all is quiet, then stampede the commissariat cattle, which are corded at this end of the village, cut the tethers of some of the horses, fire a musket and sing out 'the Godos, the Godos,' which would make the dickens of a row, the fall in would be sounded, and we should profit by the confusion to let you out and slip away."

"Don Iago is right. That is the more hopeful plan. But how will you manage to loose the cattle and cut the tethers?"

"I can do that easy enough, it is only a few slashes with a sharp knife and the Cazique and his dog will answer for the cattle, he can crawl like a snake and make no more noise, and the night is dark."

"How about the sentries?"

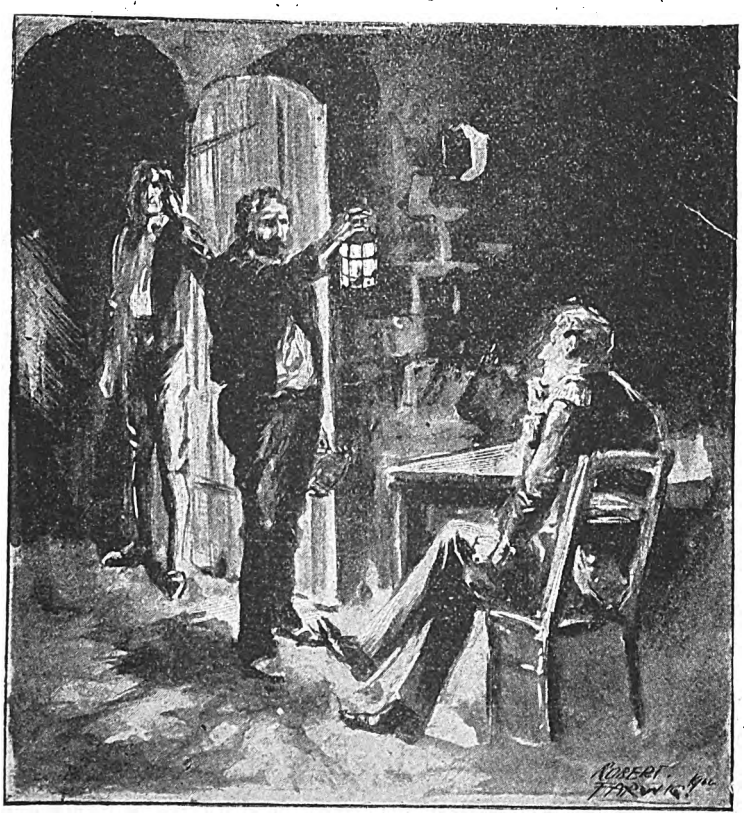
"Don Iago will order them to leave their posts and fall in with the others. If they refuse they must take the consequences."

"But won't that be bad for Don Iago afterwards?"

"He is going with us."

"Going with us?"

"Yes, he and the Cazique. Don Iago says there is nothing to choose between the patriots and the Spaniards, and that he won't serve under such a murderous ruffian as Urdenetta another day. But I must not stay any longer, sir, or the sentries will be smelling a rat. Only be sure to keep awake, and when you hear the row make ready to rush out."



One whose features I could not distinguish entered, carrying in one hand a lantern, in the other a basket.

"Oh, I shall keep awake, never fear. But just one question more. How did you get in?"

"Don Iago and Captain Comacho managed that. The captain, who is very friendly, got an order for Corporal Tambo to bring the prisoner's supper, and I am Corporal Tambo."

"Good! Now go, and may we meet again soon," quoth I, as we shook hands.

"Buena noche, Señor Colonel," said John, as the sentry let him out; and I answered: "Buena noche, Corporal, many thanks for bringing me so good a supper."

And with the supper he had brought news that gave me an appetite. I had thought never to eat, or care to eat, again; now I felt hungry, and knowing that I should need all my strength and, possibly, have to go on short commons for twenty-four hours, I made a hearty meal. Then I lighted a cigar at the lantern which Ready had left me, and waited for further developments. But I was too excited to be inactive, and after pacing about for a while it struck me that I might do something with my knife to weaken the door.

The screws were too rusty to be drawn, but I dug and cut round the hinges until they became so loose that a push from without or a wrench from within would burst their fastenings. Then it occurred to me that I had perhaps gone too far, that the mere opening of the door might cause it to fall by its own weight, and if anybody came into the carcel I should be found out and my escape prevented, a possibility which, though remote, made me very uneasy, and time dragged more than ever.

Still it passed, the noises in the village, the goings to and fro, the shouts and songs of

Digitized by Google

the soldiers, the challenging of the sentries as officers went their rounds, gradually ceased and by nine o'clock all was quiet, save among the cocks and dogs which in tropical South America crow and bark all night long.

An hour went by, then another, and I was beginning to fear some hitch had occurred when a gun went off, followed at a short interval by the trampling of horses, the bellowing of cattle, the bray of asses, the blowing of bugles, cries of: "The Godos, the Godos!" and general uproar.

"Are you there?" asked in English a voice at the door.

"Yes, give a push, but not too hard. The hinges are cut away."

Which Santleo did, and as the door yielded I contrived to let it down without much din.

"How about the sentries?" I asked.

"One went, as I bade him, the other would not budge, so I had to take strong measures. But we have no time to waste in words. Let us hence."

"Whither? The road in both directions is thronged with troops."

"Over the river."

"Without the Cazique and John Ready?"

"They know the trysting place and will follow, are perhaps there already. Come."

Don Iago led the way, though I don't know how he found it, so dark was the night.

Luckily the water was shallow and scant, and after some scrambling and splashing we reached the opposite bank, and taking a track with which my companion seemed familiar presently came to a maize field, and there made a halt.

"Now for the call," said Santleo, and then gave a perfect imitation of the strangely human cry of the goatsucker. This was thrice repeated at intervals, and after a while answered, on which we and those whom we sought, guided by the sounds, drew near to each other.

To make assurance doubly sure Santleo now imitated the song of the gallineta de monte or forest hen, to which a reply came in the voice of the arco, a bird whose drum-like notes are often heard in the stillness of the night.

"Is it well with you?" he asked as a rustling among the maize announced the approach of our friends.

"It is well," responded Tamanac.

"Where are the horses?"

"Not far off; but hereabouts tracks are so many and the darkness is so thick that we shall do better to trust to Chocoto's nose than my leading."

The Cazique spoke to the dog, stroking its head, whereupon the sagacious animal, after questing round for a minute or two, gave tongue and set off at a slow run, closely followed by his master and the rest of us. When this strange chase had gone on some fifteen minutes we heard the neigh of a horse, and shortly afterwards came to a hollow begirt with bushes, and there found a black fellow sitting before a fire smoking a churumbela (a curved pipe much used in Venezuela).

"Are the horses all here, Pablo?" inquired Don Iago.

"Si, señor, grazing among the trees."

In Pablo I recognised Santleo's servant, a Zambo of the llanos, who was greatly attached to him.

"I did not know Pablo was to go with us," I remarked to Santleo, as we sat down by the fire.

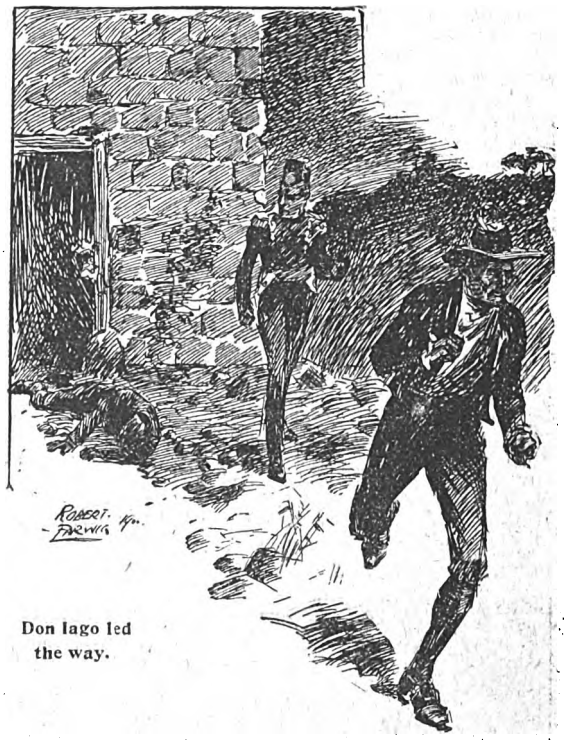
"We needed help, and he is as true as steel. Without him we could not have got the horses and kit over, and without horses we should be badly off."

"I am greatly beholden to you all. You have saved my life at the hazard of your own. What can I say more?"

"I can if you cannot. Your life being at stake because you refused to commit murder, it was the duty of all who call themselves your friends, especially of your compadre, to hazard and, if needful, sacrifice their lives to save yours. We have come off well, my only regret is that I was not able to deal with Urdenetta as he deserves."

"To do that effectually would have been to commit murder first and suicide afterwards. Urdenetta is always surrounded by his staff and his guard. Your life is worth more than his."

"That may be, yet he is in the way of doing more harm in the world than I shall do good, and he has not even the redeeming qualities of high courage and good generalship. It would be well for his country if he could be well hanged."



Don Iago led the way.

"Undoubtedly. Do you think we shall be followed?"

"No; they cannot track us by night, and the division must march, if not at three o'clock, not later than sunrise, for on Thursday they have to rejoin Bolivar, and Urdenetta though he will rage at being baulked of his revenge, is not such a fool as to wreck his leader's plans on the off-chance of recapturing you."

"We shall have to stay here till dawn?"

"Yes, and then recross the river. There is no road on this side."

"Which is your way?"

"Towards the setting sun."

"And mine towards the mouth of the Orinoco."

"For you a way of difficulty and danger. Should news of your flight reach San Fernando or Angostura before you get thither you will be in evil case. If you are in no hurry to return to England why not come with me?"

"Are you in earnest?"

"Of a surety, and I shall be glad of your company."

"But you don't say whither? To your home?"

"To my home and my people; but not having authority I cannot promise you a welcome, yet when they hear my tidings I have no more doubt that a fatted calf will be killed for you than that one will be killed for me."

"A fatted calf! But you are not a prodigal."

"I hope not, only a wanderer, and my time is finished. Besides, I want to go home. There is no child of Manoa who does not yearn to return to his native mountains, how far soever he may roam. Ever since the coming of the Cazique I have been terribly homesick"

Digitized by Google

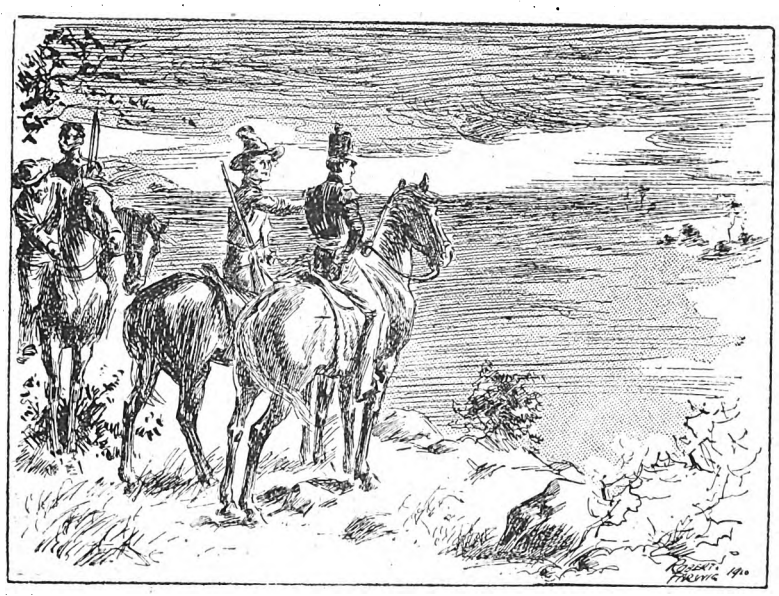
When I asked Santleo what he meant by these mysterious allusions he shook his head and answered:

"Not yet, I have said too much. Will you go?"

"With all my heart."

"It is a far and toilsome journey. We shall have to cross great plains without roads, broad rivers without bridges or ferries, traverse pathless forests, climb lofty mountains and undergo hardships. We shall travel by unfrequented ways, avoiding cities and civilised settlements, which will be all the easier as there are few of them. Once we are clear of these sierras we shall be out of danger except from the elements and wild animals, and wherever there are Indians Tamanac has friends who will render us all the help in their power."

This, though mysterious, was satisfactory; Don Iago not being a man who spoke at random.



"We are on the edge of what is probably the greatest plain in the world," said Santleo.

Three hours before dawn the blowing of bugles and the beating of drums apprised us that the troops were preparing for a move, but not being sure that all were gone we did not follow their example till peep of day, when Pablo went down to the river to reconnoitre.

"Not a man to be seen," he reported on his return. "Only women, who are fighting the turkey buzzards and burying their dead."

Urdenetta had not even interred his victims.

"Let us mount and be gone," said Santleo. "If these poor women see us they will take us for patriots and flee, while if we tarry till their men come back we shall either have to kill some of them or be killed ourselves, for they would be sure to attack us, and of killing there has been more than enough."

So recrossing the river we took once more to the road and turned our faces southward.

"There is another reason for not tarrying, which is also a good reason for hastening on," observed Don Iago, when we were well started. "We have villages to pass where the patriots are not greatly beloved, and if the news of the massacre were to precede us we might have to fight for our lives and, perhaps, fail therein. Until we reach the llanos we must be very circumspect, and give no occasion for offence."

On this we fell to discussing our itinerary, and the provision it would be necessary to make for a journey in the course of which we should have to travel for days in succession through countries without human habitation, and without meeting a human being. Finding, as I suspected, that Santleo's means consisted mainly of claims on the Republic, I placed at his disposal all the cash in my possession, which, as I had not yet touched the proceeds of my last draft, was more than enough for the purpose. The greater part of it was in gold, divided in two portions, one of which was carried in my belt, the other in Ready's, in such sort that nobody could take it from us without first taking our lives.

"You have relieved my mind of an anxiety," said Don Iago, "for, though I did not like to hint as much, we cannot travel expeditiously, or in anything like comfort, without making a considerable outlay. We need horses and attendants, also sumpter mules, and if the rains begin before we are clear of the llanos we may be weather-bound at some hut or hamlet for weeks, where, of course, we should have to pay for our entertainment."

This point settled, and a hasty and very scanty breakfast consumed, we went on, and towards noon came to a village through which the troops had passed, helping themselves to whatever they could lay hands on. The inhabitants had returned, and our arrival caused a good deal of commotion; but on being assured that we were peaceful travellers, willing to pay liberally for whatever we needed and they could supply, we were kindly treated, enjoyed a good meal, replenished our kits and bought hammocks, cobijas, food, and a few other things.

For the reason already mentioned we did not halt for siesta, going on till dark, bivouacking in a palm forest, and doing "sentry go" in turn.

Thus we travelled for several days, avoiding beaten tracks, calling at villages and farmhouses only when we desired to supplement the game, on which we chiefly subsisted, with other food.

At length, after traversing a beautiful mountain region, we came in sight of the llanos. A vast and apparently interminable plain stretched out before us, brown, barren, and desolate. It looked like some vast sea which had been turned into a dry and thirsty land, and a few tall and solitary trees, that might have been mistaken for masts, made the resemblance all the more striking.

"We are on the edge of what is probably the greatest plain in the world," said Santleo. "It extends to the foot of the Bolivian Andes, nearly a thousand miles."

"And about this mysterious mountain whither we are going. Is that a thousand miles away?"

"Would that be too far for you?"

"Not at all. I would go twice as far to learn the secret."

"What secret?"

"The secret you have so closely guarded. Who are your people, whose speech is English—for that English is your second, if not your first, mother tongue, I have no doubt whatever—and why you call yourself a child of Manoa."

"You must have patience, dear compadre. No common stranger should I dare take to the mountain. To no common stranger would the secret be imparted, but I am sure that when our chief men learn who you are they will agree with me that you have a right to know all we can tell you."

(To be continued.)

Digitized by Google

SHORT STORIES ABOUT THE ELECTION.

We devote, every week, two pages of *Short Stories* to pithy, humourous anecdotes similar to those which appear in these columns. A prize of £1 1s. will be sent to the reader who submits the best storyette this week, and a copy of "Ghosts," by K. and Hesk th Prichard, to each of those whose attempts are used. The anecdotes may be either original or selected; in the latter case the source *must* be stated. The prize of One Guinea offered for the best Storyette in this competition has been won this week by Mr. G. A. Brown, of 19 Bristo Place, Edinburgh. Attempts this week must deal with Stories about GHOSTS, and must reach the Storyette Editor, *Short Stories* Office, Henrietta Street, Strand, London, W.C., by Monday, October 29th. Post-cards only, please.

Lost by One.

IN a certain Northern burgh the contest had been very keen and resulted in a win by a single vote.

On the day following the election the unsuccessful candidate met one of his constituents who had voted for the first time.

"Well, John, we have given them a hard tussle."

"Don't mention it, sir; it has fairly upset me. Just fancy—beaten by one vote. It must have been very annoying to you, I know."

"Oh, a little; but better luck next time, John."

"It makes me angry to think of it. Some people don't know who they'll vote for, and others won't tell. That's not my style, though. After voting for you yesterday I put my card in my pocket, and can let anyone see who I voted for. I'm not ashamed to tell. Here it is."

He produced his voting card, but found that he was talking to empty space, as the disappointed one had fled to soliloquize regarding the possible effect of that lost vote. G. A. B.

Improved On.

MRS. M. was reading the newspaper to her unlettered husband

"'It is expected,' she droned, 'that the organ of the opposite party will make a great noise now that Lord X. has consented to take the chair at this afternoon's mass meeting.'"

"Is it?" cried Mr. M., getting up with decision and reaching for his hat. "Then I shall go. I've often said 'at these 'ere political meetings would be all the better for a bit of lively music." R. A. H. G.

A Tory Sheep's Head.

A PROMINENT Conservative in Mansfield during the recent election called on a Radical butcher, who had a number of sheep's heads for sale, and said!

"Mr. Butcher, I presume those sheep's heads are Radicals?"

"Yes," replied the butcher.

"Well," says the Conservative, "I want a Conservative sheep's head."

"Oh, indeed," answered the butcher, "I can soon oblige you."

He took one head and cut it in halves, and, taking out the brains, said,

"Here is a Conservative sheep's head."

The Tory walked away, sorry he had spoken.

W. H.

A Man of Peace.

AT a political meeting in one of our country villages the other evening, a well-known farmer was called upon to preside. Having taken the chair, he proceeded thus:

"Gentlemen, I'm a man o' peace, an' I want the meeting conducted in a quiet and orderly manner. Hauns up those in favour of oor candidate."

Instantly, a shower of hands were raised.

"Noo, then, hauns up for Mr. S—," naming the candidate for the other side.

Very few hands were shown.

Addressing some of the supporters of his own side, the chairman said:

"Chuck those other beggars oot, an' let us get on wi' the meeting."

T. F.

A Novel Economy.

A FARM labourer who had a very vague idea about voting (this being the first time he had been entitled to do so), was questioned by several of his neighbours as to how he was going to vote at the forthcoming election. But he always gave them the same answer.

"I tell thee I baint a-goin to give anybody my vote."

After a while two very energetic canvassers came along and asked him if he would kindly give his vote for Mr. So-and-So.

He gave a fierce glare at them and shouted:

"Now, thee look yer, mister, it ain't no good for thee to come here trying to get my vote off me. I never had one afore, and now I got it I'se a-going to stick to it." W. J.

How Did He Vote?

I OVERHEARD a party of miners one night last week in animated discussion outside a public-house as to the respective merits of the two candidates contesting the division.

One of the gentlemen is a notorious Pro-Boer, and, as a consequence, has become very unpopular with his constituents.

"Well, I don't know what to do," said one fellow. "I can't vote for that Pro-Boer, and I don't feel like voting Tory."

"I'll tell yo chaps what yo mun all do," said a man who had just quitted the polling-booth, joining the group. "Yo mun vote neutral, like me!"

J. W.

Digitized by Google

Wetter and Better.

After listening to a political address, in which the speaker set forth the benefits conferred by his party on the community, a shrewd old Yorkshire farmer was asked what he thought of the speech.

"Well," was his laconic reply. "I doant know, but I think sax hours' rain would ha dun us a deal mair good." R. P.

A Widow's Vote.

It is always difficult to persuade the woman ratepayer that she has no vote; but a lady in widow's weeds, who presented herself recently at one of the polling-booths in a borough election, had a very ingenious reason for claiming the suffrage, and was particularly reluctant to relinquish her claim.

"I know I can't vote for myself," she said indignantly, "but I am here to vote for my late husband."

C. R. F.

Only Mr. at Election Times.

The Newcastle-on-Tyne fight is not so old yet that it will fail to serve as a peg for an anecdote of a very polite canvasser.

"Well, Mr. Duffy, how are you to-night," he asked an Elswick labourer. "We've come to ask you for your vote."

"Indade, that's what I'm thinking, for Jack Duffy only gets Misther at election toimes," the voter replied with an amused smile. He had been canvassed before.

C. F.

Moral Support.

"Sir, a thousand congratulations!" gushed a toadying builder to a newly-elected M.P. "The town could not possibly have a better representative than you. You are all that the most exacting could desire."

The new member received these courtesies somewhat coldly, for he had good reason to doubt the builder's sincerity.

"May I ask you, sir," he inquired bluntly, "if you gave me your vote?"

"No, sir, I confess I did not," responded the builder not one whit abashed. "But I rode to the poll in one of your conveyances, and the moral effect of that was tremendous." R. A. G.

A Determined Voter.

At the Barnsley election, in 1895, a horse appeared in the polling-booth. The place was Ryhill National School, where Mr. Robert Ogle, relieving officer, presided.

There were not many voters polling, and the hours were hanging heavily on the official's hands, when the door was quietly pushed open, and there appeared—a horse's head!

Mr. Ogle ran to the door to drive the intruder away, but when he got there he found the horse was mounted, and in a second the animal was in the school, with his rider on his back.

Mr. Ogle demanded to know what was meant by this proceeding, and learnt that the rider-elector had lost the use of his legs some time previously; but being determined to record his vote on the present occasion, had got himself lifted on horseback, and had thus come to the poll, horse and all.

He accomplished his purpose, for the vote was duly recorded. A. L.

A Hard Task.

It is wonderful how well an election canvasser knows everybody, even if he has never seen or heard of them before. One had a take-down the other day. Calling at a house in Islington he said:

"Is Mr. Smith in?"

"No," said Mrs. S., who had answered the door.

"Well," said the canvasser, "I have called on behalf of Mr. Brown, Conservative candidate for this part. I——"

"Oh," said Mrs. S., "Mr. Smith does not take any interest in such things now."

"Well he ought to, I think I can talk him over."

"I don't think you can."

"Oh, yes I can; when will he be in? I see no reason why I should not get him to vote."

"I do, then," said Mrs. S.

"Why?" he demanded.

"Because he has been dead over two months."

J. W. L.

The State of the Poll.

It was election day in a little village, and, being the parliamentary election, all the natives had a holiday and were enjoying themselves at booths and merry-go-rounds.

Jack Saunders, the farmer's handy man, had made many unsuccessful attempts to climb the greasy pole and annex the substantial leg of mutton.

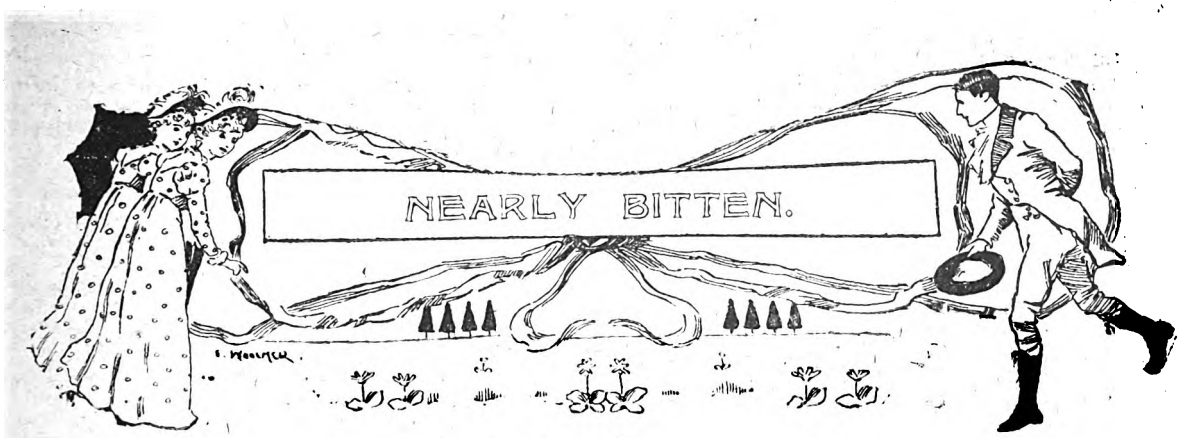
At length, his patience exhausted and his money all spent, he wended his way homewards in a somewhat muddled condition. He chanced on the road to meet his employer, who, anxious as to the election, inquired:

"What is the state of the poll, John?" Judge of the good man's astonishment when Jack, whose thoughts were still harping on the envied leg of mutton, replied in an earnest tone:

"Gad, zir, I 'ooden vise 'ee to try it, vur I never zeed 'un greasier in all my life." W. C.

PEARSON'S
New Morning Paper.
1d. 1/2 The 1d. 1/2
The Paper for Home Reading.
The Paper for the Housekeeper.
The Paper for the Busy Man.
The Paper for the City Man.
The Paper for the Sporting Man.
The Paper for EVERYBODY.
Daily
THE MOST ORIGINAL, UP-TO-DATE, ACCURATE AND BEST NEWSPAPER
Published in this Country.
Published SIX days a Week, NOT once.
1d. 1/2 Express 1d. 1/2

Digitized by Google



THERE is no doubt about it, it was time I had a holiday—i.e., a real holiday in which I could leave business absolutely behind, no letters to follow, one in fact where I should become the merest unit in the world, and forget for the brief period all ties.

My parents were alive and I had brothers and sisters. Of course usually I spent my holidays with them, but this time I was going to try what a complete change from all familiar surroundings would do for my health, which was not, at the present, good. For another thing, which for my departure was distinctly convenient, I was perfectly heart-whole—so rare a thing for a young man.

So it was that one broiling day towards the end of July, I found myself in the heart of the Swiss Mountains after an extremely hot and uncomfortably dirty journey from Paris.

For my pocket's sake it was with a trip that I was taking the mere skeleton of my holiday. I was taking the two out and in journeys at the beck of the tourist agent, leaving the intermediate portion of the holiday to be spent according to my impromptu ideas.

On my outward journey I found to my satisfaction that I was the only member of the company travelling alone. When I arrived at Lucerne, and was preparing to enter my name in the books of the Hotel Isberg, I saw just in front of me a girl of about twenty and a woman apparently much older who had booked themselves. I had to wait for a little while before getting to the book, and had time to recognise them as two whose faces I had noticed on the boat before reaching Dieppe, and again on leaving Paris.

Though I was in such a lazy, nonchalant condition of mind, determined to forget my fellow creatures, I found the girl's features rather attractive, and the interest thus aroused was increased by the glance of slight interest which she gave me as she turned round. I busied myself entering my name underneath those of Miss Purcher and Miss Ella Purcher, and when I had finished they had gone.

My interest had certainly been awakened though I doubted whether it would last, but for the present I was really anxious to make acquaintance with the fair unknown. I did not, however, care for the look of the elder sister, and rather anticipated no chance could be found by which the desired introduction would be obtained. I was mistaken. As I came out of my room to go down to dinner that evening, a figure was standing in the doorway of a room in the same corridor nearer the head of the stairs. As I advanced both the sisters came out of this room and went down stairs in front of me. The dropping of her fan by the elder sister struck me afterwards as a curious chance, but, as I hastened to pick it up, I was only too glad to have the opportunity of making the acquaintance of the younger. A few commonplace remarks at the door made all three feel quite at home, and before I knew it I was seated at the *table d'hôte* between the two sisters, having been shown straight to this seat through the attendant's conviction that we were of one party.

That evening was sufficient to make me fast friends of the two—for the sake of the younger. The elder, and apparently the chaperone, though to a certain extent neglected, seemingly did not mind so long as her younger sister was contented. This the latter certainly was, and in an hour we were talking as if we had been life-long friends. The majority of the party were on the tour for a fortnight, but I intended to stay an extra week, and was delighted to find, on telling them, that my new friends were going to do the same.

Excursions were planned, up the heights and across the lake and to the thousand and one interesting spots. It took very few days for me to be hopelessly in love with the younger girl, and I could not help feeling my wishes were reciprocated. The elder sister was particularly obliging, pleading that she often liked to be alone in the midst of such magnificent scenery. Accordingly Ella and I were much alone together. Already I thought of her as Ella as her sister called her.

And so the days went on, till I got to dread the end coming before I had spoken of these vital matters to the girl.

I knew in my cool moments I was rash, for I knew nothing of them, and yet the "all together" seemed only too satisfactory. As the time grew shorter Ella grew more and more openly attracted by my company.

Two days were left of the holiday, and though not yet quite brave enough for the final venture, I had managed to tell the girl I wanted her to go back with me alone to our favourite spot the next day. She could not fail to be aware of my intention from my very looks and manner, and I flattered myself the biggest part of the battle was over. That evening I went up to bed earlier than usual after the girls had retired. I generally spent an hour or two smoking after they had gone, but this evening I was too excited.

The evening was very close, and before lighting up I spent some minutes with my elbows on my window-sill gazing out into the night. There was no moon and I

Digitized by Google

could scarcely distinguish the rest of the building. Most of the tourists had left and there were few lights in the bedrooms.

All at once my attention was aroused by the sound of voices. They were little above a whisper, but in the stillness of the night little strain was required to distinguish them. Ella's voice rivetted my attention and there was no mistaking the very manly voice of her sister.

My first instinct was to retire, but then my wish to hear good of myself prevailed and I listened.

"To-morrow will do it all right, eh, Ella?"

"Yes, I think I've got him up to the scratch. He has not been a very hard nut, though."

My idol was in danger of being broken if that was how she talked. I listened eagerly.

"No! you've had an easier job than usual this time. He ought to be good for a couple of hundred, anyhow."

What did it mean? Easier job than usual! Couple of hundred! I puzzled to no purpose.

"Yes, he's an easier game than old Fradney, though the old chap *did* come off second best."

A light began to dawn on me.

There was a sound of subdued laughter.

Then Ella again spoke. "Well, anyhow, we'll go up to the top again. You get on that other peak—you know—and if you see me come forward then's your time. You can easily get round by that stony path at the back, and you can reach us in five minutes or so."

I had heard quite enough, and as the talking ceased I went to bed, but not to sleep. Night time was to give me some help.

As we had arranged, next morning after breakfast we started comparatively early. Before doing so, however, I had a long talk with an Englishman, in charge of the tour to a large extent, and whose casual acquaintance with me had shown me he was to be confided in.

We sat down—Ella and I—at the top of the Rigi.

All around us was magnificent mountain and lake scenery well conducive to love-making which I showed my fair companion I was very ready for.

Gradually leading up to what she expected me to say I had almost put the question when suddenly, with a startled air, she got up from my side and asked to be left alone for a minute "to think" the little jade said.

She walked to the edge of the small plateau and stood there with her head bent and her back to me for two or three minutes. Then, with eyes demurely lowered, she sauntered back to me with her hands behind her back. She certainly was a pretty girl and her appearance made me wish my dream was not to be so ignominiously dispelled. Then, sinking down by my side, she half raised her eyes to mine.

I had not finished. I was going to carry the matter through. And so, looking up to her and with my arms about her, I declared my love.

She was silent for fully a minute, though little actions showed her acceptance of my love. Then suddenly she sprang up with a little shriek and confronted me, at the same time I was astonished to see a man standing behind us.

"So, sir, *this* is your game."

The appearance was that of a man, the voice was the voice of the elder Miss Purcher.

Giving me no time to speak, he or she persisted—

"Of course this cannot stop here. You understand you cannot compromise my wife like this with impunity."

"Your wife!" I exclaimed, "whatever do you mean? And what do you mean by masquerading in men's clothes?"

"Mean, my good man," said he—"I mean that that lady is my wife. "For convenience sake"—with a grin—"we have come here in disguise, and will expose you unless you give me immediately some compensation. You probably carry your cheque book with you, sir?"

But the gods were not with him.

As he finished speaking my friend the manager and a Swiss policeman appeared upon the scene, and, amid shrieks from Ella and oaths from her husband, they were handcuffed to prevent trouble.

My friends had bided their time till the conspirators had made their intention very plain.

And so the tour to Lucerne ended in an exciting way for three of the party, and I returned to town well pleased with the result, though not altogether proud of my reminiscences, and a notorious pair of continental criminals—man and wife—spent their holidays for the next year or two amid less poetical surroundings.

Stuart Blofeld.

Soldiers' Faces Enlarged for 6s. each.

If you have a relative who has passed away either at home in peace or abroad in war, send his photograph—which you probably cherish—and we will enlarge it to a beautiful India ink and crayon portrait, 15in. × 12in., mounted on plate sunk mount 24in. × 19in.

Relatives of soldiers at the front may obtain one of these enlargements for 6s.

Other photographs will be enlarged for 7s.

Full particulars appear in the current issue of The Curiosity Shop.

A coupon from that paper must accompany each order.

A sample enlargement is on view at these offices. Below are other addresses where the enlargements may be seen:

Portsmouth.—A. B. Bennett, 408 Commercial Road, Landport.
Southsea.—L. Hillyer, 9 Green Road.
Glasgow.—William Love, 221 Argyle Street (opposite Central Station), and William Barr, 88 Sauchiehall Street.
Liverpool.—F. W. Edwards, 122 Pembroke Place, and Henry Jones (tobacconist), 184 Oakfield Road.
Blackpool.—Coppock (newsagent).
Newcastle-on-Tyne.—Messrs. T. and G. Allan, 18 and 20 Blackett Street.
Sunderland.—Edward Thompson, 263 High Street West.
Manchester.—J. Matthews, 88 Oxford Street, and Messrs. M. Carr and Co., 38 Alexandra Road, Moss Side.

A SPLENDID NOVEL. SIXPENNY EDITION.

The Invisible Man

By H. G. WELLS.

Author of "The Time Machine," "The War of the Worlds," etc.

Price 6d.

POST FREE 8d.

C. ARTHUR PEARSON LIMITED, Henrietta Street, W.C.

Digitized by Google

THE LEOPARD'S SPOTS.

THE old saying that a leopard cannot change its spots, meaning that you must not expect a radical change in a man's nature, has been exemplified in many ways; the case of John Buckland is not the least peculiar of those examples.

Buckland was the son of a hunter and trapper of wide reputation who was killed in a stampede of cattle when his boy was only ten years old. As Jack's mother had died three or four years previously, the boy was left alone in the world to shift for himself.

Those were rough times and Jack found himself buffeted from pillar to post, receiving more cuffs and kicks than kind words, so he grew up into a young man with rather crude notions of justice and with the feeling that the hands of most people were against him and that when an ill turn was done against him he must use every effort to repay it with interest.

This warped mental condition caused him to see adverse actions where no ill was meant, and his face always bore a defiant expression, while his restless eyes seemed to be for ever on the watch for an attack from one quarter or the other.

He had just completed his twentieth year when an event occurred which proved a turning point in his life. He had conceived a liking for the daughter of a hunter, a young woman about three years his senior, and this liking quickly developed into passionate, unreasoning love.

He had not spoken to Bertha Hayes on the subject; he had worshipped her from afar until his love grew too strong for further restraint. Then he boldly approached her and asked her to marry him.

The offer of marriage was so unexpected that Bertha looked incredulous for a moment or two; then she laughed at him and asked if he had gone mad.

Angered at this, Jack responded hotly, this was too much for Bertha, who shared the common opinion that Jack Buckland was "of no account" and had certainly never imagined that he would care to make such a proposal, and with a contemptuous curl of her lips she bade him be gone, adding that she was already engaged to a man. Jack, stung both by her manner and her words, went from her presence, scarcely able to contain his rage.

What Bertha may have said to her father and her lover is unknown, but Jack Buckland found himself in still worse odour than he had ever been before in the little community, and he was glad to escape the smiles and sneers of the inhabitants by joining an expedition into the territory of a branch of the Cherokee Indians. It was a risky undertaking, but what of that?

There was a fight with the Indians, and the expedition returned without Buckland, who had been wounded and carried off by the redskins; men shuddered as they thought of the fate that undoubtedly had befallen the young fellow, and he was looked upon as dead.

But quite a different fate had been reserved for Jack. The chief of the tribe had an idea that the young man might prove useful to them in the struggle against the whites, and by his command Jack was nursed and restored to health, every kindness being lavished upon him.

The contrast between the treatment he had received from his own people and that meted out to him by the Indians was so glaring to his perverted imagination that he willingly decided to throw in his lot with them. From that day he did his best to change his spots, so to speak, and to sink the white man's nature in that of the redskins.

More than six years had elapsed and, to judge by appearances, the spots had almost if not entirely faded away. Buckland appeared to have become a Cherokee; he hunted with them and fought with them against other tribes and against the white hunters—fighting with as much energy as if he had been born with a red skin.

In his determination to alter his nature he had schooled himself to look on at some of the instances of

Digitized by Google

torture inflicted upon captured enemies, but there was just this reservation—that the prisoners had not been white men.

Then came the test of the genuineness of the change. If it be possible to effect a radical alteration in one's nature, then Jack Buckland had changed. The alteration in him was seemingly far more thorough than in those savage or half-savage men who have been converted by missionary effort from the ways of savagery to the manners and religion of Great Britain; he was just as capable of withstanding the test as they are. How did he come out of the ordeal?

Returning from a hunting expedition one afternoon, he found that a white man had been captured. Three of the warriors had come unexpectedly upon a hunter reposing on the ground; he must have been possessed by an extravagant sense of security, amazing in a man of experience, for his weapons lay beyond his reach and he did not know that the Indians were upon him until they stood before him.

The warriors themselves were utterly surprised to find that the man who had fallen such an easy victim was one who had acquired a reputation for the manners in which he tracked and fought with the redskins.

The man attempted to rise as soon as he became aware that the Indians were upon him, and the latter, quic ly recovering from their astonishment, seized and bound him.

Ben Harvey was a man just over thirty, although he looked somewhat older. He had spent the greater part of his life on the plains and knew the Indian nature better than that of his own people. He reviled himself for his stupidity, but walked stolidly with his captors, for he knew that it was useless to make any attempt at escape or to appeal for anything in the shape of mercy.

He had assumed some of the stoic nature of the Indians as a result of his mode of living, and his face usually betrayed as little of his feelings as did those of the redskins. In the course of his career he had never seen an Indian express so much surprise, and the fact flattered and amused him, although he was annoyed at his own stupidity.

But suddenly his bronzed cheeks lost some of their tan and a wild, anxious look shone in his eyes. Heavens, what about Bertha and the little girl!

They were to cross the plai s to their new home with an escort of two men only, and Harvey had arranged to meet them. It had never occurred to anyone to suppose that Indians had ventured so far from their usual haunts; the savages had a wholesome recollection of the fact that they had been severely dealt with and for the past three or four years they had kept within well-defined limits.

This accounted for Harvey's sense of security in some measure, but a man of experience—a man hated as much as he was—ought never to relax his vigilance.

The Indians were growing bold again, and Harvey now awoke to the fact that there might be grave danger for his wife and child. He could on'y hope that the Indians had not gone so far in that direction.

As for himself, he was in a tight place, but he did not despair, for he had on two previous occasions escaped from the clutches of his foes when the chances seemed just as much against him. It was rather different now, for he was a married man, for his death meant grief and probable privation for two other beings.

Buckland's curiosity was aroused, he wished to see who this white man was and find out whether he knew the prisoner or not. He did not stop to ask for particulars, but made his way to where the captive was bound to the trunk of a tree and guarded by two young warriors.

"Does Angry Eye wish to see the captive?" asked one of the minor chiefs, as he saw Jack making his way towards the tree.

"Yes, Red Wolf," answered Buckland in the native dialect. They were all brief of speech.

The captive had his eyes closed and his head was bent; he was thinking of his wife and child and hoping that they would escape. The cords had been drawn tightly round his arms and body and were causing him pain and much discomfort; he was therefore too preoccupied to notice who might come or go.

Buckland looked at him with a cynical smile for a second or so; then an exclamation came from his lips, and the sound caused the captive to look up. Harvey noted that the face differed from the ordinary type of Indian, but the head-dress and clothing were similar to those of the savages round him.

"So it is you?" said Buckland sarcastically. "You have fallen into our hands at last, Harvey. We have seen very little of you lately!"

"By Heaven!" ejaculated Harvey. "It is——"

"Angry Eye, the Indian!" interrupted Buckland.

"Bah! You mean John Buckland, the renegade!" returned Harvey contemptuously. "I suppose you and your friends intend to murder me?"

"You will be treated as all our captives are treated," replied Angry Eye coldly. "The white man takes years to kill men of his own colour, and tortures them all the time, as I know by experience. We do not take long about it—as you will soon learn by experience!"

"Can a man change from a civilised creature to a savage?" asks Harvey, addressing no one in particular. Then, losing his usual calm, he burst forth: "You villain! Set me free and give me a knife or a hatchet, and I will fight you or any of your crew!"

Some of the Indians had drawn near, attracted by the talk between the two men, and there were murmurs of anger from several pairs of lips. Angry Eye, who had some influence with his fellow braves, motioned them back and addres ed Harvey.

"We have met twice in battle, soon after I left the haunts of white men and became a brave among these noble beings whom you and your degraded race call savages," he replied. "I have a grudge to p y; you are the man who married Bertha! You are the creature she called a man, by which she meant that I was not a man. You sided with those who jeered at me. We have you now, without running any risk; why should we set you free so that we may have to run some risk in killing you?" and Buckland laughed derisively.

Harvey remained silent. It was useless to appeal to this man, who had so changed that he had become a savage—with the few good qualities of the savage, probably, but with all his bad qualities in an intensified form, and one of those bad qualities was the fiercest kind of revengefulness. The leopard's spots had vanished!

The elder chiefs chuckled in a satisfied manner when they learnt what had taken place, for many of the braves understood enough English to follow the conversation. The white men had tried to win over the Indians to their ideas, and had succeeded in several instances; it gratified them to know that they also had made a convert. They might hope to make others!

But Buckland's ordeal was not over; it was only just beginning, and the real test was to come.

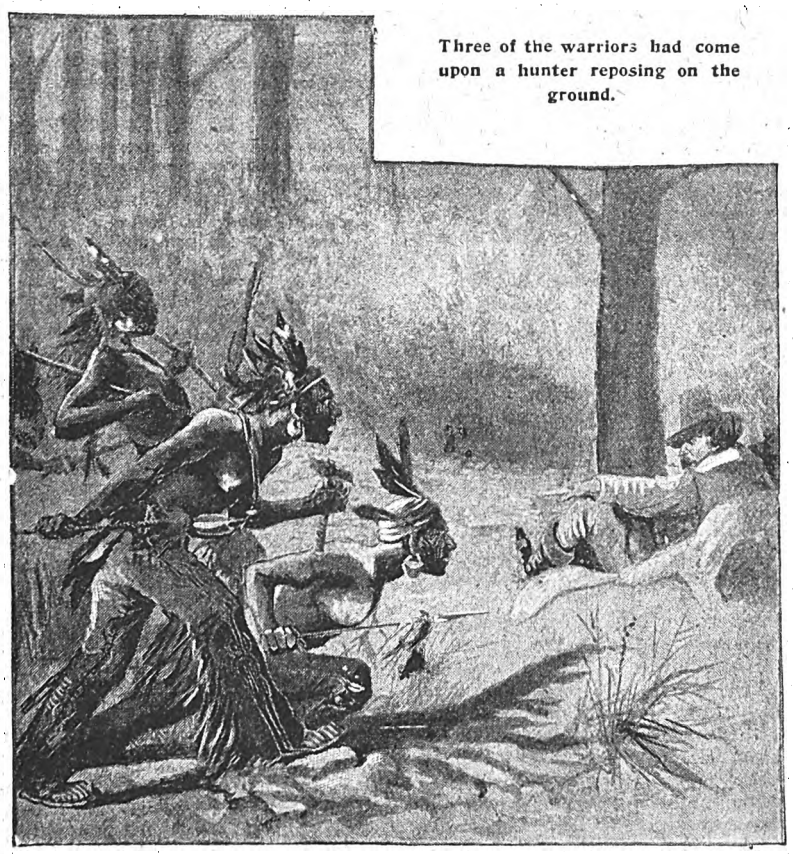
The Indians were becoming venturesome and were ex-

Digitized by Google

tending their excursions farther and farther across the plains. It was intended to torture and kill Harvey that evening, but the entertainment was delayed. News had arrived that there was a chance of making other captives and the festivities were deferred in the hope that other victims might be placed by his side.

On the following morning a party of braves set out for a journey across the plains. Angry Eye was not one of the party; he and his companions had not been successful in their search for game on the previous day and they had started again on the same errand in order to retrieve their reputation.

That day passed and the next day was half spent before either party returned to camp. The first sight that met the eyes of Buckland was a white woman and child being led captive by the triumphant Indians, and he soon heard that a small caravan had been stopped, the two white men killed after a sharp fight in which three of the braves had been sent to the happy hunting ground, and the white woman and girl had been brought to the camp to be killed or saved for a worse fate.



Three of the warriors had come upon a hunter reposing on the ground.

One glance at the captives was enough for Buckland; it was Bertha and a girl whose resemblance to the woman proved her to be Bertha's daughter.

At that moment there was a scream and a cry of "My husband!" from Bertha, who had caught sight of Ben tied to the tree; she made an attempt to get free from her captors and run to his side, but she was forcibly prevented.

A murmur of delight arose from the Indians; they had not only secured a hated enemy, but his family also. Truly, the medicine man had spoken well when he said that fortune was to favour them.

The mother and child were taken close to Ben Harvey so that the savages might gloat over their misery. Bertha looked round despairingly for a face that might show some slight expression of sympathy or mercy, and her eyes met those of Buckland. She stared at him and then gasped his name.

The white chief remained motionless, Bertha stretched out her hands in supplication.

"Jack Buckland, you are one of us, though you wear the dress of an Indian; help me, save my husband and my child!"

"I am not a man!" was the cold reply.

"Don't ask for pity for me from that savage!" cried Harvey to his wife. "He is the worst Indian of them all!"

"I can't believe that a man can change his nature," cried Bertha, realising more and more how desperate their position was.

Her despair at the fate which awaited her husband and child, to say nothing of her own, made her resolve to try the apparently impossible.

"Jack Buckland," she continued, still holding her hands towards him, "I was unfair towards you, that may be, but is such a small thing to make you turn from your own people and allow them to suffer inhuman tortures?"

"You are not the only one who ill-treated me," was the cold reply.

Bertha moved towards him. The braves looked on in wonder; they did not understand this thing, but some indefinable feeling prevented them from interrupting.

Bertha knelt down in front of Buckland, her child holding her dress and staring with frightened eyes at the warriors, and took the hands of the white chief in hers. He allowed her to do so passively; he betrayed not the least sign of emotion of any kind.

Bertha Harvey felt that she had a double task to perform; she must save her husband and daughter at any cost, but it also seemed to her that she owed it as a duty to civilisation and as some reparation for the past to draw this man away from savagedom.

"Buckland," she said in a low, pleading voice, while her eyes were fixed just as pleadingly on his, "your place is not here. You are not one of these savages; you cannot look into your own heart—search its depths—and say that you uphold their ways, their lives. You cannot stand by and see the three of us sacrificed by these people! You cannot do it! Your heart would torment you all your days with the thought that you

Digitized by Google

had been guilty of a crime against your nature! Prove yourself a man—prove to me and to everybody your claim to be regarded as a man—by throwing off the guise of a savage and assuming your real place!"

Despair made her eloquent. She paused for breath and watched for an indication that he was relenting. Then, as if afraid that she might lose ground if she did not press home at once, she continued:

"For the sake of your manhood, help us! Look at this innocent child and ask your heart whether you are really a savage—you know what it means for us! Ask ——"

"Bertha—Mrs. Harvey, I give in!" he gasped.

Her words had touched him, in spite of the remembrance of long ago. No! He was not a savage; he could not change his whole nature. It had been a hideous dream, brought about by brooding over the wrong done to him.

But now that he had swiftly searched his heart, he was awake. His companions were so different from him, he could not become one of them body and soul. The crucial moment had arrived and the leopard's spots showed themselves again.

Buckland now set so work to devise some method of securing the release of the captives. His garb and everything pertaining to the life he had led for the past few years were already becoming distasteful to him. But he must be careful not to show it. He must deal with the Indians after their own cunning methods.

Leading Bertha and her child to the chief of the tribe, he declared in a low, respectful, but firm voice that she had presented a vision to him, and that according to this vision, if the three whites were harmed or held captive, evil fortune would befall the tribe, as a large host of white soldiers would infallibly surround them and kill them all.

This was not in accordance with the saying of the medicine man, but Buckland stuck to his theme, pointing out that he had originally been one of that race which had worked such wonders and that the woman was one of his people who had visions which never lied. There was much bickering and disputation, and it was finally decided to wait till the morrow.

But when the morrow dawned, the captives and Angry Eye, with three horses, were gone and the two guards were found bound and gagged. These guards—one watching Harvey and the other on duty outside the hut in which Bertha and her daughter were confined—both told the same story; they had been stunned by a blow on the back of the head.

There was a hue and cry and the braves set out in pursuit of the fugitives, but they were not overtaken and none of them were ever seen again by the Cherokees.

Buckland left the plains and went to one of the big cities where he became a prosperous merchant; and none of those who knew him in after life would have dreamt that the leopard's spots had even so much as paled in colour.

GEO. KNIGHT.

TOMMY: "I say, Jimmie, wot is classical music?"

JIMMIE: "It's the kind you can't understand unless you wear long hair."

MISTRESS: "Why, Bridget, you have your fingers in the soup."

BRIDGET (reassuringly): "Oh, don't worry mum: it's not hot."

TWENTY-NINE SEALED ENVELOPES CLAIMED.

£290 ALREADY PAID.

THE Editor of *Pearson's Weekly* has sent out fifty men, each with a sealed envelope containing a letter entitling the recipient to the sum of £10. To secure one of these envelopes it is only necessary to ask one of the Ten-Pound Men the question, "Have you got that Ten-Pound Note?" and at the same time to show a current copy of *Pearson's Weekly*. Full details of the scheme will be sent on application to Room 36, Pearson's Buildings, Henrietta Street, London, W.C.

In order that ladies may have an extra opportunity of sharing in this great *Pearson's Weekly* scheme,

TEN TEN-POUND LADIES

have been dispatched all over the country, each of whom will deliver up the Sealed Envelope to the lady who fulfills the conditions mentioned in *Pearson's Weekly*. No gentlemen need apply.

The latest song, "Have You Got That Ten-Pound Note?" is being sung every night by Mr. R. G. Knowles in various London music-halls with great success.

HOW TO GET A COPY OF THE SONG.

Copies of the song are now ready, and may be obtained from all music-sellers and newsagents for 1s. 4d., or direct from the Song Department, Pearson's Buildings, Henrietta Street, London, W.C., for 1s. 6d. Postal Order (not stamps) post free. If your newsagent or music-seller has no copies he can get one for you if he likes. Already hundreds of orders have been received, and these will, of course, be dealt with in rotation.

Full particulars of the scheme will be found each week in *Pearson's Weekly*, and fresh developments appear in the *Daily Express* every day.

The following are the names and addresses of the winners of Ten-Pound Notes up to the time of going to press:

H. E. BAKER, 4 Beaconsfield Road, Magdalen Road, Norwich; JOHN LOTAN, 23 St. Anne's Chambers, Ludgate Hill, London, E.C.; CHARLES LEE, 1 Agnes Terrace, St. Mary's Avenue, Southend; CHARLES WRIGHT, 30 Oxford Gardens, North Kensington; ROBERT GAUTIER, 132 Clarence Road, Wimbledon; W. W. TONKIN, 5 Grove Road, Brixton, S.W.; E. G. BALDOCK, 68 Portland Street, Lincoln; ARTHUR WELLINGS, 12 The Foregate, Worcester; A. BOWMAN, 413 City Road, London, E.C.; JOHN ROE, Hatfield Road Board School, St. Albans; R. J. MARTIN, 4 Albert Road, Morice Town, Devonport; Mr. W. H. HOLE, Stationmaster, Teignmouth; ARCHIBALD BROWN, Market Place, Carluke; J. D. SOUTHALL, 38 Rosebery Gardens, Crouch End; W. COTTON, Coxbridge, West Pennard, Glastonbury; W. H. WAYNE, 19 Hurstfinch Road, St. Helens; MAY GRAMMER, 15 Elgin Avenue, Maida Vale; ALBERT J. PAGE, Sawbridgeworth, Herts; Mrs. F. PEZARO, 86 High Street, Kingsland, N.; JAMES I. W. ASH, 34 Cricketfield Road, Hackney Downs; Mrs. S. FITZPATRICK, 13 Killarney Parade, Dublin; MISS WINIFRED ELDRIDGE, 337 Seaside, Eastbourne; CHARLES W. WARD, 30 Milton Street, Maidstone; ALBERT HOUSE, 8 Lansdowne Terrace, Holloway Street, Exeter; GEORGE TYLER, 35 Cattle Market, Loughborough; MISS ANNIE HAMILTON, 12 Blythswood Drive, Glasgow; MRS. REDGRAVE, 14 Burnley Road, Stockwell; MISS KATHLEEN ORMSBY, Tower House, Greenway Road, Runcorn; MR. JOHN NEARY O'HARA, Grand Metropole Hotel, Belfast.

The original Sealed Envelopes by which claims have been made can be seen at the following places:

Mr. John Lotan's, Ludgate Hill Station; Mr. H. E. Baker's, offices of *Eastern Daily Press*, Norwich; Inspector Lee's, Cooper Brothers, Cliff Town Road, Southend; Mr. C. Wright's, Crown Hotel, Southampton; Mr. W. W. Tonkin's, Lang Sims, 437 Brixton Road, London, S.W.; Mr. E. G. Baldock's, Clifford Thomas, 202 High Street, Lincoln; Mr. Arthur Wellings', Mr. W. Spalding, 2 Lowermore, Worcester; Mr. A. Bowman's, 413 City Road, E.C.; Mr. John Roe's, Mr. W. H. Richardson, 5 High Street, St. Albans; Miss May Grammer's, Mr. Burge, chemist, 123 Shirland Road, Paddington; Mr. Southall's, Seagrief and Sons, Broadway, Crouch End; Mr. Brown's, John Young bookseller, High Street, Carluke; Mrs. Pezaro's, 86 High Street, Kingsland; Mr. Page's, Truswell and Sons, Sawbridgeworth; Mr. Ash's, "Three Sisters," Queen's Down Road, Hackney Downs; Mrs. Fitzpatrick's, 81 Lower Dorset Street, Dublin; Miss Eldridge, 337 Seaside, Eastbourne; Mr. Ward's, Walter Ruck, stationer, High Street, Maidstone.

Digitized by Google

A French Diamond Robbery.

A TRUE STORY.

It was in the palmiest days of the ill-fated Second Empire. The triumphs of the Crimea were not yet forgotten; the laurels won at Magenta were still verdant and fresh, Sedan, with all its bitter humiliation and disastrous train of tragic consequences, loomed in the misty future, undreamt of amidst the almost fabulous luxury and incredible frivolity which paved the way for the final terrible fiasco.

It was an evening in mid-winter. The Parisian season was at its height, and a brilliant audience had assembled at the Theatre Français to witness the performance of Jules Sandeau's delightful play, *Mademoiselle de la Seiglière*, in which the *rôle* of Destournelles was filled by the great Regnier, and that of Hélène by Madeleine Brohan, then in the zenith of her fame, radiant with youth, beauty, and those fascinations, the outcome of innate talent and refinement which rendered this gifted lady one of the most charming and perfect actresses of modern days.

The Empress was present, graceful and beautiful: the Emperor at her side wrapped in his favourite air of gloomy abstraction, which, like Lord Burleigh's celebrated nod, was supposed to mean so much, yet which, viewed by the impartial light of subsequent veracious history, seems to have signified so little. Several officers in glittering uniforms were in attendance, sparkling with decorations showered upon them by a grateful sovereign; and, among these gallant warriors, conspicuous by reason of the sombreness of his attire, was a solitary, humble, black-coated civilian, in ordinary evening dress, with the inevitable speck of red at his button-hole.

In a box almost immediately opposite that occupied by their imperial majesties, was a young and exceedingly handsome Russian lady, the Countess Ivanhoff, concerning whose manifold graces and fascinations the great world of Paris elected to interest itself considerably at this period.

The beauty and the wit of this fair northern enchantress were the theme of every masculine tongue, and her magnificent diamonds the envy and admiration of all feminine beholders.

The Countess was accompanied by her husband, a fine man of distinguished prepossessing appearance, who looked an embodied refutation of the celebrated Napoleonic aphorism, as though no amount of "scratching" could ever unearth the Cossack element underneath his refined, polished exterior.

The curtain fell after the first act. The Emperor and Empress withdrew during the *entr'acte*. Many humbler mortals followed their example; among them Count Ivanhoff, apparently in nowise disturbed by the fact that the golden youth in the stalls were bringing a small battery of opera glasses to bear upon the dazzling charms of his beautiful wife, with a brazen persistence which we chivalrous Britishers like to flatter ourselves is the monopoly of foreigners.

The Countess leant back in her luxurious fauteuil, fanning herself dreamily, serenely indifferent to the interest she was exciting. In the dim light of the curtain-shaded box, the glitter of her splendid diamonds seemed to form a sort of luminous halo round her graceful head: a myriad of starry brilliants gleamed among the masses of her gold-brown hair; and two priceless stones, popularly reported to be worth that unknown quantity, a king's ransom, flashed and twinkled like twin planets in her little shell-tinted ears.

The Count had not been gone five minutes, when there was a gentle knock at the door; and, in answer to the Countess's "*Entrez*," the attendant appeared, and said deferentially:

"Pardon, Madame la Comtesse; a gentleman charged with a message from her Majesty the Empress waits in the corridor, and desires to know if madame will have the goodness to receive him."

"Certainly! Enter, I beg of you, monsieur," replied the Countess, in the low suave voice, which was not the least of her many attractions, bowing graciously as she recognised the distinguished-looking civilian she had already noticed in close proximity to the Emperor in the imperial box.

The visitor advanced a few steps, and, still standing in deep shadow, said with grave dignity:

"I trust my intrusion may be pardoned. I am desired by her Majesty to ask a favour of Madame la Comtesse, and, at the same time, to beg that she will have the goodness to excuse a somewhat unusual request."

"The obligation will be mine if I can fulfil even the least of her Majesty's wishes," answered the Countess gracefully.

"The case is this," explained the gentleman in a tone of well-oiled ease. "An argument has arisen concerning the size of the diamonds in your earrings and those of the Countess W. The Empress begs that you will intrust one of your pendants to her care for a few moments, as the only satisfactory method of disposing of the vexed question. I will myself return it the instant her Majesty gives it back into my keeping."

"With the greatest pleasure," agreed the Countess, with amiable alacrity, detaching the precious jewel forthwith, and depositing it, without misgiving, in the outstretched palm of the imperial messenger; for, indeed, diamonds were almost as plentiful in the existence of this fortunate lady as in the pages of *Lothair*, and she attached no more importance to them than did the jewel-laden heroines of our late great and lamented Premier.

The Countess bestowed a smile and a gracious bow of dismissal upon her Majesty's distinguished ambassador who responded by a profoundly respectful inclination as he made his exit.

Once safely outside the box, the aristocratic features of this high-bred imperial emissary suddenly lost their serene expression of dignified gravity, and relaxed into a triumphant Mephistophelean grin.

Shortly afterwards Count Ivanoff returned.

"I have been talking to Danvers," he remarked, as he seated himself. "Clever fellow, D——. I am not surprised at the Emperor's partiality for him; he must find him so useful when he is in want of an idea."

"Who is Danvers?" inquired the Countess, with languid interest.

"That is rather a difficult question," replied the Count, smiling; "there are several editions of his biography—all different, probably none of them true.

Digitized by Google

He is successful, which is the chief point; moreover, he is entertaining, and, at any rate, looks and speaks like a gentleman, which in these evil days is something—even much. Look, he has just entered the Emperor's box—the man in the black coat."

"Is that Monsieur Danvers?" exclaimed the Countess, waking up to a mild interest in the subject; "if so, he has been here while you were away. He came on the part of the Empress, and carried off one of my earrings, which her Majesty wished to compare with one of the Comtess Wahn's."

"Danvers! Impossible! I was talking to him the whole time I was absent, and he only left me at the top of the staircase two seconds before I returned."

"Nevertheless, *mon ami*, he has been here, and has taken my earring. See! it is gone."

"Effectively," agreed the Count, with a grim smile; "but Danvers has not taken it. It is to the last degree unlikely that the Empress would make such a request. Depend upon it you have been the victim of a thief, got up as an accurate copy of the distinguished-looking Danvers."

"Impossible!" cried the Countess in her turn. "The affair is absolutely as I tell you. It was Monsieur Danvers the veritable Monsieur Danvers I see opposite, who came into this box and took away my diamond. Only wait a little, and he will bring it back intact."

"To wait a little is to lessen the chance of its recovery. In any case, I will go and inquire of Danvers, if I can get at him, whether he has been seized with a sudden attack of kleptomania; because the idea of the Empress having sent him roaming about the theatre, borrowing a lady's jewels, I regard as preposterous. Ah, these Parisian sharpers! You do not know what scientific geniuses they are in their way."

With this the Count departed, and the second act was nearly at an end before he returned.

In the meantime, the Countess perceived that she was an object of interest to the occupants of the imperial box, and notably to the "double" of her late aristocratic-looking visitor who, she could still solemnly declare, had stood before her in the flesh.

"I was right," whispered the Count, re-entering and bending over his wife's chair; "Danvers knows nothing of your earring, and, needless to say, the Empress never sent him or anyone else upon such an errand. I have put the matter into the hands of the police, and they will do all that is possible to recover it."

"Really! How very droll!" remarked the Countess with calm nonchalance—for she belonged to that order of impassive statuesque women, who remains mistress of themselves through any quantity of "china fall;" "I will take out the other earring, or people may fancy I am trying to set the fashion of wearing an odd one," and she handed the fellow to the purloined jewel to her husband.

The play came to an end, as even that most excellent feast of reason, a good French play, well acted, must do, sooner or later, in common with all things mundane.

The Countess was duly commiserated by sympathising friends, who one and all declared, behind her back, that they would never have been guilty of the imbecility of trusting so valuable a possession to the tender mercies of however fascinating a stranger; but nothing more was heard of the stolen jewel until the following day at noon, when Count Ivanoff received a note from Danvers to the effect that, as he could not help considering himself partly responsible for the loss of the diamond which had disappeared through the agency of his counterpart he had taken an early opportunity of interviewing the Chief of the Police, who assured him he had good reason to believe the thief had already been traced as far as Brussels.

Early in the afternoon the Countess was about to start for her daily drive in the Bois. The frozen snow lay deep upon the ground, and her sledge, with its two jet-black Russian horses jingling their bells merrily in the frosty air, stood waiting in the courtyard while the Countess donned her furs.

A servant entering announced that an officer of police in plain clothes asked permission to speak with Madame la Comtesse concerning the lost diamond.

"But certainly," agreed madame graciously; "let the officer be shown into the boudoir."

Into the boudoir presently came the Countess, stately, beautiful, fur-clad, buttoning her little gloves. Near the door stood a short wiry-looking man, with keen black eyes, closely-cropped hair, and compact, erect, military figure. The small man clicked his heels together and bowed profoundly in the presence of so much high-born loveliness, while he said with the utmost respect, at the same time laying a letter upon the table:

"I am sent by order of the Chef de Police to inform Madame la Comtesse that the stolen diamond has been satisfactorily traced, but there is unfortunately some little difficulty connected with its identification. I am charged, therefore, to beg that Madame la Comtesse will have the goodness to intrust the fellow earring to the police for a short period, in order that it may be compared with the one found in the possession of the suspected thief. Madame will find that the letter I bring corroborates my statement."

The Countess glanced hastily through the letter, and ringing the bell desired that her maid might be told to bring the remaining earring immediately; this was done, and the dapper little man, bowing deferentially, departed with the precious duplicate safely in his possession.

The Countess descended to her sledge and drove to the club, to call for her husband *en route* for the Bois. Crossing the Place de la Concorde, she related to him the latest incident in the story of the diamond earring.

"You never were induced to give up the other!" cried Count Ivanoff incredulously.

"But I tell you, *mon ami*, an officer of police came himself to fetch it, bringing a letter from his superior vouching for the truth of his statement."

"If the Prefect himself had come, I don't think I should have been cajoled into letting him have it after last night's experience," laughed her husband. "However, for the second time of asking, we will go and inquire."

The coachman turned and drove as directed to the Bureau of Police, at which the Count had lodged his complaint the night before. After a somewhat protracted delay the Count rejoined his wife with a semi-grim look of amusement upon his handsome hirsute face.

"The police know nothing of your detective or his epistolary efforts," he said, drawing the fur rug up to his chin as the impatient horses sped away merrily over the frozen snow; "it was the wrong man they had got hold of at Brussels. Your second earring has been netted by another member of the light-fingered fraternity, and upon my honour I think he was the more accomplished artist of the two!"

And from that unlucky day to this the Countess Ivanoff's celebrated diamond earrings knew her pretty ears no more.

Alaric Carr.

Digitized by Google

THE FAMOUS
GEM AIR RIFLE.
13/6

Kills at a longer range than any other air rifle. Most accurate sight. Shoots darts, shot, and slugs. Ammunition and targets free.

H. & S. Co., 73 FARRINGDON STREET, E.C.

INCREASE YOUR STRENGTH
ONE HALF by using our
GRIP EXERCISERS.
Five minutes' practice twice a day will wonderfully develop strength and size of hand, wrist, forearm, and upper arm. Invaluable to athletes, clerks, mechanics and professional men. Everyone improved in health and strength by using them. With life photo, chart of exercises, prices 2/3 and 4/3 per pair, 3d. postage.
H. & S. Co., 73 Farringdon St. E.C.

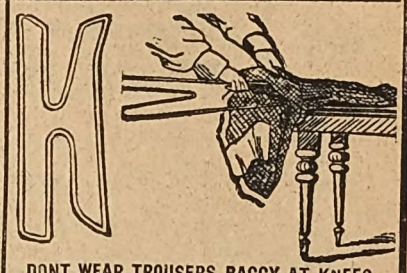
WRIST AND WIDE GRIP DUMB-BELLS.
Combines advantages of Dumb-bells and Grip Exercisers and you grip wood, not nerve-annoying cold metal. Beautifully polished, enamelled, and nickelled. Price 6/6 pair, with Life Photo Chart.
H. & S. Co., 73 FARRINGDON STREET, E.C.

A BEAUTIFUL SKIN
There's nothing better than our MASSAGE ROLLER for making a clear and firm skin. Also tones up the nerves and appetite better than any tonic, cures and prevents nervous depression, dyspepsia, cramp, rheumatics, and neuralgia, by stimulating natural circulation. With 128 page illustrated Instruction Book, prices 6/6, 8/6, and 10/6 (on approval).
H. & S. Co. 73 Farringdon St., E.C.

TRAIN YOUR MOUSTACHE.
Wear this at night, you can train your moustache to any desired style. THE EMPEROR MOUSTACHE FRAMES, invented by the German Emperial Barber, and used by German Emperor, post free with instructions for 2/6. — LONDO NOVELTY CO. 1 Abbot's Road, Upton Park, E.

THE MAGIC FORTUNE TELLER.

Answers Questions and Reveals the Secrets of the Future. Causes great Fun. Interesting to young and old.
LONDON NOVELTY CO., 1 Abbot's Road, Upton Park, E.



DONT WEAR TROUSERS BAGGY AT KNEES.
Use of our Stretchers makes trousers always fit and look like new. Price 2/- pair; postage 6d. extra.
London Novelty Co., 1 Abbot's Road, Upton Park, E.

A SCIENTIFIC WONDER.

PRICE 1/-. Post free.
With this scientific instrument you can see bones whilst moving as well as still.
LONDON NOVELTY Co., 1 Abbot's Road, Upton Park, E.

WHY BE FAT?

When a lady, who has discovered a simple means of Self-Cure will be happy to send particulars of same to any sufferer from this distressing complaint. Free on receipt of stamped addressed envelope. ADDRESS:
Mrs. TREVOR WELLS,
63 *HIGH HOLBORN, LONDON, W.C.*

Neuralgia Positively Cured!
Free Test Offered.
The annexed cut presents in the prominent white lines the nerves most liable to attacks of Neuralgia. Sufferers will know only too well the pain tracks, and will be glad to know of a Simple and Sure Remedy. The proprietors will send Free two sample Zox Powders to any reader of *Short Stories* sending stamped envelope to ZOX CO., 11 HATTON GARDEN, LONDON E.C.

Don't Cough-use
They at once check the Cough and remove the cause.
The Unrivalled
One Lozenge alone relieves.
Sold everywhere, Tins 13½d. each.
Keating's Lozenges

THE MOST NUTRITIOUS.
EPPS'S
GRATEFUL—COMFORTING.
COCOA
BREAKFAST—SUPPER.

HAIR DESTROYED.
Send me an envelope (stamped and addressed) and I will tell you how to remove all superfluous hair **free of charge.** (Send no money.) Address, in confidence, Miss E. V. (Room 3), 195 Oxford Street, London, W.

NOSE
MACHINES. LEES RAY S. S. Dept., South Castle St. Liverpool, is a specialist on Ugly and Red Noses. Send stamp for particulars of his patent scientific Nose Improvers. Red Nose Cure, medically approved, 3/9. Outstanding Ear Machines 11/6.

DRUNKENNESS
CURED. This can be done with or without patient's knowledge. Send me a stamp and I will tell you how. (Send no money.) Address, in confidence, Mrs. C. H. (Room 8), 195 Oxford Street London, W.

VIE D'OR FOR THE HAIR.
THE AMERICAN TREATMENT.
Vie d'Or puts 10 years on the life of the hair.
SOLE AGENT:
GUSTAV ROSSELLI, 4 New Park Street, Park Lane, LEEDS.
Price **2/9** post free.

POST FREE THREE STAMPS
A Treatise on the Modern and Successful Treatment of Nervous Diseases and Exhaustion, by local absorption.
Fully up to the advanced ideas on the subject.
THE MARSTON CO.,
59 and 60 Chancery Lane, London, W.C.

DRUNKENNESS
CURED. On receipt of stamped envelope a lady will gladly send free particulars of a simple remedy, which cured her husband (without his knowledge) of the craving for alcohol, to which he had been for many years a victim. Address, in confidence, MRS. TERRY, 46 Sternhold Avenue, Streatham Hill.

FREE FREE
Our £2 10s. Real Silver Watch
(with chain),
or
A Real Gold Ring
Set with REAL DIAMONDS and other stones.
SEND NO MONEY.

NO MONEY REQUIRED. WE TRUST YOU.
We give you your choice of either of these handsome presents for selling NINE articles of Jewellery at 1/6 each. (Regular price 2/6).
We do not want your money.
Just send us a stamped addressed envelope and say that you will either sell the jewellery or return it to us if you fail to sell it. On receiving your letter we will at once post you the jewellery.
When sold, send us the 13/6 you have received for same, and we will at once send you ABSOLUTELY FREE our £2 10s. Real Silver Watch with Chain, or the Gold Ring, whichever you desire.
A WRITTEN GUARANTEE for TEN years sent with each watch.
You can sell our Jewellery in a few minutes at 1/6 each article. We have thousands of testimonials as to the quality and value both of our Jewellery and Presents.
Send no money. Write to-day.
BRITISH PREMIUM SYNDICATE (Dept. 5),
282 CENTRAL CHAMBERS, GLASGOW.

Digitized by Google

Transposed Letter Competition.

First Prize	**£5.**
Second Prize	**£2.**
Third Prize	**£1.**

LIST No. 1.

ART; CEL; OMW; GIN; BUS.

Here are five sets of letters, and prizes will be awarded to the competitors who send in the longest words containing the letters in each of their combinations.

For example, the following words contain the letters IST in their different combinations: fIST, ITSelf, SIT, STIpend, ouTSIde, adverTISe.

CONDITIONS.

1. Write your attempts on one side of the paper only, and keep until three other lists have appeared.

2. All words must appear in Nuttall's Standard Dictionary.

3. The letters of the combinations must either be underlined or put in capitals in the words in which they occur.

4. In the event of a tie, the prize will be divided.

5. The Editor's decision is final, and competitors must enter on that understanding.

RESULT OF BRAIN GYMNASIUM.

Nos. 223 to 228.

The prize of £2 has been awarded to Mr. R. Wigley, of The Ferns, Olton, Warwickshire, whose solution was the first correct one dealt with.

A copy of "Pharaoh's Broker," by Ellsworth Douglas, has been sent to each of the following:

C. Smith, Red House, Westleton, Saxmundham.
P. E. Tavender, 182 Bruntsfield Place, Edinburgh.
Miss. J. Whitaker, Savile House, Worsborough Bridge, Barnsley.
A. Ruddle, 118 Greenwich Road, Greenwich.
Miss H. Warner, "Australind," Crawley, Sussex.
Miss Inglis, Brockhurst, Oaklands Road, Bedford.
F. G. Homer, Richmond Villa, Anderton Park Road, Moseley, near Birmingham.
Miss K. Cooke, 21 Hamilton Road, Ealing, W.
E. Goodall, 61 Beaconsfield Street, Liverpool.
E. McIntyre, 68 Crofton Road, Camberwell, S.E.

SOLUTION OF BRAIN GYMNASIUM.

Nos. 229 to 234.

No. 229.
P A I R
A C R E
I R O N
R E N T

No. 230. PRINCES—PRINCESS.

No. 231. "As the twig bends, so the tree inclines."

No. 232.
B luf F
U ppe R
L ith E
L ine N
E nteri C
R as H

No. 233. L—EVE—L LEVEL.

No. 234. Lap; lap-dog; lap-wing; Lap-land.

SHORT STORIES ADVERTISEMENT RATES.

Single column, per inch, per insertion	£0 10 0
Double ,, ,, ,, ...	1 0 0
Full page inside, facing page of matter, either white paper or 2nd or 3rd page of cover, or back page, per insertion	10 0 0
Half-page ,, ,, ,, ...	5 0 0
Quarter-page ,, ,, ...	2 10 0
Eighth-page ,, ,, ...	1 5 0
Front page, whole ,, ,, ...	12 10 0
,, half ,, ,, ...	6 5 0

All spaces above one-eighth of a page are charged at per page rate. Series discount: 5 per cent. for 13, 10 per cent. for 26, 15 per cent. for 52 insertions.

Black blocks are charged 25 per cent. extra. All advertisements are subject to approval. All copy must be sent in by Noon on Tuesday, Oct. 30th, if intended for the issue on sale Nov. 13th, and dated November 17th. The Proprietors reserve the right to hold over or suspend the insertion of any advertisement without prejudice to other insertions on order. All communications should be addressed to the Advertisement Manager, "Pearson's Weekly" Offices, Henrietta Street, London, W.C.

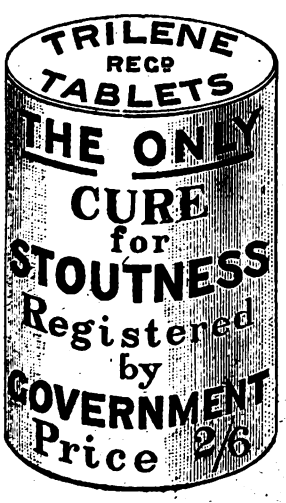
Printed and published by C. Arthur Pearson Limited, Pearson's Buildings, Henrietta Street, London, W.C.

Digitized by Google

ALL FAT PEOPLE

Can be **CURED** by taking

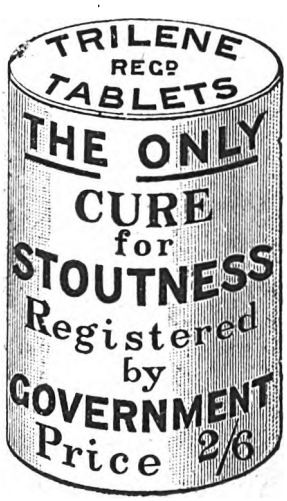
TRILENE TABLETS Regd.



For a few weeks. They will safely REDUCE WEIGHT and CURE CORPULENCY PERMANENTLY, whether Abdominal or General. They are small, agreeable, harmless, sent privately, and never fail to Improve both HEALTH and FIGURE without change of Diet.

An English Countess writes: "Your Trilene Tablets act admirably."

Send **2s. 6d.** to **THE TRILENE ASSOCIATION, 66 Finsbury Pavement, London, E.C.**



SAMPLES OF TESTIMONIALS.

"67 Alexandra Road, Norwich, October 19th, 1896.

Gentlemen,—In reference to Trilene Tablets, I may say that my wife found the greatest possible benefit from the use of them; their action was rapid, and exceeded our utmost expectations, as they were also most beneficial to the respiratory organs. My wife was many years growing so stout, but although the disease was, I consider chronic, the Tablets soon reduced the same completely. You have our united thanks, and if I can do anything to promote your interests I will freely use my utmost endeavours to do so.

"Yours faithfully, J. R. CANHAM."

Mrs. DARNLEY SMITH, Landscove Vicarage, Ashburton, writes: "Trilene Tablets have reduced my weight very much. I am so much lighter in every way, and better in health."

COUNTESS SECKENDORFF, of Berlin, writes: "The Tablets greatly benefited me personally, and I am recommending them to friends."

Miss CHATTERTON, 7 Salisbury Villas, Banstead, Surrey, says: "I weighed 12st. 6lb., but am now 11st. and getting much better."

Nurse CROUCHER, at Mrs. Bennett's, 14 Buckleigh Road, Streatham, says: "I lost 9lb. from the box I took."

"77 Hindhill Street, Heywood, February 5th, 1898.

"Gentlemen,—I have not quite finished the box of Tablets and am 4lb. lighter. The change is great, and several friends are beginning the treatment, which not only reduces fat but strengthens rheumatic joints—such has been the case with me. "Yours sincerely, M. A. HEYWOOD."

Mrs. D. BURTON, of Silverleigh, Tunbridge, writes: "I am very pleased with difference in size, my friends all telling me how much thinner I am getting."

Miss NORTHLEDGE, The Laurels, Risholme Road, Lincoln, says: "The Tablets reduced me 1st., so that I am cured."

West Cornforth, Ferryhill.

Mr. WM. USHER says: "A sister of mine, who was 17st., was greatly reduced by your Tablets to 11st."

Extract from *The Lady*, September 3rd, 1896: "Many stout persons have suffered untold agonies in unavailing efforts to reduce their bulk, either by means of severe dieting, or by taking more or less deleterious drugs; but all these pains would have been saved if they had only invested in a box of the wonderful Trilene Tablets which are quite harmless, containing neither mercury, arsenic, nor any other mineral poison, and which are an unfailing cure for obesity."

Mrs. T. BOSTON, Cambridge Villas, Clifford Street, South Wigston, says: "I congratulate you on your wonderful Tablets. My weight at first starting them was 15st. 7lb., and I now weigh 9st. 11lb."

Mr. MCLEOD, 44, Calside, Paisley, writes: "I have been cured. If you want to know my weight now, it is 10st.; reduced 1st. 6lb., and I am quite content."

A. M. PRATT of Ongar House, Ongar, says: "My weight is so much reduced it is unnecessary to take more. The reduction of weight was from 12st. 6lb. to 10st. 4lb."

Mrs. H. COX, 28 Watnall Road, Hucknall Torkard, writes: "The box of Tablets has reduced my weight 1½ stones."

Mr. WALKER, 236 London Road, Hazelgrove, Stockport, says: "I have used one box and am 14lb. lighter. Send another soon as possible."

Col.-Sergt. WHITTLE, of East Lancashire Regt., Burnley, Lancs, says: "A man in our regiment in 1897 lost several stone from taking your Tablets."

Mrs E. ALEXANDER, 102 Dixon Street, New Swindon, says: "They have reduced me quite 2 stone, and I am now quite cured."

Mrs. W. A. RADFORD, of High Street, New Brinsley, Eastwood, writes: "Before taking Tablets I was 46 inches round waist, now I am 39 inches. I hope soon to be 23. I could hardly move or get up, now I get about easily. Please use this as you wish."

Countess FURSTENBERG, of Germany, writes: "They act speedily and well."

The Princess LIECHTENSTEIN writes from Landsberg, Austria: "Pray send me your excellent Tablets."

Mrs. WEAVER, of Greenpits Villa, Ross, Hereford, writes "I am reduced from 13st. 6lb. to 11st. You may use this if you like."

Mrs. CROSSLEY, of Rose Hill, Torver, nr. Coniston, says: "There is a very decided diminution of fat. I am delighted, and cannot speak too highly in praise of Tablets. My heart is better, and I can breathe so much easier. You may refer to me as often as you like."

Lady C. CONRAD writes from Wiesbaden: "I am very pleased with your Tablets."

Mrs. TAYLOR-ROBINSON, of Tweed Green House, Whalley Range, Manchester, says: "I feel so much lighter and better since taking your Tablets, and am so much thinner that I hardly recognise myself."

Miss A. LONG, of 9 South Parade, Waterford, writes: "Your Tablets have reduced me 14lb."

Miss A. DAWSON, 62 Orchard Street, Weston-super-Mare, says: "Glad to say the Tablets have sufficiently reduced me. I shall always recommend them."

Miss F. L. BALL, 47 Chesterfield Road, St. Andrews, Bristol, writes: "I am quite cured through your Tablets. They improve the figure, and greatly relieve shortness of breath."

Miss PATTERT, of Woodberry, Talgarth Road, writes: "Feel great benefit from Tablets. I have lost 2 st., and am sufficiently reduced."

Mrs. DREW, of 1 Bellevue Gardens, The Nursery, Devizes, writes: "I took Tablets some years ago; they soon reduced me and I have not got stout since. Send me a box for my mother."

THE TRILENE ASSOCIATION, 66 FINSBURY PAVEMENT, LONDON.

Digitized by Google

"NO BETTER FOOD."—*Dr. ANDREW WILSON, F.R.S.E., &c.*

Fry's PURE CONCENTRATED Cocoa

300 Gold Medals, &c.

IMPORTANT CAUTION.—*Sold only in tins with gilt tops.*

Advertisements should be sent to "Short Stories" Advertisement Department, Henrietta Street, London, W.C.

Digitized by Google

RESULT OF FIRST £100 A WEEK FOOTBALL COMPETITION.

SHORT STORIES
A WEEKLY MAGAZINE FOR HOME AND TRAIN

No. 618. FOR WEEK ENDING NOVEMBER 3RD, 1900. [ONE PENNY.

A STOKER AND

DR TIBBLES' Vi-Cocoa

"I FIND IT DOES ME GOOD."

MR. H. HART, 7 Upper Green Street, Friar Street, Blackfriars, S.E., writes :—

"I am a stoker at a glass-blower's, and I am in intense heat all day. I take a tin of Dr. Tibbles' Vi-Cocoa with me at intervals, and I find it does me good. I sometimes feel a dizziness come over me through the sulphur in the burning of the coke. I make my usual pint of Vi-Cocoa, and after drinking same I feel much relieved. I have been using your Vi-Cocoa for over three months, and now I do not think I could go to work all day without it. You may use this letter as you please."

DAINTY SAMPLE FREE

ON MENTIONING "SHORT STORIES."

Address : Dr. TIBBLES' VI-COCOA, Ltd., 60 BUNHILL ROW, LONDON, E.C.

Advertisements should be sent to "Short Stories" Advertisement Department, Henrietta Street, London, W.C.

Digitized by Google

KAPUTINE

The Best & Safest Remedy for

HEADACHE.

NURSE HILL, of the London Association of Nurses, writes:

"I have seen Kaputine administered to many patients, and can truly say it is a remedy which should have a place in every household."

All Leading Chemists sell KAPUTINE, 1/-. Samples One Penny.

If your Chemist has not KAPUTINE send his name and address to

KAPUTINE, HUDDERSFIELD,

and we will send you a SHILLING PACKET FREE.

WORTH A CROWN A DOSE.

JOHN NOBLE.

COSTUMES AND MANTLES.

Sent without delay by Parcel Post safely packed.

GUARANTEED TO GIVE SATISFACTION.

PATTERNS POST FREE

of Costume Coating and Cheviot Serge, the good durable cloths in which this Costume is made.

Colours: Black, Navy, Myrtle, Fawn, Royal Blue, and Grey.

Sizes in Stock of Ladies' Costumes are: 34, 36, 38 in. round bust (under arms); Waists 24, 26, 28 in.; Skirts being 38, 40, 42 in. long in front. Any other size made to measure, 1/6 extra.

☞ **MODEL 256.**—Well-cut Bodice, velvet revers, trimmed black and white. Full Tailor Skirt. Price **10/6** complete Costume; **10/6** carriage 6d. or the Skirt alone, **5/6**. Carriage, 5d.

SPECIAL VALUE.

Smart Sac Jacket. ☞

MODEL 274.

Well-cut comfortable garment, in good Black or Fawn Beaver, Velvet Collar. Price only **8/6**; carriage 6d. Please send bust (under arms) measurement when ordering. **8/6**

Please name *Short Stories* when writing to

JOHN NOBLE Ltd.,

Dept. No. 46 BROOK STREET MILLS,

MANCHESTER.

TO THE QUEEN PURVEYORS

CROSSE & BLACKWELL'S

GREEN PEA. GRAVY. JULIENNE. MULLIGATAWNY. TOMATO. HOUSEHOLD, CRESSY, &c.

SOUP TABLETS

OF ALL GROCERS ETC. THROUGHOUT THE WORLD

HAIR DESTROYED.

Send me an envelope (stamped and addressed) and I will tell you how to remove all superfluous hair **free of charge.** (Send no money.) Address, in confidence, Miss E. V. (Room 3), 195 Oxford Street, London, W.

NOSE

MACHINES. LEES RAY, S.S. Dept., South Castle St, Liverpool, is a specialist on Ugly and Red Noses. Send stamp for particulars of his patent scientific Nose Improvers. Red Nose Cure, medically approved, **3/9.** Outstanding Ear Machines **11/6.**

TOO STOUT

I was for years; by chance I came across a simple home remedy that reduced me from 17st. to 10st. 12lb., and I will willingly send particulars **free** to any sufferer enclosing stamp. Mrs. L. E. FELL, 195 Oxford Street, London, W.

ESTABLISHED 1851.

BIRKBECK BANK

Southampton Buildings, Chancery Lane, London.

2% on CURRENT ACCOUNTS, on the minimum monthly balances when not drawn below **£100.**

The BIRKBECK ALMANACK, with full particulars, post **free.**

FRANCIS RAVENSCROFT, *Manager.*

NEW AUTOMATIC KNITTER.

FOR HOME WORK.

"The machine that knitted the hosiery and comforts for the troops in Africa."—See what *The Times* said.

Knits Socks (a pair in 35 min.), Stockings, Fancy Goods, &c. Easily learned. Lessons Free.

Cash, hire, and Work Terms from "Sorres" dept.: 67 Southwark St., S.E.; 55 Oxford St., W.; 192 Upper St., London, N.; 105 Nicolson St., Edinburgh; 98 Union St., Glasgow: 132 Stephen's Green, Dublin; 62 Great Hampton St., Birmingham; 31 Stokes Croft, Bristol.

Advertisements should be sent to "Short Stories" Advertisement Department, Henrietta Street, London, W.C.

Digitized by Google

SHORT STORIES

No. 618.] For the Week Ending November 3rd, 1900. [One Penny.

THE LITTLE HARLEQUIN.

A few evenings ago I was sitting in my room, together with a few friends. We had been reading aloud a drama written by one of us, and were amusing ourselves with a discussion as to what constituted the most tragic circumstances that can possibly arise in life, that would be a fitting setting for a hero of a drama. My friend B., an unusually keen observer, who waited, as was his wont in a discussion, until everyone else had had his say, to put the question in a new light, by the aid of a few words, at last remarked, that in dwelling upon the complicated and tragic conflicts of the mind, we had forgotten the most simple and tragic ones of all.

The most tragic human being is the one who, in spite of unusual mental attainments, is brought low by the consciousness of great physical ugliness. Then, when we all protested against this "idealising of a most inferior sort of tragedy," based upon bodily peculiarities, he said he was sure we had again misunderstood him, and so he told us the following little Italian story, for the truth of which he vouched:

"In a tiny tower in the vicinity of Modena once lived a curious young man. The inhabitants at first avoided him but later grew to look upon him as a sort of official clown, whose duty it was to make them laugh. No one in the town knew exactly who or what he was. His real name was unpronounceable. He had appeared suddenly on the scene, had rented two rooms and lived quietly in retirement.

"The old woman with whom he lodged said that he had a quantity of books, and that he spent the entire day reading or writing. She had a funny story about him, too, that she was fond of telling. When he first came to her and saw the large mirror in his bedroom, he fell into a sudden rage, and, seizing the wash-basin, hurled it at the mirror so that it broke and the pieces fell all about the room. But what did that matter? Of course, he had paid her for both mirrror and basin (by which she had incidentally made a good bargain), and had only stipulated that there must never be a mirror in his room again.

"Every time this story was told in the town, someone, particularly among the young girls, began to giggle. It was so plain why he could not stand a mirror—he was so terribly ugly! His figure was very small and lank, but he had a huge hump on his back which seemed to contract his chest by its weight and to make an upright position in walking impossible, as it was incredible that the long, thin legs, that the children declared clattered at every step, as if they were wooden, could carry such a body. His arms were almost as bad as his legs, reaching nearly to his knees, which gave his whole body an ape-like appearance. There was no trace of a neck to be found. His gigantic head sat directly between his shoulders. This was perhaps the most peculiar feature of all. It was very large at the top and very small at the bottom, so that it looked as if a wedge had been driven down between the shoulders.

"This likeness was probably increased by the fact that the face was drawn to one side and distorted by pain. To be sure, the large, thin, hooked nose was directly in the middle, but that only made the whole worse, for it divided the face into two entirely different halves. The mouth was much too far to the left, and the forehead slanted upwards from left to right, which was made all the more conspicuous by reason of its being particularly high and arched. Naturally a bristly confusion of ragged hair and a preposterous number of unusually deep wrinkles did not tend to make the face more attractive. The large, dark eyes might have done so; but they were really the most uncanny part of the man. Sometimes very sad, sometimes very fierce, and often there emanated from them such unrestrained glances, that had they come from another body, would have made every girl's heart beat; but with his appearance that was, of course, impossible. For let him do what he would, walk, sit, stand, recline, speak, keep silence, be sad, angry, resigned or full of enthusiasm, it was impossible to help laughing at him. When he walked he looked like an inverted pendulum. When he stood still, with his arms hanging limp at his side, as was generally the case, he looked, seen from a distance, like a colossal cropper pigeon, it being impossible to distinguish his breast any way off.

"And one can easily understand that the emotions of his soul, which mirrored themselves so closely and sensibly on his countenance, produced the most ridiculous impression of all, for in such an uneven mirror the most glorious thing must appear frightfully distorted, as everyone knows who has ever looked in a convex or concave glass, and laughed himself half to death at the disgusting contortion of his own body, or still more at those of his acquaintances.

"I should like to know, however, if you would still laugh if one of these same contortions should stick to you? At all events, the inhabitants of the little town in

All rights reserved.]

Digitized by Google

Seizing the wash-basin he hurled it at the mirror.

which our story is laid did laugh. Although he had been there two months, no one but his landlady had ever heard him speak; and she said that he had such a wonderfully beautiful, soft voice that people who listened to him could scarcely help crying, and were forced to keep their eyes closed. They would have liked to know what sort of a man he really was, especially the young people, and so they tried in every way to get information in regard to him. Soon they succeeded.

"One afternoon, when he was walking through the street, carrying a small package to the post-office, a piece of paper with writing on it, stuck out of his coat pocket. A small boy, noted for his boldness, succeeded in stealing the paper from the pocket, and handed it over to his elder brothers and sisters. The elders were charmed at the chance to satisfy their curiosity, for the paper was written all over, and without doubt by himself.

"At the top was the date, September 15, just a week before. Then it continued:

"'Is it fate that makes man always regard that which is for ever closed to him as the most desirable of all things? That he must always love and admire most that which he lacks altogether? Or am I in this also an exception, as I am bodily?

"'Oh, when will there be an end to this terrible flight from the world and my own ugliness? When shall I learn to be content with the treasures which I have, and to forget my own miserable unimportant limitations? Am I the only one who has no mercy on himself? All other people forget their afflictions and are proud of their good points, and I do the opposite. Why then? Why?

"'And has my flight been of any good? Oh, these horrible two years of flight from one neighbourhood to another! And during them always again and again the awaking to this horrible reality of the body that drives me back into my misery—the misery of a man who throws his treasures to the winds and tries to conquer by means of his defects. Is there then not enough irony in the world?

"'Asceticism, asceticism! Death of things of the body—a wonderful principle! I only know that asceticism and the breeding of unrestrained ideas are one and the same. And why can I not love something more than a mere spiritual love? Oh, but I can; but not be loved in return. Can the "beautiful great soul" which I possess, take the place of the glorious body that I desire? How would a sketch do of Thersites as Don Juan, an attempt at a self-vivisection, by a person made insane by bodily defects?

"'I believe one is finally too cowardly to take leave of life, because he would still like to enjoy that which is impossible. For example, I have in mind a man who will never die of hunger, because he would first like to write another Faust. It is the same story with me. I cannot be beautiful, and would yet celebrate the triumph of the body—for what else is love? And I cannot die until then.'

"The good people could not understand much of this diary; but one thing they were able to read in it—he was in love! That was killingly ridiculous. Now they knew it, and everyone whispered to everyone else: 'He is in love.' A band of rude schoolchildren called after him down the street: 'There he goes; he is in love!' at which he fell into such a rage that everyone who saw him screamed with laughter.

"For three weeks the Teatro Classico had been in town, and had had great success. To be sure the performances were not very classic, and people were surprised that 'he' went every evening, being himself so much funnier than the plays. He never laughed in the theatre, not even when the rest of the audience were convulsed with amusement.

"The Harlequin was so comical, enormously tall and thin, who impressed people mostly (though, of course, without intending it) by his never knowing what to do with his arms and legs. If he were walking on the level he tripped over his own feet; if he went up the stairs, he slipped on his hands. The only fat thing about the entire man was his red nose (he was a great drinker), and the only thing connected with him on which you might waste pity was his audience. The whole town was soon saying that Harlequin's acting was perfectly tasteless, repeating the words of Maestro Poccini, who now played the dance music, but who had once been in the orchestra of the Milan Opera for a month.

"The female portion of the town had a regular hatred for the little leading lady of the theatre, who was a sweet little creature, called Lala, sixteen years old, small and dainty, with charming little feet, a slender throat, large childish eyes, full of wonder, and black hair. As she laughed often, for every one exerted himself to be witty before her, her delicious, little, shining, sharp teeth were also visible. She was always in a good humour; it was only seldom that she sat still, with her hands in her lap, dreaming of sad things, perhaps of her parents' early deaths and her loneliness among strangers, which even her gay profession was not quite able to drive away.

"Lala was so attractive that she soon had the *entrée* to many of the houses in the town, particularly after people had learnt from the director of her sad lot, and knew that she was a thoroughly good girl in spite of many temptations. The conversation often turned upon him. No one knew his name, and she laughed with the others at the ridiculous creature who appeared at the theatre every evening, who never applauded, and who wrote whole nights through.

"Lala knew this, for living on the opposite side of the street she could see into his room when she went to bed at night, thanks to a beautiful lamp, which had no equal in the town, a lamp with a woman for a pedestal. She had seen it plainly, and this lamp often burned all night through, for she often saw it when she awoke. But he was terribly comical. She could never help laughing

Digitized by Google

when she saw him. He should have been Harlequin—the other smelt so of brandy.

"Aye, that would have been just the thing. He should have been the Harlequin, and then the theatre would have been twice as popular. Such a curious man he was! He often wrote all night long! And the pedestal of his lamp was a girl. He was in love, too. What interesting things do happen! It is after all worth while living.

"'He' was scarcely ever to be seen now, except in the theatre, leaving the house only after dark. Something in him seemed to have changed. He walked so much more slowly and haltingly than before, as if he were tired or continually thinking of something that gave him no rest.

"The audience at the theatre paid almost as much attention to him as to the actors on the stage, and they noticed that he turned first red and then white, and that he breathed heavily and trembled when Lala was playing; and his eyes rested on her with such an appealing and glowing expression that all who saw him had trouble to smother their laughter. How amusing the theatre was!

"One fine day the tall Harlequin, reeking still of brandy, was found dead in his bed. The doctor said that he had died of heart failure. He was no great loss to the company, but the director was obliged to engage another Harlequin and the theatre was closed for three days out of respect to the dead.

"On the afternoon after the old Harlequin's death, another event of great interest took place in the town. 'He' went crazy! At least so his landlady declared. She said he had behaved most curiously of late. He often wept aloud, and stamped his feet; again he swore and threw heavy books about the room. He had not been to bed for three days in succession, but had spent the entire night writing, and then early in the morning he had sent a small package to the post, which she believed contained paper. She had been quite worried about him once.

"For two days and nights he had written continuously, covering a great mass of paper, then had tossed about on his bed for a few hours sobbing, and at last, laughing horribly, he had burned a whole pile of the paper on which he had written.

"Things must have come to a pretty pass with him. He had ordered a long mirror in which he could see himself at full length, and he had laughed and sprung about, talked and sung the greatest nonsense, and gesticulated in such a manner that seemed a physical impossibility to such a body.

"She had been terribly frightened, but it had been so funny after all that she could not help watching him, and he had asked her if she were pleased with it all.

"But curious things do happen. The director of the theatre announced that he would give no more performances, but would move to another town.

"He told no one his reasons for doing this, not even Lala. He only said to her that it was on account of the new Harlequin, who was the most wonderful Harlequin possible and that she would be able to play with him better even than before.

"So the entire troupe moved to another town, but it seemed strange to Lala that the new Harlequin had not yet put in his appearance.

"At the same time he had paid the rent for his rooms six months in advance, and leaving all his things behind him, he went away.

"The last and principal number on the programme was a love scene between Lala and Harlequin; but neither Lala nor any other member of the troupe had seen the new Harlequin, and Lala did not even know what she was to say in this new *rôle*. The director grinned as he remarked that this was not at all necessary, that it would go off all the better.

"The last number came. Lala, with a slight tinge of embarrassment, very becoming to her, stepped on to the stage and looked anxiously about her. The new Harlequin rushed at her from the opposite wing of the stage, and threw himself at her feet. It was 'he.' She screamed aloud from astonishment and fear, and trembled all over. The audience burst into applause.

"And now an improvised love scene unfolded itself on the stage, that convulsed the audience with laughter. After Lala had recovered from her terror her natural cleverness aided her to play her part of the beauty who refused so terrible a lover. He, too, made it easy for her. How wonderfully she was playing! She was delighted with herself, and, for the first time in her life, was greatly interested in her own acting, and felt really inspired.

"He acted and spoke so naturally that her words and gestures came of themselves. It was glorious! How he wept and implored and laughed and swore! All would have been so touching in a tragedy, and yet with what art he turned every emotion, no matter how fervent or grave it might be, into something comic, so that each moment the crowded house fell into a fresh paroxysm of laughter.

"The play was over. He had been rejected, and had hurried away in desperation to hang himself. The applause was tremendous.

"Sweets, flowers, parasols, bouquets, gold pieces, and wreaths fell in a heap on the stage. Lala and Harle-

A band of rude school-children called after him down the street.

Digitized by Google

The new Harlequin threw himself at her feet.

quin had to bow again and again until the director excused them on the plea of fatigue.

"It was easy to see that both were pretty well exhausted, but what else could be expected after such fatiguing acting? They were both so tired that they did not attend the unusually liberal supper which the director gave in their honour that evening. He could easily afford to do so, since the theatre was already sold out for a fortnight ahead.

"Lala and Harlequin still sat in the green-room, each on a box. He seemed greatly excited and trembled, and kept looking before him with an indescribable expression, half-sad, half-glad, which, however, on account of the metamorphosis which every emotion of his face was subject to, would have caused great merriment to any one who might have seen it.

"But Lala saw nothing. She held her handkerchief before her face, and sobbed and wept bitterly for a long while. At last he rose and stroked her hair, saying in a wonderfully soft voice, and in a quivering, low tone:

"'Lala, my poor child, go to bed, won't you? or you'll be ill. You are so worked up.'

"Then he walked slowly to his room, which was quite near. Curious must have been the thoughts that filled his brain, for he did not hear the applause of the audience that stood in the street waiting to see him go home with the expectation of another amusing performance. The manner with which he crossed the street, the fanciful, earnest expression and the tired movements were wonderfully done, and the applause followed him as far as his house.

"He sat at the window, weeping long and softly. Above in the heavens the moon and countless stars were shining, and he felt within himself the same horrible loneliness which separates one star from another. Between him and the other star, for which he longed, there was a frightful icy space that nothing could bridge over.

"He wept, and below in the street the gallery gods shouted up to him, the king of all merrymakers. It was some time before they became quiet. Then he rose, lit the lamp and took a locked book out of a drawer and wrote in it with a firm hand:

"'November 17th. To-day I have thrown my soul to the rabble that it might devour it, and in its death-struggle it awoke another soul. How long will Lala have a soul?'

"This was another leaf from his diary that the citizens of the town would not have understood, but as Lala's name occurred in it, they might have inferred from that that he was in love with her.

"And Lala? She could not tell what had happened to her. She wept half the night through, and prayed that she might be endowed with this great talent and wonderful power that made her now so sad and so full of longing. And then again, when she pictured him to herself she shook with laughter, but curiously enough, her laughter was no longer the same as of old, and she was ashamed of it as soon as it was over. She slept very badly.

"The next morning she found about two dozen magnificent bouquets awaiting her when she awoke. They all came from gentlemen in the town who expressed their admiration for her on the visiting cards which accompanied the flowers. They gave her great pleasure, and she was happy all day, chatting with her fellow-actors and actresses, who were all jealous of her, but appeared exceedingly affectionate, and made jokes about Harlequin, who was nowhere to be seen; and naturally she laughed with the others, and told them everything she knew about him.

"Now began a delightful life for her. She received flowers and jewellery daily, and was invited to entertainments which she was delighted to attend in company with the director. Harlequin had refused every invitation from the first, and was never seen outside of the theatre.

"Lala often sat alone now in her room doing nothing. She did not like to go out alone, and she had no need to learn her *rôles* by heart or rehearse. Harlequin improvised everything, and so wonderfully that she was able to play just as well as if she had studied every word and gesture carefully.

"When she sat thus, her charming, wondering, childish eyes staring before her into vacancy, thinking how she would play this or that, as she was fond of doing, being inspired with the idea of sometime becoming a great actress, she would ask herself how it happened that every time after she had acted with Harlequin she felt so sad and yet so happy, though she might have been amusing herself all the day until then with silly jokes, and though these improvised pieces were really the most comic things one could imagine. But she did not find out what the cause of it all really was.

"Only one thing was clear. That Harlequin must have something to do with it, and that he himself was not nearly so ridiculous as he always appeared. At first she talked very little with him.

"He did not seem to care for it, and she, too, was better pleased when she could enjoy listening to his voice without looking at him, for he was so comical that the most earnest word which he might utter could not but seem funny. She had told him this once innocently and without embarrassment, and had begged his pardon in case she ever laughed when he had no intention of being

Digitized by Google

ridiculous. She had said this to him without glancing at him, one evening after the play, when she had been talking gaily for quite a while with some fine gentlemen, and he had advised her to be careful of such people. Her words had made him very sad, and he had asked her in a low tone:

"'So to you, too, then, I am only a sort of amusement machine? And can you not realize either that I am a man with a heart and not merely a Harlequin? Is it true that you cannot stand a few hours with me any more than the others?'

"She marvelled at his words at first, scarcely understanding them. Then she glanced up at him. He was sitting in the dim lamplight, his legs in the shadow, his face too indistinctly visible, and it suddenly flashed across her mind that he looked like a large black egg standing on end, and this ridiculous idea was so overpowering that she laughed right in his face.

"He grew crimson, and began to sob with anger, and sprang up, his arms hanging loosely down by his side, and clinched his hands convulsively. After standing thus a while, a picture of desperate rage, such as might be exhibited by a murderer who was listening to his death sentence, he said softly, with choking voice:

"'And it was for you alone that I became a Harlequin.'

"Then he left, not waiting for an answer.

"All night long Lala tried to make up her mind whether she ought to be amused or ashamed.

"The following day she begged his pardon—with averted face—and after that she talked oftener with him. Her fellow actors and actresses, and more particularly the gentlemen who frequented the side scenes, began to make jokes about 'her good taste,' and to tease her about Harlequin, so that she was often on the point of crying with anger, and it grew worse day by day.

"She could not defend him; it would have been silly, and how could she help his being so ridiculous? And then all their jokes fitted him so perfectly! Why should she not make fun of him as the others did?

"She did so, and amused herself royally with her girl friends and some gentlemen who seemed greatly interested in her, and who gave her all sorts of costly things. It was only after she had played with 'him' that none could make her enjoy the rest of the evening.

"Indeed, Harlequin seemed to know all the details of her life, and to be always watching her. He now took for his subject in the theatre the jealousy and impotent rage of a deceived and rejected lover, and he was almost funnier in this than in his earlier scenes.

"She was standing one evening before the beginning of the performance, behind the wings with a gentleman who was endeavouring to persuade her, by all means in his power, to take supper with him that evening, promising her that she would be sure to enjoy it. She had certainly no intention of accepting, for it would not do for her to take supper alone with a man, so she said to him, with a saucy smile, which he naturally took for an acceptance: 'Perhaps.'

"Then for the first time she noticed that Harlequin was standing beside her and had overheard it all. But what did that matter? She did not explain. She only wondered why he looked so pale, as pale almost as a corpse, she thought, and a cold shudder ran down her back.

"That day, for the first time in her life, she really feared the scene, and yet there was no reason for doing so. To the audience it seemed as if they both played better than ever before. The deadly pallor of the deceived lover was simply grand, and the secret anxiety pictured on her face was truly beautiful, and the way she avoided looking at him was delicious.

"She could not stand this deathly paleness, could not look at him. If she had only explained matters to him! And now, whenever she was not looking directly at him, it seemed to her again and again, and more and more surely every second, that every word he uttered was thoroughly in earnest.

"'Must I then die on account of thee?' he said to her with touching softness.

"The audience applauded loudly, but Lala suddenly began to tremble, and uttering a terrible cry she sprang from the stage into the wings as if pursued.

"At midnight, after talking over an hour with Lala, Harlequin went to his room. All she had said was:

"'Now I am only the more afraid of you.'

"The lamp in his room burned all night long. His neighbour in the next room, the director, heard him sobbing for a long while, and then heard him say some words in a foreign tongue, slowly and with wonderful expression. Then everything was quiet.

"But the lamp still burned when the bright morning sun laughed in at the window. His diary lay open on the table in his room. The last words he had written in it were:

"'Now the soul to which I awakened is dead. I follow it.'

"By the side of it lay a thick, sealed letter to Lala, a

Lala threw herself on dear little Harlequin's body, sobbing piteously.

package of papers and an empty bottle. On the bed lay Harlequin—dead! He no longer looked ridiculous. An exceedingly touching expression rested on the pale features of a martyr.

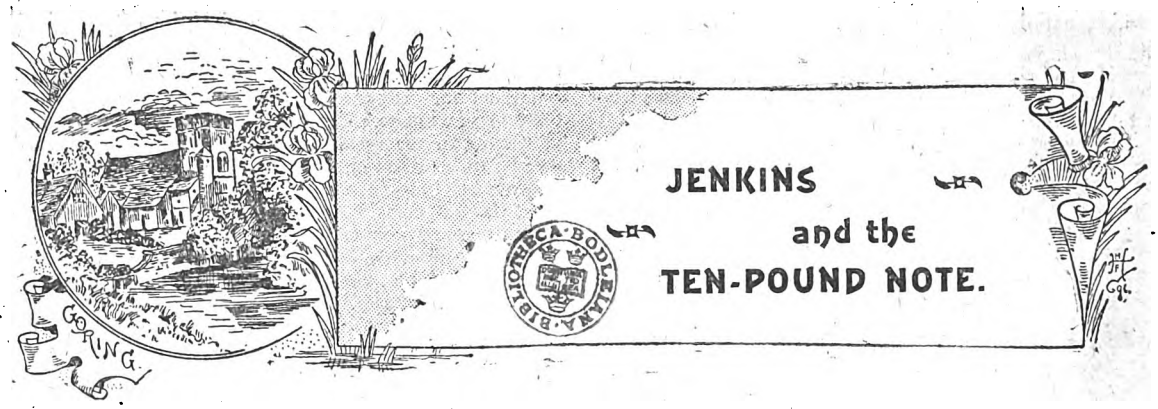
"When Lala was led to the bed she threw herself on dear little Harlequin's body, sobbing piteously, and murmured hopelessly:

"'And, after all, I did love him!'

"The package of papers was taken to the police, so that the cause of his death might be known, and Lala learnt that she had driven the greatest Italian poet of the present day to his death."

ALEXANDER MAR.

Digitized by Google



I WAS sitting quietly in my room after a hard day's work, smoking and glancing at an evening paper.

There was a roaring fire and the howl of the wind outside intensified the very soothing feeling of comfort and ease which was creeping over me.

Mrs. Gum had cleared away the tea things, fiddled a bit about the fire and then left me.

I was in fact just beginning to enjoy a nice quiet evening when I heard a rap at the door and in walked Jenkins.

I didn't move, I didn't welcome him and I sincerely hoped he would take no notice of me, but just settle himself down comfortably with a book and leave me in peace.

I hoped all this, but as he entered I could see that there was a wild look of excitement in his eye which I knew of old.

Jenkins, I told myself, had got hold of some project, some wild scheme or other, and my quiet evening would be trampled down, jumped upon, torn asunder. I could see it in his eye.

He approached me kind of stealthily. He then tapped me on the shoulder in a way which positively made me shudder, for it had the Scotland Yard touch about it.

Then after looking carefully round, he drew a copy of *Pearson's Weekly* from his pocket, and looking at me as if he would read my very inmost thoughts, said in a sepulchral voice, "Have you got that Ten-Pound Note?"

I was fully alarmed at this. True, I owed Jenkins a trifle or so; but a ten-pound note, why a ten-pound note is quite another matter.

"It's all right, old chap," I said, thinking to soothe him. "It is all right; just you lie down on the sofa for five minutes or so and it will pass off." But Jenkins took no notice of my advice.

"Then you have not got the Ten-Pound Note?" he said, with a sigh which verily seemed to come from the bottom of his boots.

I quite thought now that Jenkins was either drunk or delirious.

"Oh, yes," I said, wishing to humour him. "Oh, yes, I've got it all right. But sit down, there's a good chap, and you'll be better presently."

"You've got it!" Jenkins shrieked. "You say you have really and truly got it!" he yelled.

"Poor Jenkins, it is worse with him than I thought," I said to myself.

But Jenkins had caught me by the collar of the coat, and waving a copy of *Pearson's Weekly* high in the air, he shouted:

"Then hand it over and let us make a night of it. You are just the best man I have met to-day."

I got up quietly from my chair, for Jenkins seemed quite far enough gone to need a straight waistcoat, and I was debating whether to make a bolt for the door or to ring the bell for Mrs. Gum.

So I patted him on the back, and said: "Don't mind me, old chap! Just you sit down. You will feel much better—ever so much better—if you will only sit down quietly for a few minutes."

The wild look in Jenkins' eye positively frightened me, and I edged for the door, thinking to run for it and summon a policeman before worse happened.

But Jenkins was too quick for me. He seemed to have the lunatic's instinct, and before I had got a yard from him he rushed to the door and put his back against it.

"No you don't!" he said with a glare that made my knees tremble. "I'll have it out of you before I've done with you," he continued. "You had best give it up, for it belongs to me, and I'm not going to stand any hanky-panky."

A cold perspiration began to break out upon my forehead. Poor Jenkins, I thought. Poor, old, quiet, sedate, easy-going Jenkins! What an end to our friendship. An absolutely raving, murderous lunatic.

I had better humour him, though, I thought.

"It is all right, old chap," I said, "make yourself quite easy about it. If you will just wait here half-a-minute, I will go and fetch it. I have left it upstairs."

Jenkins looked at me doubtfully. "All right," he then said, "go upstairs and get it; I will come with you." I dodged Jenkins in the hall; or, to speak accurately I quickly put my leg behind him, gave him a push, and then made for the street like greased lightning.

I didn't wait for a hat, I wanted the nearest policeman, badly.

Jenkins recovered himself in no time.

"Stop him! Stop him!" he shouted as I sped down the street.

"He's raving mad; look out for yourselves," I said hurriedly to the people, who came rushing from every quarter at the sound of Jenkins' wild shouts.

Soon I espied a policeman and fairly rushed into his arms.

"He's mad, absolutely mad!" I shouted.

Jenkins was close upon my heels and by this time a crowd had collected.

"Hold him tight, Bobby!" Jenkins shouted, "Don't

Digitized by Google

let him go whatever you do and I will give you a sovereign of it."

The policeman, upon hearing this, made a sudden grab for me, and held me like a vice.

"He's got the Ten-Pound Note!" gasped Jenkins.

"What!" shouted the bobby, "What! What!" shrieked the crowd rushing at me.

If Jenkins had told them I was a pro-Boer, or even Kruger himself, I could not have received more attention.

Then there was a regular flutter of *Pearson's Weeklies* in the air and with a regular whoop of "Have you got that Ten-Pound Note?" they came for me like one man.

"It is my Note, I saw him first!" shouted Jenkins, trying to force his way through the crowd.

"Rats!" said a burly coalheaver giving Jenkins a dig in the ribs with his elbow, "first come, first served," he continued, making a way for himself through the crowd with an ease which seemed to come naturally.

Something seemed to be troubling the policeman. He held me with a grip of iron with one hand, but there was an agonised expression upon his face, as if he had colic, and he was searching in his tunic for something most diligently.

I was glad to perceive that the crowd were fighting, happily, amongst themselves. Everyone seemed most anxious, for some unknown reason, to get at me, but equally anxious that no one else should touch me.

The coalheaver was laying about him manfully, and I would have enjoyed it all immensely but for the fact that I felt something would soon happen to me. I tried to wriggle from the policeman's grip.

"Half-a-minute," he said; "I have nearly got it." Then a most beautiful and bewitching smile stole across the weather-beaten face of that guardian of the law, and as he drew forth a copy of *Pearson's Weekly* from his breast he said, in dulcet and sweet tones, as if he were proposing to a cook: "Have you got that Ten-Pound Note?"

I could have stood and gazed upon the peaceful, happy, loving, and tender expression of that policeman's face for an hour, and would have thanked him at the end with tears of gratitude in my eyes.

Oh! the sweetness, the unutterable tenderness and yearning, the whole-souled gladness that was expressed in that one look.

As I looked upon his face it was as if I saw a land of hope, of joy; a land full of all that was good and noble stretched out before me.

But a rough shake of the shoulder disturbed me, and the whole expression of the policeman changed.

"Now then, mister, turn it out—that Ten-Pound Note! Be quick, now!" he said threateningly, as the coalheaver also laid a hand on my other shoulder.

"Everyone seems to think I am a millionaire," I said, "unless it is that Colney Hatch is let loose."

"Don't you take no notice of 'im, mister," said the coalheaver.

He then sidled most lovingly up to me, and in a voice that was as tender and soothing as that of a mother to her first child, he said:

"Have you got that Ten-Pound Note?"

Who could have resisted his winning little ways? But I gently patted the coalheaver on the head and said, as kindly as I could:

"Never mind me, old chap; just you go home and sleep it off."

"What-d'yer-mean! Now then, none of yer gimes wi' me. Don't yer try to come none of yer monkey on me, Mister bloomin' whatsyername, so I'm telling yer! D'y'ere?" said the coalheaver, shaking his copy of *Pearson's Weekly* in my face and looking most ferocious.

It was just about here that I lost my temper and began to say things.

"Just shut up your row and let me speak," I said.

"You hand over that Tenpun' Note," said the coalheaver.

"You had better do it quietly, Mister," said the policeman.

"Hand you a rope to go and hang yourselves with, would suit you better," I said, getting cross.

"What is the matter with you all?" I continued. "You silly idiots, do you think the millenium has come, or do you take me for a millionaire? Here am I, a peaceable man, driven out of my house by a raving lunatic called Jenkins, and then surrounded by a varied assortment of howling madmen, all shrieking and fighting for Ten-Pound Notes as if I were cram-jam full of them to the brim.

"You silly, addlepated asses, you doubly-distilled——"

But the coalheaver interrupted me just as I was warming to the subject.

"Ain't you one of them Pearson chaps?" said he.

"My name is Theophilus Biggs," I shouted, "and if there are any Ten-Pound Notes flying around just put me on the track."

That coalheaver was not a bad chap after all. He said he would have a drink at my expense and tell me all about it. He did, and that was the first I had heard of it.

When I got back to my rooms that night I found Jenkins very much the worse for wear, sitting in my armchair drinking my whiskey, whilst Mrs. Gum was patching him up with sticking-plaister.

"Hello!" I said.

But Jenkins never answered a word; he just sighed, and poured himself out another glass of whiskey.

"Buck up, old chap," I said encouragingly. "I quite forgive you; I am going to hunt Ten-Pound Notes myself."

"You forgive me, do you?" said Jenkins. "And that is the man I called 'friend!'" he continued, sighing deeply. "Theophilus, I thought better of you."

"Jenkins," I said, "you look hurt."

"I feel it," said Jenkins; "that fool of a coalheaver was like an Indian on the war-path. But I mean to get it, if it kills me. Why, man, I have already spent half of it. I gave my tailor an order for a new suit yesterday, I feel so sure of getting it."

"Well, look here, Jenkins," I said; "I'll help you, and if I get it I'll stand you a supper."

So we shook hands on the matter, and, after finishing my whiskey, Jenkins left.

I met Jenkins early next morning. We had agreed to take the day off and return richer by ten pounds, which we did not think bad pay for a day's work.

I left everything in Jenkins' hands as regards our movements, and followed him like a lamb. Anyone noticing Jenkins' furtive glances from right to left, his cat-like crawl, his whole sleuth-hound appearance, in fact, would have set him down either for a Sioux Indian on the warpath or a criminal of the deepest dye. I kept at a respectful distance from him—he looked too desperate, too weird-like.

Digitized by Google

The first man Jenkins tackled gave one look at him, and then bolted for his life.

I told Jenkins that he would have to assume a very much milder demeanour and accompany his question with a kind of sylph-like smile.

He said he would and he did; but his smile was too sylph-like, it was absolutely idiotic.

One old gentleman gave him a penny and another man gave him an envelope which seemed to send an electric thrill through Jenkins.

But upon opening it he discovered an advertisement for So and So's tea; and then he sighed.

So we strolled along and then an idea occurred to Jenkins.

"Look here, Biggs old man," he said, "I'm thinking we are on the wrong tack. So far we have been asking the most likely looking persons and I think now it is the unlikely looking ones we should ask."

So he stopped a 'bus and put the vital question to the conductor.

That conductor told Jenkins many things in many words, which rather discouraged him; in fact, he told me the things that conductor said really hurt him.

What possessed Jenkins to try and knock a cab-horse over I don't know. He says he didn't try to knock the cab-horse over; he didn't see any confounded cab-horse.

It was like this. We were walking quietly along, when suddenly Jenkins darted across the street, and the next thing I saw was a kind of mixture, half Jenkins, half cab-horse. However, they put Jenkins together, so to say, and, whilst sipping some brandy and water, he explained.

"I'm sure, he was one of them. He had Ten Pounds written all over him, so to speak, and but for that silly cab-driver, I should have got it. Of course, he has gone now, and here am I, hat smashed, coat torn, and one mass of bruises from head to foot."

"You are certainly enjoying yourself, Jenkins," I said.

Whilst I thus spake, Jenkins suddenly dropped his glass, and, leaving me to pay, rushed out.

I followed, and was just in time to see him almost throw himself upon a well-dressed looking man.

I saw Jenkins pull out his copy of *Pearson's Weekly*, and that was all, for the man beckoned Jenkins to go up a side street, and so I waited.

Jenkins came back in a little over five minutes.

"I thought I had him," he said sadly, "but it was no go. He was only fooling me!"

I asked Jenkins to tell me all about it, and he did.

"When I went up to him and asked him the vital question, he kind of smiled, and said, 'Come up this street, and let me see the date of the paper; it will be quieter up here.'

"So I, of course, followed him and held my copy of *Pearson's Weekly* up, pointing to the date.

"He seemed to study it for a minute or two, and then saying:

"'I'm only fooling you, old chap; good-day, wish you luck,' he left me."

"Rather curious," I remarked, and then I happened to notice that Jenkins' watch-chain was missing.

"Where's your watch, Jenkins?" I said.

Jenkin's face when he next looked at me was a study. Jenkins said very little but what he did say was to the point.

Poor old Jenkins! All the spirit seemed knocked out of him, and it was a weary man I helped into the Twopenny Tube.

We were going straight home and not caring how soon we got there.

Ours is a quiet out-of-the-way looking street and for a stranger to pass down it is a rare event. In fact I prided myself upon being able to give a full account of the business of everyone who passed my sitting-room windows from sunrise to sunset; so did Jenkins.

But I thought Jenkins was too limp, too thoroughly done up to know even where he was.

But there was life in the old dog yet. For without a word of warning he rushed across the street and I saw he had got hold of a stranger, the first I had seen in that street for many a day.

Jenkins kissed that man and I don't think the man liked it.

He then hugged him and proceeded to dance round him. But the man refused even to have a drink at Jenkins's expense. He just handed him an envelope, about which there was certainly no mistake, and then, after congratulating Jenkins, he left him.

Jenkins was another man. He even put his arms round my landlady, Mrs. Gum, and kissed her.

"This makes up for everything," he shouted, holding the Envelope aloft, and the smile that shone upon Jenkins's face was the smile he used to wear in childhood's happy days.

If you ever happen to meet Jenkins he will tell you all about it. Since getting that £10 Note he has missed trains, gone past his destination, gone without his lunch, and even missed appointments, all through trying to tell everyone all about it.

As Jenkins left me that night he said:

"That's number one I have got; I want you to keep count of them as I get them, old chap."

W. St. G. Drennan.

PEARSON'S
New Morning Paper.
1d. 2 The 1d. 2
The Paper for Home Reading.
The Paper for the Housekeeper.
The Paper for the Busy Man.
The Paper for the City Man.
The Paper for the Sporting Man.
The Paper for EVERYBODY.
Daily
THE MOST ORIGINAL, UP-TO-DATE, ACCURATE AND BEST NEWSPAPER
Published in this Country.
Published SIX days a Week, NOT once.
1d. 2 Express 1d. 2
ON SALE EVERYWHERE.
ORDER A COPY NOW.

Some of these days we shall tell you about
TWENTY TEAZER.

Digitized by Google

PEARSON'S WEEKLY

FOOTBALL SKILL COMPETITION

£100 PRIZE AWARDED EVERY WEEK.

Result of Competition No. 1.

As no one got all the results absolutely correct, the £100 has been divided among the following competitors: J. F. THORNHILL, 9 Brierley Avenue, Ardwick, Manchester; JAS. TAYLOR, 27 Stevens Road, West Ham; GEO. HUNT, 90 Arodene Road, Brixton Hill; T. LEA, 18 Morlton Street, West Kensington; W. BARKER, 41 Frostoms Road, Workington; H. JOHNSON, Dyehouse, Woodchester, Stroud; E. A. WORLAND, 5 Noel Street, Islington, N.; JAS. PARKER, 254 Hanover Buildings, Tooley Street, S.E.; F. S. GOODALL, 12 Nottingham Street, Cardiff; MISS FEY, 89 St. Albans Buildings, Gray's Inn Road, W.C.; F. NEWTON, 381 Commercial Road, Portsmouth; F. W. HOCKADAY, 2 Belmont Terrace, Bideford, Devon; P. O. MCINTIRE, 64 Richards Terrace, Roath, Cardiff; CHAS. E. WACOGNE, 50 Meanley Road, Manor Park, Essex (two shares); JAS. POTTER, 13 Alma Cottages, Wealdstone, Harrow; F. E. LADD, 3 Brighton Square, Rathgar, Dublin; J. LLOYD, 20 Allens Road, Ponders End.

The football matches named below will be played on Saturday, November 3rd. To the competitor from whom we receive the correct result of all these matches we will pay the sum of ONE HUNDRED POUNDS. If no competitor gives all the results correctly, the HUNDRED POUNDS will be awarded to the person or persons most nearly correct.

FOOTBALL COUPON No. 4. Matches to be played on Saturday, November 3rd.

MATCHES TO BE PLAYED ON SATURDAY, NOV. 3RD.	Free	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
1 NOTTS COUNTY v. 2 SHEFFIELD UNITED																			
1 WOLVERHAMPTON W. v. 2 LIVERPOOL																			
1 SHEFFIELD WEDNES. v. 2 ASTON VILLA																			
1 SUNDERLAND v. 2 NOTTS FOREST																			
1 DERBY COUNTY v. 2 BURY																			
1 PRESTON NORTH END v. 2 NEWCASTLE UNITED																			
1 BOLTON WANDERERS v. 2 MANCHESTER CITY																			
1 BURSLEM PORT VALE v. 2 GRIMSBY TOWN																			
1 SOUTHAMPTON v. 2 MILLWALL																			
1 SWINDON v. 2 READING																			

The clubs engaged in each match are numbered 1 and 2. To fill in the above coupon, insert in the space provided the number of the club selected to win. To predict a draw, put X. THE FIRST COUPON IS FREE. A penny stamp must be inclosed for each coupon used in addition to the free one. Nine extra coupons may be used for Sixpence, and eighteen extra coupons for One Shilling.

I send in this coupon as a competitor for the prize advertised in this paper, and subject to the conditions printed on this page:

Name and address.....

THINGS TO REMEMBER.

1. Coupons may be sent either from "Pearson's Weekly" or "Short Stories."
2. All coupons must reach us not later than Friday, November 2nd, first post.
3. Competitors should cut out the whole coupon, score it as directed, put their name and address in the space provided, and send to "COUPON No. 4," Pearson's Buildings, Henrietta Street, W.C.
4. All coupons are at senders' risk, and if they go astray, from whatever cause, we do not accept responsibility.
5. Competitors must attach their private address to their attempts. No prize will be sent to any post-office, refreshment rooms, or other places at which letters are called for. Attempts bearing such addresses will be disqualified.
6. In the event of a tie the prize will be divided.
7. It must be taken as a condition of the competition that anybody competing therein agrees to abide by the Editor's final decision.

Intending competitors in the above would do well to procure a copy of "The Football Who's Who," which contains valuable information and statistics showing the previous records of the various clubs, and the particulars of the points of about a thousand of the best known players. This book will be found of great service in determining the chances of the teams engaged. It only costs a shilling, and may be obtained of all booksellers, and post free for 1s. 3d. from the Publisher, 17 Henrietta Street, W.C.

Digitized by Google

NEW SERIES.

THE ADVENTURES OF AN ACTOR.

III.—At the Nag's Head.

YES, we were in a pickle. The little fit-up company we had gone out with had "dried up," and we were left "stranded" in a small town on the north border of Lincolnshire. For weeks we had been dragging on somehow, listening to the promises of our unprincipled manager with all the gullibility of human nature, and looking upon his hopefulness with something more than admiration.

In the next town we were sure to make money; our luck was bound to turn; they must see the merits of our London comedy. So we parted with our jewels, watches, and musical instruments in different towns. The hall-keeper of the present town had legally or illegally put a restraining hand upon our baggage until he should have l is rent paid.

The company had diminished considerably. We were twelve originally but now we were seven, counting the manager. Latterly, nearly everyone doubled, and we prided ourselves that the audience did not discover the fact. Happy actors! Always ready to deceive themselves.

The manager had flown with the last receipts—a few pounds—the ladies had gone to London. We were too proud to write home and ask for money, at least we said so; Boddreys really was I believe, or afraid of being laughed at.

Halkett's family did not approve of his being on the stage; he was probably expectant of a rebuff and a lecture.

I, well, no doubt I should have got it if there happened to be any to spare there, but on that point I was doubtful.

"By Jove, I am hungry—and thirsty," said Halkett, who always was ready to eat.

Still, there was some excuse for him this time, as we had eaten nothing since breakfast, when we left our humble lodgings and our very handbags in them in lieu of payment.

"Well, there's a nice Jubilee fountain over the way, and heaps of turnips in the fields," suggested Boddreys.

Somehow we did not think he was a bit funny, though he tried to be.

We were standing in the market-place of the picturesque little town of Towton, gazing with hungry eyes at the shops. We were hungry; I doubt if we had ever been more so.

"I suppose there's nothing for it but the workhouse to-night," I said.

Their faces dropped.

"By Jove, is it as bad as that?" muttered Halkett.

"Will they take us in? We are rather decently dressed for casuals, are we not?" asked Boddreys.

"I think they would have to if we like to work."

"Work before supper, eh? Oh, then I am going for the turnips, honest I am. Come on, you chaps, it's not a bit of good standing here."

We had seen the turnips the day before when out for a walk, and laughed about them, but we little thought our hopeful manager would bolt with our next day's dinner and our jests become realities.

"Have we really nothing else to pawn?" asked Boddreys.

"Well, there are these handcuffs and this revolver put in my pocket by mistake last night after the last act, instead of, as I usually do, handing them to our late and worthy boss," I said. "But they wouldn't fetch anything, would they? Besides, there's no pawnshop in the town."

"Oh, happy town, or rather village!" said Halkett, mockingly spreading his hands towards Towton, in the approved dramatic gesture of bestowing a blessing.

"If I only had my mandoline, and you your banjo, we should soon pick up a few coppers in a pub," I said to Boddreys.

"We could try a song and a recitation or two without them, couldn't we?" suggested Boddreys.

We thought it over and felt we lacked courage without the banjo and the trifling sum with which to first pay our way into the place. For we wanted to do things in style and tickle the eyes of the company with our instruments first, and then accede to a request to tickle their ears.

"I have it," said Halkett, stopping us in the road, facing us and speaking hurriedly. "It's risky, but it can be done. The pub and the handcuffs put it into my head. We are two detectives, Brownson and I, and you, Boddreys, are the captured criminal, because you do look a bit of a scoundrel, you know, and you are dark. I was out here yesterday alone and went into a small inn about half-a-mile further on. A nice, simple-minded old man, just the very thing."

Digitized by Google

"Yes, yes, but I don't understand," said Boddreys, "what good will that do?".

"Wait, and I'll explain, only come on quickly. Brownson give me the revolver. Good, I see it has a few blank cartridges yet unfired."

As Halkett unfolded his plan we became quite excited and pressed on quickly. It did seem feasible. Boddreys had qualms of conscience, but we explained to him hungry men could not deal in conscience, besides which we could make it all right afterwards.

Having rolled Boddreys in the road, battered in his hat and pulled him about a bit, he bore evidence of a struggle. The handcuffs completed the criminal to the life, plus a sulky and truculent expression. It was getting dark now, so thus prepared we entered the passage of the "Nag's Head" and asked to see the landlord privately.

Halkett was spokesman; he was a parson's son, and had plenty of cheek. The fat old innkeeper came out of the kitchen. The clatter of mugs and glasses, and the laughter of the yokels, made us determined, if we previously wavered, to share these luxuries with them.

"Mr. Laybourne, a word with you," said Halkett in a grandly precise manner. Then he spoke low and mysteriously. "I am detective Cooper, from Scotland Yard, and this my brother officer, Mr. Robinson. Oh, don't be alarmed, we are not on business here, we have only come to ask you for a little supper. We have just captured this dangerous criminal in the district and are now taking him to London."

"Well, sir," replied the landlord, now a little flurried, "I 'arldy like to 'ave a criminal in my 'ouse, it don't seem right, some'ow."

"Oh, perfectly safe, I assure you, any trouble you see and—" he produced the revolver by way of finishing the sentence.

This seemed to upset the landlord still more, and Halkett had to use all his tact to bring him round. He finally appealed to his humanity.

"Would you believe it, Mr. Laybourne, we have been so hard on the prisoner's track that we have had nothing since a hasty breakfast early this morning. Can you turn starving men from your door?"

"Well, sir, if you put it that way, what am I to say? But there is no fire in the parlour."

"Oh, never mind, we will go in the kitchen, I am sure no one will mind in there. Good evening, gentlemen," said Halkett, entering the room with all the assurance in the world, "and, Mr. Laybourne, let us have whatever you have got in the house as quickly as possible, for we shall have to be away soon."

One or two of the occupants of the kitchen muttered a good evening, but most of them were too astonished to speak, and continued to stare at us for a good quarter of an hour after, until they found their tongues.

I followed Halkett, having a firm hold of Boddreys by the collar. We took up our positions at a table between the fire and the door, Boddreys sullenly crouching at that end of the settle which was nearest the door.

We made short work of the cold meat, bread, cheese, and a gallon of beer the landlord placed in front of us; it was a godsend and no mistake.

Boddreys had to have his food cut up for him, on account of his pinioned hands; to do him justice, Boddreys ate like a savage, discarding all polite means of conveying his food to his mouth, and made noise enough for two pigs. The business went well, but we were terribly tempted to laugh, for it was so unlike the polite Boddreys.

Then we had a consultation as to whether the criminal should be allowed beer, and finally came to the conclusion that as he was not likely to ever see much more we would extend the favour. He drank a pint of it at a draught; this created a profound impression.

At length, one rubicund farmer bolder than the rest, being a man of means I suppose, broke the silence of the audience by saying:

"And who may you happen to be?"

"Do you refer to me, sir?" asked Halkett, "I am detective Cooper from Scotland Yard, and this is Mr. Robinson, my brother officer. We have just had the good fortune to capture that dangerous criminal in this district."

"Ah, I haven't seen him aboot," said the rubicund one.

"Possibly not, he was in hiding and disguised, but we found him out, and are now going to take him to London by the next train. Time-table please, Mr. Laybourne."

And Halkett with a sidelong and meaning glance at Boddreys put the revolver on the table with a bang and began to study the trains. The revolver created another impression, and set them all thinking again.

Old Rotundity was again the first to recover from the shock and said:

"I can't mak oot what he wanted up here. Wheer does he cum fra?"

"Why, surely you heard," said Halkett, stopping short.

"What, the chap as escaped?"

"Why of course."

"What, not Fosdike, the escaped murderer?"

"Who else?"

We knew nothing about Fosdike, we had not been able to afford a paper for weeks.

"Eh, but he's cum a lang way. And why be you fur takking him to Lunnon?"

"Those are my orders, sir, my orders, a man can but obey orders!"

"Aye, that's right enough, but for my part I should ha' took him back fra wheer he cum."

"And let him escape again," I suggested.

This raised a big laugh, and I think the farmer marked me for revenge, he was evidently an important person in the Nag's Head.

"He's like to be a dangerous sort," suggested a tall, raw-boned man.

Boddreys looked up from his plate and gave them all a scowl to verify the remark.

"Not th' sort o' chap as you'd like to meet alone on a dark night, Mr. Bawtree?" suggested another.

The remark was considered humorous.

The criminal objected to being laughed at, and lifted his plate with a growl as if to throw it, but quieted down as Halkett fingered the revolver.

"Now, gentlemen," said Halkett, "will someone sing us a song?"

"Eh, young Thompson here is a rare singer," said the raw-boned Bawtree, "ax him, he will. Cum, young Thompson."

"Yes, Mr. Thompson, now do oblige us," I requested.

"But I should like to hear one o' th' Lunnon gents sing first," said Thompson, with a perfectly regal condescension.

He was a young man with a very receding chin. He evidently knew his power as a vocalist, and did not deal much in modesty.

Digitized by Google

"I've heerd say," put in old Rotundity, with intent, looking hard at me, "as Lunnon chaps can't sing fur nuts."

"It's not true, sir," said Halkett, before I could reply, "I will sing any man in this room for half-a-sovereign, and the company shall be the judge."

This was received with acclamation, and Rotundity offered to back Thompson against Halkett, half-a-sovereign a side. Halkett took the bet.

"Drinks round to the company, Mr. Laybourne," shouted Halkett. "Have you change for a sovereign?" he said, putting his hand in his pocket, then not giving the landlord time to reply, he went on, "but there, don't trouble, put it down on the bill and we will make one job of it, eh?"

Thompson commenced the contest with "The song that reached my heart," ladled out in gusts and barks, with an expression on his face as of ducks that die in storms. It was received amid the thunder of mugs and sticks upon the tables.

Then Halkett, who really had an excellent voice, gave us "The Diver." The applause was moderate and I heard a voice here and there say, "Not half bad," "He frames well." But the song was evidently too classic for them. As the contest was for three songs each side Thompson now barked "Kathleen Mavourneen," at times becoming drearily sentimental in the back of his throat. He chose too high a key and failed on one or two high notes, and although the song was a favourite his success was not so great as formerly.

Seeing the taste of our audience I told Halkett to sing "Rocked in the cradle of the deep," in which he scored well. The favour of the last two songs, "In old Madrid," from Thompson, and "The Vagabond" from Halkett was very equal.

Then came the vote and I sat in fear and trembling. I was greatly relieved when the result was equal. Many stuck to their local favourite, and it was surprising that Halkett had so many admirers who possessed the courage of their opinions.

The judgment of the singing was very humorous. One liked Thompson because his notes "kind o' hit him in the eye like." Another, because "he seemed to have three or fower voices all different;" one liked Halkett, because "he looked so grand and worked his hands so nice," another, because "he didn't seem 'fraid o' nowt."

The question was the casting vote. The landlord was appealed to, but he said:

"It's my place to please you all, gentlemen, and I can't afford to show no favour, nor make no enemies, nohow."

We suggested the prisoner, but that was objected to on the ground that a criminal has no taste.

Suddenly, Halkett espied a dart board against the wall.

"Look here, gentlemen, what do you all say if Mr. Thompson and I settle it with a throw or two of the darts, 151 up."

After some discussion this was agreed upon. Both competitors having declared they could neither of them play at all, they commenced with a few trial shots, and found themselves very equal, at least, so it seemed.

"Back me for all you're worth," said Halkett to me aside.

I knew Halkett enough to rely upon him. He evidently knew the game well so I promptly made a few small bets.

It was an exciting contest towards the end, for both men were equally matched, but finally Halkett made a lucky throw and won by a few points amid the cheers of his partisans. The money promptly changed hands and we felt elated with our success.

How delightful it was to feel rich again, we now possessed about a sovereign between us.

Thompson was very much annoyed, so also was old Rotundity, who clamoured for a renewal of the contest in a way that could not be refused.

"Noo be sportsmen if you Lunnon chaps can be, and I've heard you can't," said he, looking hard at me again. "Let him hev his revenge, Mr. Cooper, I double the stakes, an' if you're a man you'll take it."

They played again at double stakes and of course I had to renew my bets. But what was the matter with Halkett?

He began to play horribly; the anxiety of the whole night began to tell upon his nerves and his hand shook visibly.

I looked meaningly at Boddreys who was pretending to be asleep in the corner of the settle, with one eye half open.

We crowded round the players all intensely interested in the game which was nearing its close, and going badly for us.

At any moment Thompson might win, while Halkett had very little chance. Rotundity was radiant, and his vulgar sarcasm did anything but raise our spirits.

Thompson was preparing to throw the winning shot. I looked round, Boddreys was gone.

"Cooper, Cooper." I gasped with horror, as the arrow fled to its mark, "our prisoner has escaped," and then I stood there like one paralysed.

"What?" exclaimed Halkett with a shout.

Everyone forgot the game and turned to where Boddreys was supposed to be asleep. Their faces fell in blank dismay.

"My goodness, we are ruined!" exclaimed Halkett tragically. "Come, don't stand here like a pack of fools! After him, boys!"

We all rushed or tumbled out, Halkett firing two shots into the darkness and everyone shouting his best.

"A hundred pounds to anyone who catches him!" I shouted as we went. "Come he's gone this way across the fields to Towton."

We raced forward at our topmost speed and when we had out-distanced our beer-logged companions we doubled and made for the next station down the line where as had been arranged Boddreys waited for us.

Going into the station the last minute we took the first train north to the town where our musical instruments had been left in "Uncle's" care.

With the help of these we worked our way to London, doing so well that we were soon able to satisfy our qualms of conscience and settle our supper and betting accounts at the Nag's Head. DOUGLAS VIGORS.

Next Week: VIRTUE'S CHAMPION.

REMEMBER, REMEMBER,
the 1st of NOVEMBER
is the day when
PEARSON'S MAGAZINE
is published. The November number is superb. Keep a sixpence ready for it.

Digitized by Google

CORPORAL CHRIS.

"CHRIS," said Tom's mother, "you'll look after him, won't you? He's all I have, you know; and he's so daring that I fear for him; Heaven alone knows how I fear for him!"

"Right you are, Mrs. Keene. I'll keep an eye on him. And don't you fret now, Tom will come home to you, a perfect hero, with medals, and glory, and a whole haversack of loot."

"I only want him to bring back himself. You're stronger minded, Chris, than my Tom, and if you'll only keep your word you'll have my prayers, and a mother's prayers are worth something, Chris."

Tom Keene and Chris Underhay were the David and Jonathan of Gwynne Street, Chelsea. Schoolmates, playmates, and later on always good chums, where one led the other was sure to follow; so it was not surprising that upon the breaking out of the war in South Africa, when Chris, in a fit of enthusiastic patriotism, enlisted, Tom should needs do the same.

Chris' position as one of a large family, made his action of no especial moment to his friends, he being the "ugly duckling" of the domestic brood, but Tom, the only son, the only child of his mother, a widow, ought to have thought twice before taking such a step.

It was a stirring time, as everyone will remember, this send-off of a great army to the Dark Continent, to vindicate British honour, and maintain the national credit, and in spite of mother-tears, and tremblingly whispered "farewells" from rosy lips, the two friends went joyously to the fray.

True, Tom every now and again felt sobered as his mother's face, anxious, sorrowful, rose up before him, but it was not in his nature to indulge in such thoughts for long. He lived in the light of other men's companionship.

Gregarious to a degree, he never cared to remain much with himself. He bored himself. He needed the noise, the glass-clink, and the laughter, to be found in the company of his kind.

It was this disposition which made his friendship with Chris the more remarkable. For Chris was by no means a roysterer, a mere empty chatterer and boon-comrade. Rather was he a reserved man, one who kept his opinions to himself, and one, too, upon whom you might surely rely at any time in stress or emergency.

Still Tom loved him, although often vexing him by his utter want of backbone and self-control, by a shilli-shalliness which more than once had landed him in undesirable situation.

One secret, and only one, had they between them, otherwise, there was perfect mutual trust and openness.

It is generally a love affair that occasions, in the case of men, at least, a certain amount of reserve as between intimates. In this particular instance there was, on the one side at any rate, good reason for it.

Kitty Laidlaw had much to answer for in the matter, as all such pretty mischievous coquettes ever have, or should have.

She loved Chris Underhay, there was little doubt about that, but when behind her sweetheart's back she though it good to carry on a desperate flirtation with Tom, the value of her affection, to any right thinking mind, was sensibly discounted.

The worst of it was that Kitty, up to the moment of the embarkation of the troops, succeeded only too well in persuading Tom that she really cared for him, giving him, at a final stolen interview in the gardens of the old College, her portrait, and a vague, though to him very real promise of reward on his return from the campaign.

Chris, too, had his "farewell" experiences, and, in his happy ignorance, they were very sweet.

Yet even his generally unsuspicious nature fancied an absence of something he could not altogether define. The rift in the lute always adversely influences its tunefulness, be the rift ever so small or so apparently unimportant.

So matters stood upon the day of departure, and although the big transport carried, in the persons of the two friends, two such diverse natures, yet it had on board no two finer examples of Britain's fighting sons.

* * * * *

The day of Colenso, that terrible Friday, the effect of which was to cloud for awhile our prospects in South Africa.

It was at early dawn that the British made their attack in full force, and all through the day the struggle went on, to the murderous accompaniment of an unprecedented cannonade.

"Tom," Chris said that morning before daylight, (the regiment was luxuriating in a brief "stand-easy," for the advance of the Ladysmith relief column had been severe to the point of punishment.) "Tom! this isn't going to be child's play to-day; we shall need all our pluck, lad, I'm thinking, to carry us through."

"Why, Chris, old man, it isn't like you to be despondent. Take it from me, the Boer's aren't made yet that will lick us! Besides, you oughtn't to talk like that, you who got your stripes at Elandslaagte!"

"Ah! I don't care so much about that," said Chris musingly, "after all, I very much doubt if the game's worth the candle."

Digitized by Google

"There's something wrong with you, that's certain," said Tom, seriously for him, "what is it, old chap?"

"Oh! nothing! and yet it is something, something I can't shake off, or make clear to myself," replied the other.

"Well, we shall be falling-in in a minute or two, but if you'd care to tell me, as near as you can get at it, what it is that's worrying you, it might ease your mind."

"Tom, I'm not, as you know, a believer in dreams, but I had one last night which shakes my scepticism a bit."

"A dream! you! I shouldn't think that a vision of the night would have much weight with you."

"Nor would it in ordinary case; but this dream, Tom, was so real, so—so convincing, that faith in its actuality and warning is somehow forced upon me."

"Well."

"I saw then in my dream that I, myself, was lying dead out on the veld yonder; and that you, riding a white horse, leapt across my prostrate body towards a white-robed female figure, that stood outlined in the moonlight against a belt of dark scrub, a hundred yards or so away. That's all!"

"Is that all!" cried Tom; but as he uttered the words his heart sank within him.

An indefinite sense of coming peril to one or other, or both of them, smote his soul. For the life of him he could not look Chris squarely in the face. Even the dull red glow of the hastily lit fire of a few sticks, would have revealed his agitation.

Then Chris spoke again.

"Perhaps, after all, it may only be the outcome of a morbid brooding. Well, there! I'll try and throw it off, Tom, old boy! Let us hope that Richard will be himself again by this time to-morrow!"

"Heaven grant it!" said Tom, fervently, grasping convulsively almost his friend's hand.

The word was now given to march, and in a few moments the relief force was in rapid motion again.

When, an hour later, the faint signs of approaching dawn were visible, the water of the Tugela lap'd a welcome to man and beast.

It was Friday evening. The Boers swimming, some of them, the river in their shirts, swarmed to the pursuit. They seemed infected with the spirit of vengeful malice, threatening even the bearers of the dead and wounded, and in more than one instance, deliberately shooting down the doers of the charitable office.

The enemy's fiercest fire had come from a Hotchkiss Automatic Gun, planted upon Hlangwane Hill. The execution done in the British ranks by this means had been fearful; but in the rush to reap the reward for victory, the gun on the hill was left practically undefended.

Half-a-dozen Boers at the most kept by it, and even these few seemed to be more interested in watching the action of their comrades than in the safe keeping of their formidable charge.

The regiment in which served Chris and his friend was the last to leave the field. It had borne the brunt of the last deadly Boer onslaught, but at the expense of many lives.

Save for a spent bullet tap on his left forearm, Tom was unhurt, while Chris had never a scratch.

It was during the retreat, that Tom, casting back a glance at the scene, saw the comparatively unprotected state of the big gun on Hlangwane Hill.

Without a second thought or without even a word to Chris by whose side he had kept throughout the day, he whispered to three or four men nearest to him, hurriedly sketching his scheme.

Suddenly the little party broke away from the main body, darting back to where stood an ammunition waggon, with its team still attached.

Unhitching the horses, and then each man springing into the driver's saddle, they made at breakneck speed for the hill.

Tom cannot to-day tell how he reached it, or what exactly happened.

All he does know for certain is that every one of his little band was shot out of the saddle before the hill was gained.

He remembers, too, his own hand-to-hand encounter with a gigantic Boer, whose clubbed Mauser brought him crashing to the ground.

Chris, usually so watchful of Tom's movements, had his hands full at this time, owing to the lack, through casualties, of non-commissioned officers; thus it was quite ten minutes before he missed his friend.

Then, intuitively almost, he guessed the truth, which a look behind him verified to the full.

He did not hesitate. Tom's mother seemed present, and urging him to a fulfilment of his promise.

Not staying to gather help, he turned and ran for dear life in the direction of what now was a little battle on the hill.

Tom saw him, just as his adversary's rifle was descending upon him for the second time.

But the Corporal was also seen by other eyes.

Two shots rang simultaneously out. As the big Boer threw up his arms, his mauser dropping heavily out of his hand, Chris staggering towards Tom a step or two, fell forward upon his face.

* * * * *

Tom, who remained a prisoner until the general release after Botha's resignment of the struggle, now lives with his mother in the old house at Chelsea.

Kitty Laidlaw is nurse in one of the great metropolitan hospitals. She says she will never marry.

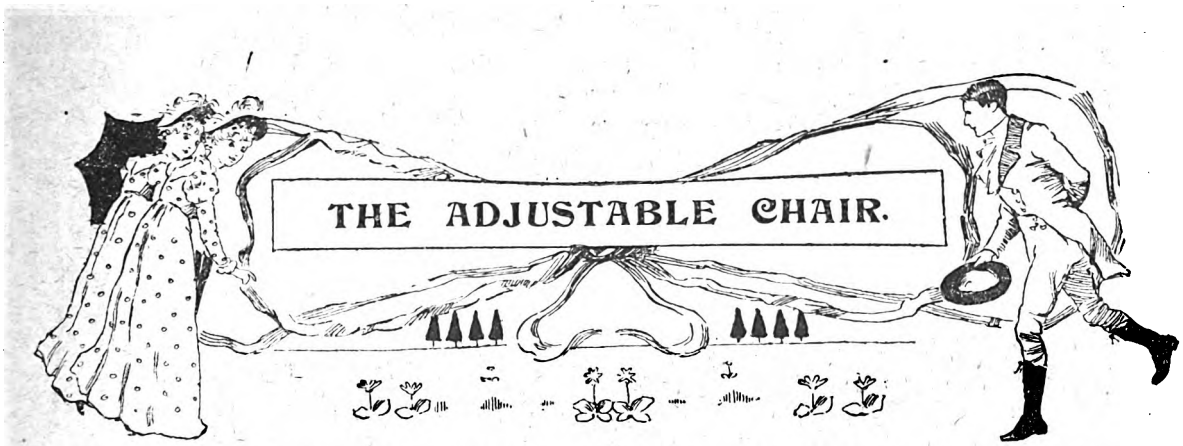
Tom has returned to her the portrait of herself that she gave him in the "College" garden a year before.

The memory of him who lies buried in the far-away veld is very green in both their hearts; but it is mingled with, in large proportion, a feeling closely akin to conscious shame.

As for his regiment, there is no brighter record on its roll of honour than that associated with the name of Corporal Christopher Underhay.

RALPH ENDERBY.

Digitized by Google



THERE are eccentric men in Tooting. The same is true of all parts of the country, but Tooting eccentricity develops itself in ways that are peculiarly ingenious and pleasing. Mr. James W. Beale furnishes a conspicuous and characteristic illustration of this great truth, and his name deserves to be remembered among those who can appreciate eccentricity of a truly original type.

Mr. Beale has a daughter. She is a good girl, weighing one hundred and thirty-three pounds. She is greatly respected by all who know her, and is undoubtedly a most estimable person, of whom her father might be honestly proud. It is, however, a part of Mr. Beale's eccentricity to assume that when a young man comes to spend the evening with a young lady, the two usually occupy only a single chair.

This theory, which is doubtless founded on the unsubstantial basis of the comic papers, is, of course, utterly untenable by any man of sound judgment, but the eccentric Mr. Beale firmly believes it. He cherishes, moreover, views of the strictest nature as to the way in which a young lady should conduct herself, and he has often informed Miss Beale that a community of chair is one of the most wicked of the ideas of modern Socialism, and that no young lady should permit any man to sit within ten feet of her chair. His daughter has invariably replied: "Yes, pa, I think you are quite right."

Although he thus failed to discover any evidence that his daughter had departed from his instructions, Mr. Beale was far from being convinced that all was right, and accordingly he designed his now celebrated patent adjustable chair, a mechanical invention intended to restrain young people from any tendency to overtax the strength of any one chair.

The patent adjustable chair does not present any novel peculiarities to the eye, but it is so constructed that when an excess of weight is placed upon it the seat sinks to the floor, and a whistle, worked by compressed air, gives forth a weird and piercing shriek. It can be adjusted so as to sink with almost any desired weight, and a judicious father can regulate it according to the weight of his daughter and of her various visitors.

For example, Miss Beale weighed one hundred and thirty-three pounds, and Mr. Barlow, the local chemist's assistant, weighed one hundred and fifty-five. If, therefore, Mr. Beale adjusted his patent chair so that it would sink under a weight of two hundred pounds, it is evident that the weight of the young lady or the young man alone could not cause the whistle to sound, but that their combined weight could not be placed on the chair without setting the peculiar machinery in action.

There was also a Mr. Carpenter, weighing two hundred and four pounds, who occasionally called on Miss Beale, and on nights when he was expected it would be necessary to fix the sinking point of the chair at three hundred pounds. The merit of the invention is obvious, and Mr. Beale felt, when he placed his patent adjustable chair in his back parlour one Sunday evening, just before Mr. Barlow's arrival, that he was now certain to learn whether his daughter was in the habit of implicitly following his counsels.

About nine o'clock the ingenious father, who was in the dining-room waiting earnestly for the whistle, heard the peculiar and unmistakable sound of that treacherous device, and instantly rushed into the back parlour. He found Mr. Barlow lying across the collapsed chair and Miss Beale standing at a respectful distance from him, anxiously inquiring if he was hurt. He said he had accidentally caught his foot in the hearthrug and had fallen over the chair.

This explanation could not be rejected, for it was quite possible that the chair might have been collapsed by just such an incident. The disappointed father withdrew, taking the chair with him, and admitting to himself that his daughter was not to be caught with any ordinary trap.

But in spite of this failure the adjustable chair has recently been brought prominently before the public. When the church committee met last month, and there was a scarcity of chairs, Mr. Beale sent the sexton to his house with instructions to bring all the chairs he could find.

The adjustable chair was among them, and Mr. Beale, forgetting its peculiarities, made haste to personally offer it to the chairman. The chair, as a subsequent examination proved, had been adjusted, and it so happened that the chairman weighed just three hundred and one pounds.

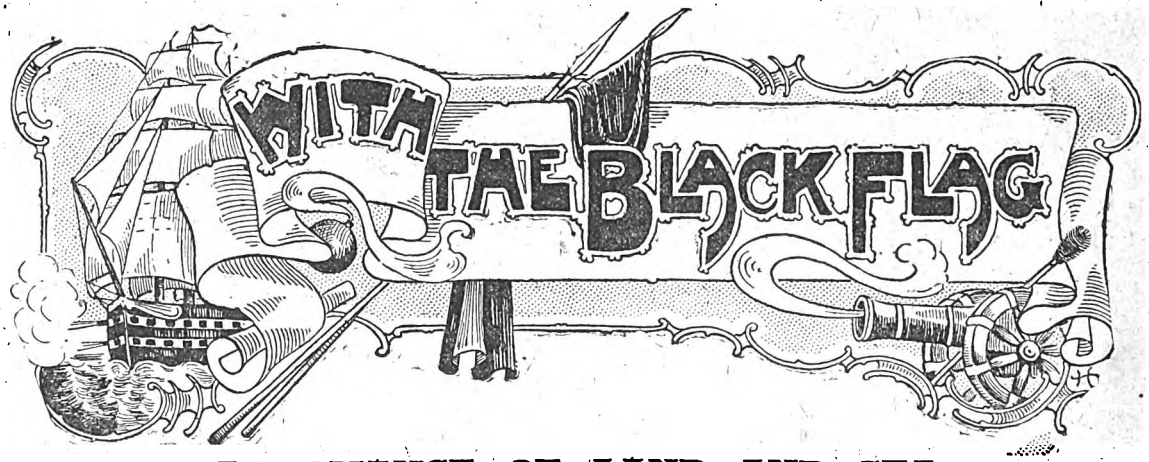
When, therefore, after having delivered an impressive speech, the reverend gentleman sat down, the assembly was horrified to see him sink rapidly to the floor, while the shriek of the whistle was supposed to be a cry of pain wrung from the unhappy man.

The subsequent trial and expulsion of Mr. Beale for sacrilegiously playing a dangerous practical joke on the chairman, with the design of bringing religion into contempt in the eyes of the world, has made the peculiarities of the chair familiar to almost everyone.

At the same time there can be no question that this chair is an excellent one from a father's point of view, and the time will come when every young man will eye the average chair with misgivings, and share with his sweetheart the convenient, if grimy, coal-scuttle.

W. E. SPEAR.

Digitized by Google



A ROMANCE OF LAND AND SEA.

By William Westall.

Author of "With the Red Eagle," "The Phantom City," "Nigel Fortescue," etc., etc.

PRINCIPAL CHARACTERS.

Major Wyvenhoe, commander of an expedition which went out from England to help the Venezuelans in their struggle for liberty.

Captain Cautley, who is in charge of the ship which took the expedition out.

John Ready, the servant of Wyvenhoe.

General Arismendez, ex-Governor of Pampatar and Vice-President of the Venezuelan Republic.

Dons Iago Santleo, and Antonio Bonanza, two Venezuelans who are friends of Wyvenhoe.

General Urdenetta, Governor of Pampatar, a bitter enemy of Wyvenhoe.

Bolivar, Supreme Chief of the Venezuelan Republic.

Tamanac, an Indian Cazique, and great friend of Santleo.

CHAPTER XIX.

Arrival at Manoa.

"At to-morrow's dawn you will get your first view of Mount Manoa," observed Santleo as we dismounted from our mules before a rude Indian habitation where we were going to pass the night.

"We shall have to rise before the sun then. From this valley there is no prospect," I said.

"Two hours ere the sun, or we shall not gain the foot of the mountain before he sets. From hence thither is nearly a day's journey and my home sickness is greater than ever. We have been a weary while on the way. Did not the darkness of the night and the difficulties of the descent forbid, I would fain push on a few leagues further."

We had indeed been a weary while on the way. It was three months since we parted company with the patriots, and even yet we had not reached our destination. We had met with more delays and undergone more hardships than we anticipated; the "ordinary dangers of travel" had proved as great as the ordinary dangers of a campaign. For days together we had ridden over arid plains where no water was, and through snake infested swamps, and dark and dismal forests. We had been laid up with fever and forced to make long halts in wretched quarters. Once, while returning alone from an abortive shooting excursion I had been attacked by a pack of savage dogs and narrowly escaped with my life. Not common prairie dogs, but descendants of the ferocious hounds of Cumana, used by the Spaniards for hunting fugitive slaves, which, having been let loose owing to the war, had betaken themselves to the llanos, and reverting to their original wildness became more dangerous than jaguars or pumas. The pack chased me, full cry, for several miles and had not Santleo and the others heard their baying and come to my help there had been a kill and I should have been in at the death. It was the first time I had ridden from hounds, and I found it vastly more exciting than riding to them.

Before long the weather broke, beginning with terrible thunder storms, preceded and accompanied by lightning so vivid and continuous that for hours together the whole firmament was in a blaze of white fire. Then the windows of heaven opened and the rain descended for many days, making the rivers overflow their banks and converting the llanos into vast lagoons, out of which, here and there, rose a hamlet or a hato (cattle farm) which, being built on an eminence, escaped the deluge.

To one of these we betook ourselves, and there for a long time tarried, under compulsion, since going on before the floods abated had been to court destruction.

So soon as it was possible and before it was prudent we went on. The earth was so soft that our horses sank up to their fetlocks at every step, which so tired them that we could make only short marches, and camping out on the saturated ground was neither comfortable nor safe. We all suffered more or less from fever. When the sun came out a great smoke rose up from the plain, so that we were in a continual vapour bath. Our clothes were never dry. But crossing the swollen rivers was our greatest difficulty and our greatest danger. They were too wide to be passed by swimming, and we had baggage. When boats could not be obtained, we had to make rafts of bulls' hides, to which the animals were roped; hazardous undertakings that several times brought us into great peril. Two of the horses were drowned, and one of the llaneros, whom we had engaged as helpers and guides, was so mauled by a cayman that he died.

But everything comes to an end, so did the llanos, and when we came to the hills we had to make different arrangements. The horses were changed for mules, the llaneros dismissed and replaced by Indian mountaineers.

From this point the journey, though less monotonous, was quite as trying and progress even slower. We crossed ravines and rivers by rope suspension bridges under which we were slung, getting over partly by our own impetus, partly with the help of drag ropes; crawled along the face of precipices by tracks not more than two feet wide, and tra-

Digitized by Google

versed rocky passages so narrow that we had to dismount and go afoot, there being no room for our legs.

Of ordinary ascents and descents we thought nothing, albeit many of them were desperate scrambles; and the days were intolerably hot and nights often as intolerably cold. But we had the advantages of superb scenery and bracing air, and one still greater, relief from the onslaughts of ticks, jiggers and mosquitoes.

After many days this part of our journey drew also to a close. On the morrow I was to see Manoa and, as I hoped, learn Santleo's secret. During the journey he had told me no more than I have set down, and seeing that he desired to avoid the subject I made no further attempt to draw him.

At four o'clock we were once more on the move, leading our mules; for the trail out of the quebrada was steep and stony and ran between sheer rocks and a raging torrent.

We were once more on the move, leading our mules.

At first we were in inky darkness, but as the gorge opened out and we reached higher ground our old friend Lucifer favoured us with his friendly light, which was a great help.

Santleo was silent and seemingly absorbed in thought, and being myself in no mood for talk, also somewhat anxious, for it was just possible that his people might give me the cold shoulder, I asked him no questions.

When we had gained a ridge, which so far as I could make out, was the summit of the pass, he called a halt, speaking for the first time since we left the Indian hut.

"We shall wait here until the sun rises, unless you are cold and would rather go on," he said.

"Not at all, I am warm with expectation," quoth I, making an effort to keep my teeth from chattering, the cold just then being intense.

"It won't be long, only a few minutes. See, the stars are beginning to pale already," added Don Iago.

I looked east. The sky was suffused with a crimson glow which gradually broadened and soon the red disc of the sun rose above a chain of serried peaks which bounded the horizon.

"Manoa is not out there," said Santleo.

I looked westward, and saw what seemed to be a great, white wall reaching from the earth to the sky. As the sun rose higher I perceived that the wall was a chain of mighty snow mountains, the first I had seen, and the most stupendous sight I had yet beheld.

"Manoa is not out there," repeated Santleo. "Look down."

I looked down and saw a vast and verdant plain stretching further than the eye could reach. In the middle of this plain rose a mountain of great extent with sides absolutely sheer, as perpendicular as the walls of a house, and as Santleo told me nearly two thousand feet high. Hence it was as broad at the summit as at the base, peak there were none, and in the distance looked as flat as the plain from which the mountain sprung. How far it extended westward I could not make out, nearly as far, it seemed to me, as the white mountains.

"And that is Manoa?" I exclaimed.

"That is Manoa," answered Santleo.

"And where do your people live, on the plain, I suppose?"

"On the mountain, of course."

"But how the dickens do they get there? Have they wings?"

"Not yet. Those are to come," quoth Santleo with a laugh. "You will know all about it in a few hours."

"Well, if it is not wings it must be balloons. Scaling that mountain is no more possible than swimming up the falls of Niagara."

Then we began the descent which was so abrupt that the mules were often on their haunches, occasionally on their beam ends, mine taking up so much of my attention, that, until we reached the bottom I had none to bestow on Manoa, though it was continually in my mind. But when I had leisure to look about me, I scrutinised it more closely, and the more I looked the more my wonder grew.

Regarded from the plain it was far more imposing both in bulk and height than it had seemed from the ridge. It was the difference between looking up and looking down.

Yet we were still twenty miles away, a distance at which you can distinguish only the general contour of the mountain, and there might be some way of getting to the top obvious only on closer inspection.

We rode on, and the mules, pleased with the change from stony tracks to a fair road, took to pacing without being pressed, and we went over the ground at good speed. The plain was fertile and well cultivated, the climate, as I judged from the products of the soil, sub-tropical. The peons (peasants) were all Indians, and lived in little houses built of wood and mud, which, when hard-dried by the sun, becomes as hard as bricks.

The Indians whom we met greeted Tamanac with great deference, some rendered Santleo similar honour, though they appeared to have a difficulty in recognising him, from which I inferred that he had altered considerably during his absence.

But I had eyes for little else than Manoa, and presently perceived something so passing strange that I thought I was bewitched. The mountain appeared to have no base; it rested on nothing. The lower half—but that was the point, or rather, the illusion or my delusion—so far as I could see there was no lower half.

I shut and opened my eyes repeatedly, turned my head

Digitized by Google

The number of columns was bewildering; no two were alike.

and looked again and again. It was always the same. Manoa still hung between heaven and earth. But the thing was so impossible, the idea so preposterous that I could not bring myself to ask Santleo whether I saw right.

Finally, however, I put the question, though diffidently and in expectation of a laughing reply.

"Either my eyes deceive me, or there is something peculiar about that mountain," I said. "On what is it supported?"

"On pillars. But as yet they don't show. It looks as though there were nothing."

"Pillars! But how can pillars support a weight so immense? And how did they get there?"

"The Indians say that the work was done by the genii of the Andes, with the devil for architect. That is the Cazique's opinion, and he shakes his head dubiously when I tell him that Nature is a greater wonder worker than Satan. When you have had a closer view you must give me your opinion."

Soon I had a closer view, and I saw that my eyes had deceived me, though not a great deal.

Owing to a slight diaphanous mist that hovered over the plain, or to some peculiar effect of light and shade, the void had appeared greater than it really was. Yet none the less did the body of the mountain seem to be without support, and it was only when we drew nearer that I descried the pillars of which Santleo had spoken. These were white and round, measuring, from base to summit, two to three hundred feet; and through a vast archway of the same material flowed a broad river, which meandered eastward across the plain.

I was so lost in wonder at these marvels that until Santleo roused me by an abrupt exclamation I had not noticed a party of horsemen who were coming towards us.

"Some of your people?" I asked.

"Yes! Yes!" he exclaimed excitedly, spurring his mule, but, as the creature was doing its best already, without increasing its speed.

Soon we met them, a party of four young men of about the same age as Santleo, one as light complexioned, two darker, with flashing, black eyes; the fourth seemed to have a touch of Indian in his composition. But all were fine, good-looking fellows, and all spoke English. Their greetings were warm and rather effusive, yet there was none of that effeminate embracing and kissing to which Venezuelan creoles are so much given.

Then Santleo introduced me to his friends, whose names —Preston, Porter, Hewes, and Wells—sounded so familiar and home-like as to make me feel that despite my strange surroundings I was amongst friends.

"As we are about it I may as well tell you my name," said he.

"It is not Santleo, then?"

"That is the Hispaniolised version. I was christened James Santley."

"And you prefer the English version?"

"Here, certainly."

"Good! Now for another little rectification. You introduced me as Colonel Wyvenhoe. I am no longer in the Venezuelan service, and if you will henceforth call me Captain Wyvenhoe I shall be greatly obliged."

"I understand. You set more store by your captain's rank in the army of King George than your colonel's rank in the army of Don Simon, and you are quite right. So remember, brothers, our guest is Captain, not Colonel, Wyvenhoe."

After conferring with his friends, Santley told me that until they obtained permission from the authorities they would be unable to take me up the mountain.

"But Wells and I are going thither immediately," he added, "and during our absence the others will keep you company. I don't suppose we shall be away more than three or four hours, and there is a rest house where you can eat, and drink, and take your ease."

"You are very kind and I am greatly obliged to these gentlemen for bearing me company," quoth I. "Would you add to the obligation by letting me see you go up!"

On which they laughed, and answered, "Surely, why not?" And with that we went on once more, for while we talked we had pulled up.

So far I had seen only one side of the mountain, the shape of which was oblong, and a part of the front, as in my mind, I termed its south end, from which issued the stream. This we crossed by a bridge of canoes and after going two miles further came to a place where, at some time long past, a great piece had fallen from the mountain top leaving a huge gap above and forming a considerable mound below.

From the edge of the gap a flight of steps led up to the summit, while on the rocks was built a substantial platform to which access was gained by another flight of steps. These two points were connected by a series of rope ladders every length of which was secured to a bar of iron-wood, driven into a crevice of the rock, or a hole drilled for the purpose.

But none faint of heart, short of wind, or weak of limb, might attempt to climb that giddy staircase, and I almost trembled when the two men went lightly up the ladders, their apparent size diminishing until they looked like flies creeping up a wall, and in a short time became almost invisible to the naked eye.

Then a flag was waved from the gap at the top to inform us of their safe arrival, and we who were left behind descended from the mound and betook ourselves to the rest house, which stood hard by. Quite a large place it was, with several rooms, and a large garden, and servants who brought us meat, maize cakes and fruit, and palm wine of the finest vintage of Manoa, to all of which we did justice.

Digitized by Google

I took care not to ask my entertainers no questions which I thought they might not like to answer, but when we had done eating I proposed a walk under the mountain, to which they readily assented, and in a few minutes we were there, entering the mighty cave between two gigantic pillars with bases so perfectly shaped that it was hard to believe that they were not the work of human hands. The number of columns was bewildering; no two were alike, some were round, some oval, some twisted, some straight, some so large that it took several minutes to walk round them, others comparatively slender, all white and smooth. The upper parts were shrouded in perpetual darkness, and the sun being over our heads the light below was ghostly and dim. The grandeur and gloom and awesomeness of the place were intensified by the din and roar of the unseen river and once there came a mighty crash like a thunder clap, which echoed and reverberated for several minutes in a way that made my flesh creep.

"A stone falling from the top," said Hewes. "They are always falling, and the man who is hit is seen no more. He is killed and buried at the same time. I think we had better be going out."

I thought so too. It was not a desirable place for an afternoon ramble.

Hewes told me that the river came out of the ground some way west of Manoa, and it was supposed to have its source in a large lake at the foot of Mount Lofty, the great white peak in the far distance. In winter, when it rained on the plains and snowed on the Andes, the river often rose to an immense height, thundering under the mountain and foaming and swirling among the columns as though it were possessed of legions of devils. Which I could well believe.

We now took a walk in another direction and then returned to the rest house where presently came Santley and Wells, accompanied by a fine looking old gentleman with a white moustache and beard, the latter pointed, a nondescript complexion and skin something between light red and reddish brown, a long face, an aquiline nose, high cheek-bones and kindly grey eyes.

"Master Walter Wyvenhoe, our honoured judge," said Santley, and then withdrew, followed by the others.

"Did I hear aright? Is your name indeed Wyvenhoe?" I cried, so soon as I could speak. "Or was Santley joking?" I was going to add, but as the old gentleman looked far too dignified to be jocular I refrained.

"My name is indeed Wyvenhoe, good sir. I am a descendant of the Walter Wyvenhoe who sailed from Bristol in the ship *Bold Venture*——"

"In which also sailed his cousin and my forefather Gilbert Wyvenhoe," I, now greatly excited, struck in. "But by what strange chances or series of events has it come to pass——"

"That shall in due time be imparted to you," interrupted the judge. "My errand now is to say on what condition the council and people of Manoa will receive you as a welcome and highly honoured guest——"

"Any condition you may like to impose?"

"Nay, listen ere you decide. It is but one condition, the taking of an oath thus conceived. 'So long as I live and Manoa exists I will impart neither to man, woman nor child aught whatsoever I know of Manoa and its people, or may hereafter learn.'"

"I accept the condition," said I, though with a sense of disappointment, for it would compel me to keep secret what I thought was likely to prove the most interesting part of my travels and adventures.

"And your servant?"

"John Ready will also accept the condition."

"Then all we have to do is to call him in, also James Santley and the others, for the oath should be taken before witnesses. All this may seem strange and ungracious, Master Wyvenhoe, yet in truth it is not so, as ere long you shall know. But explanation must wait on opportunity. The day is far spent, and I fear you would find mounting the ladders after dark rather trying."

"And you, sir!"

"For one who has been used to that way of going home from his youth upwards, night has no terrors, but it hath its dangers, and in good sooth I would rather go up by daylight."

So Santley and the others were summoned, and in their presence Ready and I took the oath.

"Is there any way of getting our kits up?" I asked my compadre, as we made for the mound.

"Some of the peons will bring them."

"How? On their backs?"

"No, on their heads."

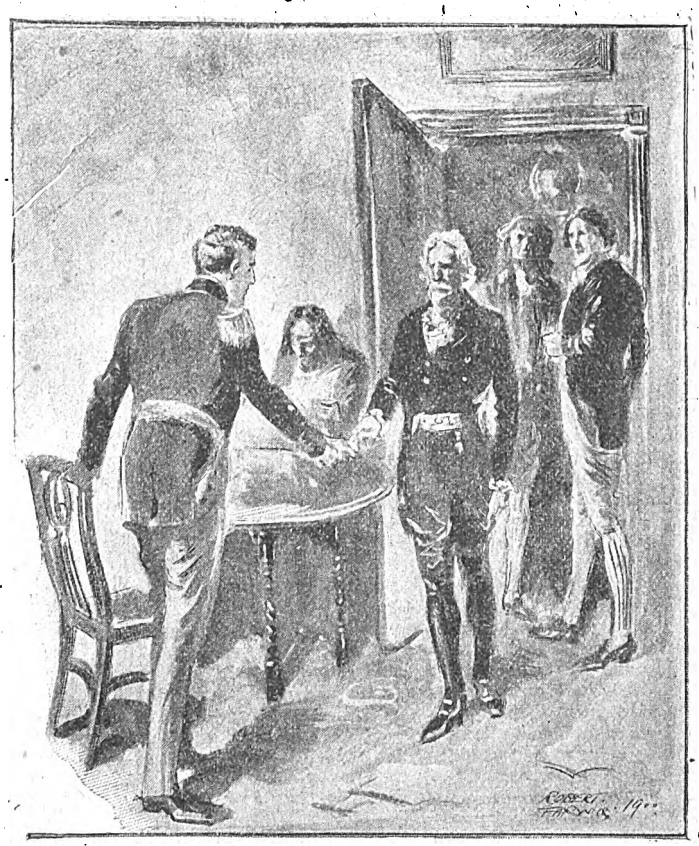
There was some question as to who should start first. It was the judge's right, but he waived it.

"You young men begin," said he, "you will go faster with us behind you than before. I shall follow with my good cousin, Captain Wyvenhoe, if he will let me so call him."

"I shall esteem it an honour to be so called, dear sir, and though as cousins we are many times removed, as friends I hope we shall be near," I returned.

"And near friends are good friends," added the old gentleman with a pleased smile.

Meanwhile the others were beginning the ascent, as to which certain rules were observed; no more than two were allowed to be on the same ladder at the same time, nor near together, and the second man was not to keep step with the first.



"Master Walter Wyvenhoe, our honoured judge," said Santley.

Digitized by Google

John Ready did not like it at all.

"I would rather risk my life in a brush with the Spaniards or the French," he said. "Even if you get hit, the odds are against your being killed, but a fall from one of those ladders would be sudden death and no mistake."

"You won't fall, John, you will be too frightened. I know I shall," said I, as I prepared to follow my leader. "All you have to do is to step steadily and hold tight."

The mounting proved less formidable than I had anticipated, and after the first feeling of nervousness had passed away, I could look down, and even backward, without a tremor. The ladders were taut and strong. The staves, made of bulls' hide, light and tough, and the nearness of the mountain gave a sense of security which, however, was more apparent than real, since the rocks being for the most part smooth and sheer, there was nothing to lay hold of.

On the other hand, it was trying work for the wind, as well as for legs and arms, and I was glad when the judge called out:

"Here we will rest awhile."

Looking up, I saw him step from the ladder into a crevice, where Ready and I presently joined him. It was large enough to hold half-a-dozen; furnished with seats and shaded with bushes, and made a pleasant half-way house.

The prospect was grand. All round, so far as the eye could reach, were mountains piled on mountains. Manoa was the centre of a vast amphitheatre, a fortress whose furthest ramparts pierced the clouds, and where a handful of resolute men might hold their own against countless foes.

"Welcome to Manoa, kinsman," answered the girl.

The plain, as I now saw, was by no means level—few plains are—it rose gradually, as well towards the north as towards the west, and sloped to the east and south, a peculiarity to which I was one day to owe my escape from death.

"Is this the only way of getting to the top, Master Wyvenhoe?" I asked the judge.

"There is another thitherward"—pointing to the west—"practicable both for man and beast. But long ago it was blocked by a landslip, so that until it could be made good, a work of many years, there was no means of getting up or down. It was then that, driven by necessity, our fathers first made these rope ladders. But the journey that way is far more toilsome and five times as long, and we are used to the ropes."

"From which I conclude that the town is at this end of the mountain."

"The principal township and village are. We have no town. Shall we go?"

"If it please, you, Master Wyvenhoe."

On which we resumed our climb, the judge treading as nimbly and lightly as ever, Ready and I plodding wearily with heavy feet. I could hear John growl and groan, and mutter:

"Next time I'll go by that old road."

But as I have had occasion to observe before, everything comes to an end, and eventually we reached *terra firma*.

Santley and the others were waiting for us. There were also three mules.

"I thought you might be tired, so I ordered mules," said he.

"Which was very thoughtful of you. I am tired, and Ready can hardly get one foot before the other.

"Coming up the ladders is rather tiring at first, but you soon get used to it. How far have we still to go?"

"Not more than a mile when we are out of the hollow."

The hollow had been made by the great fall of rock which formed the mound. The sides were steep and covered with bushes and trees, through which a winding track led upwards.

My legs and arms were so stiff and sore that I had a difficulty in mounting my mule, but when we gained the summit I forgot my aches and was amply rewarded for my pains.

In grandeur and beauty the view surpassed the view from the resting-place as much as that surpassed the view from the plain, and the whole range of Andean peaks, for once uncapped by a single cloud, was bathed in the red glow of the setting sun.

The mountain-top was an undulating plateau, a great part of it under cultivation, interspersed with fine shrubs and noble trees, and had the appearance of a vast and lordly park.

The village lay something more than a mile away, a collection of white, single-storied houses, half-hidden among trees and surrounded by gardens.

Most of the villagers seemed to be out of doors.

"They are making ready to welcome you," said the judge, "and those in the road are coming to meet you."

"Those" were a number of young men and maidens, as might seem, in gala attire; the girls in flowing, white drapery and straw hats, adorned with bright flowers.

One of them came on faster than the others, a tall girl with rather square shoulders and as upright as a young palm tree, her well-poised head slightly backward, carrying herself like a queen, and walking with the light elastic tread, which denotes health and high spirits.

"Come hither, child," said the judge reining in his mule. "Come hither, child, and give thy kinsman welcome. Here is Captain Wyvenhoe from England, and this, Captain Wyvenhoe, is my daughter, Rosalind."

(To be continued.)

Digitized by Google

SHORT STORIES ABOUT HAUNTED HOUSES.

We devote, every week, two pages of *Short Stories* to pithy, humorous anecdotes similar to those which appear in these columns. A prize of £1 1s. will be sent to the reader who submits the best storyette this week, and a copy of "The Optimist," by Herbert Morrah, to each of those whose attempts are used. The anecdotes may be either original or selected; in the latter case the source *must* be stated. The prize of One Guinea offered for the best Storyette in this competition has been won this week by Mr. R. Jenkins, of Little Boys' Press, South Darenth, Kent. Attempts this week must deal with Stories about TELEGRAMS, and must reach the Storyette Editor, *Short Stories* Office, Henrietta Street, Strand, London, W.C., by Monday, November 5th. Post-cards only, please.

Ghosts?

A WALK of seven miles at midnight in a torrent of rain is not very inviting, but as I had missed my last train home this was necessary if I wished to reach my destination before daylight.

I started on my way, but had not got very far before I came to an empty house, set on a lonely common, which had the reputation of being haunted.

Feeling very brave, I determined to spend the night in this house, so as to save the long walk in the rain. Accordingly I climbed in through a window and prepared myself for the worst.

I had been there some time when I heard a noise outside in the passage and a loud bang at the door. My bravery suddenly departed. I trembled and went hot and cold by turns.

The noise continued, and after a time I found courage enough to go to the door armed with my umbrella. As I opened the door I heard a patter of feet. Cold perspiration was running down my back. What could it be? I stepped into the passage trembling in every limb, only to see half-a-dozen rabbits scampering down the stairs.

R. J.

Not a Ghost at all.

AN old Irishwoman who lives alone in a two-roomed cottage, went to the priest recently in a very perturbed state of mind.

"Sure me house is haunted, fadher!" she declared.

"Haunted? By what?" asked the priest.

"By a sperrit wid a wooden leg on him," answered the old woman. "Ivery noight for the lasht two wakes, whin Oi've bin in bed, Oi've heered him come shtumpin' along the road. He shtops at me dure, lifts the latch, shuts the dure behoind him, an' crosses the front room into the back wan. In the mornin' the dure is as Oi locked it the noight before. Oi want you to dhrive him off wid the howly wather, fadher."

"Very well," said the priest indulgently, for he knew the old woman was in her dotage.

That night as he sat in her house, he as well as she heard a wooden-legged person come along the road, open the door, and cross the outer room to the inner one, where the father and old lady sat. A big man with a wooden leg stood before them.

"Patsy!" shrieked the old woman. "Me bhoy! Where have yez been this fifteen year?"

"Soldierin', mother!" replied the ghost, clasping the old woman to him, "Oi lost me lig at Colenso."

W. J. O.

What a Relief.

JIMKINS had a habit of keeping late hours, and although his better-half made it uncomfortable for him at times, she failed to cure him of his nocturnal home-comings.

At last she hit upon a plan to frighten him, and so when he staggered in one night at his usual hour, he saw a white shrouded figure gliding towards him along the passage in the moonlight.

"Wh—wh—w—w—what's that?" gasped Jimkins.

"I am the family ghost," a sepulchral voice replied.

Jimkins heaved a sigh of relief.

"Great Scott!" he said; "how you frightened me! I thought 'twas the missus."

Then the storm broke.

H. E. L.

The Shade of Trouble.

AT a Christmas gathering in a country house we were all sorry that Mr. Gill, a popular young curate, could not join us for a few days. His *fiancée*, Lily Sweet, was especially disappointed.

However, at the last moment he wired to say he could come, after all; and as another guest had been given his room, there was no choice but to put him in the haunted room—the only one available.

He arrived at five o'clock, and during the evening was the life of the party, and laughed at Lily's fears respecting the uncanny nature of his apartment.

Next morning he did not appear at the breakfast-table, and we went to his room; but, finding the door locked, we finally broke it open—to find the room empty and looking as though no one had slept there.

Naturally, we were much mystified and alarmed at this strange occurrence, especially when nothing of his whereabouts could be ascertained; and great was our horror when news came a few hours later from his home saying that the poor young fellow had been found dead in his bed on the previous morning!

We then realised that our guest of the night before had been none other than our friend's spirit.

CISSIE.

A False Alarm.

I AM a traveller, and one winter evening I put up for the night at an old inn at Leek, in Staffordshire. I sat by the fire, and, in order to keep out the cold, I am afraid I drank a good deal of my landlady's old ale. However, I fell asleep.

When I awoke, the room was pitch dark. The wind howled outside. I rose shivering, and looked out of the

Digitized by Google

window. Great Kruger! what a sight met my eyes. There, dancing about, first assuming one shape and then another, was a perfect army of spectres representing different parts of the human body.

Here was a long, white, headless body frantically waving its long, skinny arms; there a pair of legs, minus the feet, dancing as if crazed. Farther on was a smaller body like that of a child. The air seemed full of them. Presently there came a wild gust of wind. One of the bodies seemed to detach itself from the rest and fly straight at the window. I gave a fearful shriek. The landlady rushed in.

"Look, look!" I gasped, pointing to the window.

She looked, then turned to me with a pitying smile.

"Well," she said, "what's the matter? That's only the washing out to dry."

J. C.

Only a Cat.

A WEEK or two ago there was a ghost scare in a small village in the North of England. Strange noises had been heard for two or three days and nights in an old disused cottage.

One night the villagers determined to hunt the ghost down. They nearly all turned out. Some had pitchforks, others spades, hammers, knives, or anything they could use as a weapon. But when they reached the cottage and heard the rattling inside, none of them dare enter until the village constable came on the scene.

He burst the doors open, and ran the ghost into a corner of the cottage, when he found that it was not a ghost, but a cat. It had got its head fast in an old salmon tin, and in trying to extricate itself had dragged the can over the stone floor, making the strange noises that had frightened all the village.

The cottage is now always known as the "Haunted House."

W. J. B.

No Longer a Sceptic.

UP to a few years ago I was a disbeliever in the so-called ghost story, and put no faith in the tales. I often heard of meetings with shadowy forms, death warnings, second-sight visions, and such like. That there is something in these, however, I must now admit, reluctantly, perhaps, yet having had a personal experience, I can no longer claim to belong to the ranks of the sceptical.

What I am now about to relate is no mere creation of my brain, but actual fact.

I ought to say that my wife, with whom this story is more immediately connected, has all her life been more or less superstitious.

In the summer of 1889 I was spending a short holiday at Anstruther, Easter, in Fifeshire. I was accompanied by my wife and two children, and we had a comfortable room rented from an elderly couple, who appeared to have been at one time in better circumstances. They had a little granddaughter staying with them, a girl of fourteen or so.

One night towards the end of our holiday we retired to rest about eleven o'clock, and I very soon fell asleep. I was awakened by my wife some two hours afterwards asking me to get up and strike a light, as she fancied someone was in the room. I lay for a moment and listened, and hearing the little granddaughter cough in the adjoining room, the door of which was slightly open, I called out:

"Are you sleeping, Jeannie?"

"No," she replied, "but I wish you would light the lamp, as I think there is something in my room."

I sprang out of my bed at once and put my hand on the box of matches on the mantel-shelf.

As I did so a man brushed past me in the direction of the window. His face was towards me, and I recognised the features of my wife's father. My wife must also have seen him, for she called out:

"Oh, that's my father."

The sweat broke out on my forehead and ran in streams down my face. I replied:

"It's nothing; you've been dreaming, dear," but she was not to be put off, and there was no more sleep for either of us that night.

Next morning we had the following telegram from my wife's sister:

"Father died last night about twelve."

E. C. C.

"Robert" as a Ghost.

I SLEPT in a room over a shop, and was the sole occupant of the premises during the night. I had sunk, as was my wont, into a deep, refreshing sleep. Suddenly I awoke, to find that my hair was going up, and my courage going down.

For a moment, I was spell-bound with fear, for a strange, unearthly light pervaded the room, proceeding, as I quickly perceived, from a ball of blinding light, about the size of a cricket-ball, suspended in mid-air at the further end of the room.

I sprang up, quivering with horror, gazing at the eerie, staring eye of light. It moved—it was coming nearer! My blood ran cold, and I was gasping for breath, when a hoarse voice grunted out:

"It's all right, guv'nor; only you've forgotten to lock the shop-door!"

It was the policeman with his bull's-eye lantern! I believe I put my arms round his neck and embraced him when I discovered it wasn't a ghost after all.

A. H.

A Startling Visitor.

THERE is a castle in Gloucestershire where a strange thing happened some years ago, and in broad daylight, too, which makes it the more interesting.

Two ladies were sitting in the morning room after breakfast, one on each side of the window, facing each other. They were engaged on their embroidery, and not talking or thinking of ghosts.

All at once the lady of the house saw a strange sight, which startled her beyond measure. Being possessed of great self-control, she restrained herself and glanced at her companion. This lady was pale as death, and evidently greatly alarmed.

"What is the matter?" asked the hostess.

"What! Did you not see the head and shoulders of that black man come up through the floor?" came the reply.

This was exactly what the hostess had seen.

Subsequent investigation revealed the existence of a walled-up cellar below, in which was a skeleton evincing all the peculiarities of the negro type.

J. B. C.

Digitized by Google

CHEE-WING-SU, MANDARIN.

BEGINNING at Shangtung, in the Yellow Sea, the coast line of China is dotted with Islands clear down to Hongkong, a distance of over 2,000 miles.

If the islands were counted I believe they would number 10,000, great and small. While some are uninhabited there is not an honest community on one of them. The people are wreckers and pirates to a man, and woe betide the ship which meets with disasters on any of the island shores.

From Yang-tse-Kiang to the entrance of the Straits of Formosa the islands are under the jurisdiction of a mandarin at the above port.

In the year 1868 this mandarin was one Chee-Wing-Su, who had held office for years, and his reputation was that of a devil. There was no question but that he encouraged piracy and got his share in the spoils and his orders all along the coast line were to kill every white person who might fall into the hands of his subjects.

The fellow was subordinate to the Government at Shanghai, but whenever he was brought up on the complaint of a European consul he managed to get the best of it.

He was fairly well educated, a finished liar and hypocrite, and there was no catching him.

In the year I have mentioned above certain Englishmen in Hongkong decided to fit out an opium clipper to supply the port of Shanghai.

Opium smuggling was against the law, of course, and any person found engaged in the trade was beheaded at once, but you might as well try to keep rice as opium out of China.

The profits in smuggling have always been enormous, and it has always been part of the business to bribe the custom officials. As Shanghai was to be supplied from Yang-tse-Kiang I was sent up to arrange matters with Chee-Wing-Su.

There was no beating about the bush. I told him what we wanted, and he lost no time in giving me his figures.

For so much per cent. he would guarantee us safety. He was smooth and suave, but under the polish I saw the hypocrite and tiger.

I accepted his terms for the company, but I also warned them that he would not hesitate to play any sort of game for his own benefit. He gave us a flag to protect us from piratical junks, but we did not trust to it.

The clipper was fitted out with four guns and well provided with small arms, and the crew of eighteen was made up entirely of Europeans.

On our very first voyage, despite the old scoundrel's flag, we were twice attacked by junks which he probably sent out. We sent both of them to the bottom with their crews, and, although Chee-Wing-Su must have heard of the tragedies, he passed them by without a word.

We had run three cargoes when the old fellow prepared a surprise party for us. He sent for our captain and changed the place of landing to an island about fifteen miles further south. He claimed that the officials at Shanghai had got wind of our business and had set a watch, though he and the captain did not believe the story, agreed to make the landing-place on the next voyage. We made the bay at night as we returned, but the guns were double-shotted, the muskets and pistols loaded and every man was at his post.

The first thing we knew we were surrounded by five junks, and then a fight began which lasted forty minutes. We sunk four of the junks and drove the fifth ashore, with the loss of but three men on our side.

Next day Chee-Wing-Su appeared on board and pretended to be very excited and indignant that we had been molested against his orders.

In the fight we had exterminated at least a hundred of the vermin, but had captured unhurt and were holding ten others.

To try to smooth things over with us the wily old scoundrel had the ten brought before us, read them a lesson on morality and then had their heads struck off by his own executioner.

Our landing-place was to be Yang-tse-Kiang again, and Chee-Wing-Su put up another job. To restore our confidence in him again he offered to put £500 into our next venture and draw out only a fair percentage.

This seemed like a fair thing, and it was accepted He handed over the money with promptness, and we sailed away, but when our captain had had time to turn the matter over in his mind he began to wonder and theorize.

Old Chee-Wing-Su would never have put in his money without some stronger motive than a per cent. profit.

Few Chinese ever trust a European a shilling's worth, and a man of his class must have handed over his little fortune to throw dust in our eyes. A good deal of time was given to the puzzle, but just what his scheme was could not be satisfactorily solved. We could only watch and wait and be prepared for whatever might happen.

On our return we always made port at night. When we had displayed an agreed signal, sampans came off to us and unloaded and took away the cargo, and an agent was on the spot to pay for it.

Chee-Wing-Su's agent was also there to collect his blackmail.

There would be thirty Chinamen aboard of us when discharging cargo; but, though they were a villainous lot, we felt no fear of them and did not keep the crew even under arms.

We were within a day's sail of port on our return when the captain was struck by an idea. Chee-Wing-Su knew that our cargo would be a heavy one. Suppose he should have planned to capture the clipper in harbour.

All he had to do was to put men enough aboard, and when he had exterminated the crew and taken possession who was to betray him? He had men who could sail the craft, and by giving her a new coat of paint, a new name and making some changes in her rig she could not be recognised. Even if she were, what would her owners dare do about it? To have set up a claim would have been to convict themselves of smuggling. As for wiping out a score of Europeans, he would consider that as a sort of duty under any circumstances.

Before we made harbour everything was prepared and every man instructed.

In response to our signal a dozen sampans appeared, and the first man on our decks was the rascally old Chee-

Digitized by Google

Wing-Su. He was effusive, good-natured and as obsequious as possible. He said there was cause for haste in unloading, as the custom officials had suddenly become active, and he was permitted to order about fifty men on board to discharge the cargo. So soon as our anchor was down all but two or three of our crew disappeared, and the captain and agents sat down to a luncheon in the cabin.

Not a box had yet gone over the rail when the Chinese on deck broke loose.

In thirty seconds every man but the captain was sailing into them. They were armed with knives only, while we had cutlasses.

No firearms were used.

The fellows made a good stand for about five minutes, and then we began driving them. No quarter was given.

When the last living yellow devil went overboard, there were thirty dead ones on our decks. Of course, the row was heard in the cabin.

At the first sound Captain Walters laid his revolver on the table before him and said to Chee-Wing-Su:

"There seems to be some skylarking going on above, but we will not interfere with it."

"If my men are creating any trouble, I must go up and stop it," replied the old pirate.

"Your men are all right, and you will remain here."

They heard the sounds of battle and knew that the Chinamen were being driven overboard, but the captain talked about the voyage and the profits and pretended ignorance of the real state of affairs.

When the fight had ended, the anchor was lifted and the clipper sailed away out of the harbour. Chee-Wing-Su played the hypocrite at first. Then he blustered and threatened, and in the end he broke down, and became disgustingly abject.

The agent on board with him was in the plot. He refused to give it away at first, but when he knew that death was the alternative he talked fast enough. The game was to seize the clipper and cargo and murder us all, and if we had not been on our guard it would have been carried out to the letter.

We made a run for another port.

Chee-Wing-Su made a big offer for his life, and as a matter of law we had no right to punish him. I must tell you however, that law or no law, he was hung by the neck to the yardarm, while the agent was landed on an uninhabited island.

It was a high-handed thing to do, you will say, and yet the governor of Shanghai, who could have been bribed any time for five pounds and who hadn't an honest hair in his head, issued a proclamation and publicly thanked Providence for removing a bad man from earth.

A few months later he somehow got knowledge as to who owned the clipper, and he seemed inclined to make a fuss, but with my own hands I carried him fifty pounds, and he laughed and grinned and rubbed his hands together and let the affair drop there and then.

C. B. LEWIS.

CREATION AND DESTRUCTION.

ELENA BORONI stood before her mirror, her face and eyes betraying the greatest excitement. It was a great scheme, one which it pleased her fancy to carry out, and she determined to do it. But would he agree?

Could he refuse? The idea was absurd! No man would refuse to marry Elena Boroni, the accomplished *prima donna*, concerning whose exquisite singing all Italy was raving; to suppose, therefore, that Giacomo Vitala, the struggling artiste, would form an exception to the rule was ridiculous.

Elena was doubly gifted by nature; she was beautiful in face and figure, and her voice was declared by the critics to be superior to any other that had been heard in Europe during the past century. She had made her *début* one short year previously, and she was the idol of the music-loving people of sunny Italy. But she had a defect which is not uncommon among the highly gifted; she was nervous to the last degree, always wanting something fresh. Moreover, she was of a passionate temperament, quick to change from one sentiment to another, capable of loving intensely and hating fervently.

The scheme which she had imagined was this: Giacomo was a young man about her own age—twenty-four—and possessed of a voice which was capable of being made equal to her own; but he had not received proper training and this barred his chance of success. He had had a few small engagements, and she had heard him sing at a private entertainment, when she had recognised the quality of his voice. She proposed that he should marry her, that she should train his voice and then secure for him, with the aid of her undoubted influence, engagements at the best theatres and concert halls.

It was the kind of plan that would only originate in the brain of, and commend itself to, such a wilful, nervous, imperious woman as Elena Boroni; but, having conceived it, she was not likely to allow anything to prevent her from carrying it out. What a couple they would make!

With such a woman the old proverb about the will and the way holds good to the fullest extent, and she was aided in the development of her scheme by the fact that Giacomo Vitala had worshipped her in secret. In a little while the world was startled by the announcement of the marriage, and then began the preparation for the act, when they should figure as the supreme stars of the musical firmament.

Giacomo's training proceeded apace. Elena taught him with unabated zeal and watched his progress as a painter watches the evolution of the portrait which he is creating, or the sculptor watches the divine figure into which he is transforming a block of marble. Giacomo was an apt pupil—had he been otherwise the whole plan would have fallen to the ground, for Elena was not a patient woman and ill-fitted for the position of teacher: as it was, her joy and admiration—we may, perhaps, say her love—increased in accordance with his progress. He was her creation, she was bringing into existence a grand singer, just as the sculptor creates and loves the beautiful image which is gradually formed under his chisel.

"You will be great, you will be divine, my Giacomo!" she would exclaim ever and anon. "There will be none

Digitized by Google

to compare with us; we shall stand apart from all the world, above all the world, worshipped and envied!"

Giacomo's heart swelled with pride; he would be on a level with the one whom he had worshipped—and envied! His ambition, the one desire of his life, would be gratified, and he would be one of the very few to whom it is granted to excel.

Slowly, but surely, the inevitable was approaching; Elena, in the enjoyment of her task, never imagined that she might be preparing for herself a whip that would scourge her own back. Giacomo, actuated by his all-absorbing ambition, studied and worked hard to perfect his voice for the sake of the position it would give him rather than for the pleasure it would afford to his wife. And as he approached perfection, so his worship of her, his admiration for her, dwindled away, and he began to feel that he was on a level with her.

Elena perceived nothing of this; she was as delighted as a child with the success of her experiment, and when at length the time arrived when she could obtain an engagement for him with the certainty that he would be immediately successful, her joy was unbounded. Her creation was complete; she had made a great singer and she was happy.

On the night of his first appearance—for she ignored his earlier efforts—she was not content to remain on the side of the stage; she must have a box, so that she might witness the triumph to the full. Her triumph! Giacomo had no personality for her; he was her toy, and any triumph that resulted from a display of his ability was hers.

Giacomo's singing created a sensation, and his reputation was assured. From all parts of Italy came offers of high fees for his appearance at concerts and equally advantageous proposals to take various leading parts in well-known operas. Elena and he played together and sang together, and became the leading lights of the musical world, as they had anticipated. For four months this continued, and then there came a change.

Elena perceived with growing dissatisfaction that her husband's reputation and popularity were exceeding her own. She could not realise this at first, and smiled at the absurdity of the idea that had crossed her mind; but, as time went on, the suspicion became a certainty, and she turned pale and cold with anger and jealousy. Giacomo himself furnished proof of the truth of her conviction, for, feeling that he had attained his ambition, his sentiments towards her underwent a change, and he wished that he were free. She was always with him, depriving him of the full extent of the glory that should come to him; he wanted to appear alone so that he might overshadow all. How can the full light of a star be seen when another star of equal—nay, almost equal—magnitude is shining near it?

Giacomo was surpassing her! This was a condition that she had never imagined, and once she was sure of it Elena set to work to undo what she had done. Fierce jealousy and hatred consumed her until it was with difficulty that she restrained herself from putting an end to this competition by violence. The dagger or poison would have been easy methods of regaining her supremacy, but there were two objections—Giacomo would never know that his light had failed, and the consequences to herself would be serious. Some other method must be adopted.

She must ruin him by destroying the fulness and richness of his voice, pretending all the time to be stricken with grief at the deterioration, and encouraging him to persevere and to fulfil the engagements which she would assist in obtaining for him. She would allow him to sing apart from her, in order that she might from a private box enjoy the full measure of his humiliation and misery. As she had raised, so she would degrade him.

She employed every insidious artifice which her cunning brain could originate; she mixed drugs in his drinks and in his food, contrived that he should be exposed to unfavourable weather and draughts, and incited him by artfully-uttered taunts to strain his voice in practise at the very time when he should have nursed it. In this way also she made him fulfil engagements when his voice was not in a fit condition, and thus began her task of humiliating him and ruining his reputation.

Giacomo was so filled with pride about his own accomplishments that he could not imagine a fall from his high estate; he therefore fell readily into the traps set for him by Elena, and shut his eyes to signs of disapproval that were obvious to everyone else.

Step by step the descent was made; offers came less quickly, and Elena had to exert all her influence to obtain them. When she judged the time ripe for so doing, she changed her tactics, and began to make stinging remarks to Giacomo concerning the decline of his popularity and the failure of his voice; but this was not done in too pronounced a manner. Secretly enraged by these taunts, Giacomo sang in public at every opportunity, giving his services in aid of charitable institutions and singing at church, so that he might keep himself well to the front. All this merely aided the development of Elena's scheme.

He was engaged for a grand evening concert at Milan, and Elena seized this opportunity to compass his final overthrow. She had declined to sing herself on some pretext, and occupied a prominent position in the theatre. Anyone observing her closely would have noticed that her face betrayed considerable anxiety, and that she cast many and frequent glances at all parts of the auditorium.

Giacomo appeared and sang; his voice was in a distinctly bad condition and those among the audience who had admired him at his best were pained at the change and murmured to themselves, or to one another, their regret that he had not declined to appear. Elena's face changed continually in expression, when she looked at Giacomo there was triumph in it, but when she turned to the audience there was anxiety.

At last the song was finished. Giacomo's few friends heaved sighs of relief as the last notes were uttered. But suddenly, as Giacomo was about to bow before retiring a volume of hisses burst upon his ears. They came from all parts of the house, and seemed to lash him like so many whips; he started, turned deathly pale and glared about him. Then his wild eyes rested on the triumphant face of Elena and he seemed to comprehend it all. With one hand clutching his forehead he staggered from the stage.

On the following day the newspapers contained a report of an outrage on Elena Boroni—she was still known in the profession by her maiden name; she had been discovered senseless on the floor of her room at the hotel, her face disfigured by a terrible wound, which would prevent her from ever again appearing on the stage. She could not say positively who her assailant was, but she did not hesitate to give expression to her suspicion. Giacomo disappeared after the concert, and was never heard of again.

GEORGE KNIGHT.

Digitized by Google

FORE-ARMED.

SARA FORESTER, rising from the writing-table in the oriel window and giving an admiring glance at the stately proportions of "Sir Walter's Room," wondered for the second time as she crossed its breadth to go downstairs for tea, that the nerves of Lord and Lady Selhurst should be weaker than their appreciation of the beauties of so fine an "interior," was strong. They had arrived at Carmel Abbey, she had learnt, before luncheon, to increase and perfect one of the house parties Lady Lucy Gascoigne was fond of collecting together from Monday till Saturday in the country, but within an hour of their arrival had heard through the gossip of a maid that the room they had been installed in, was reported to be haunted, and had transferred themselves to a modest room in the west corridor destined for Sara herself. Sara, arriving later, found herself in succession to their retreat, possessed of the importance attaching to the tenant of the state-room on the central staircase, next to that of her host and hostess, a position, as false ones often are, essentially, if ephemerally, desirable.

The laughter and gossip of a mixed party greeted her as she entered the oak parlour. The house party completed by the recent return of the hunting contingent, was broken up into knots.

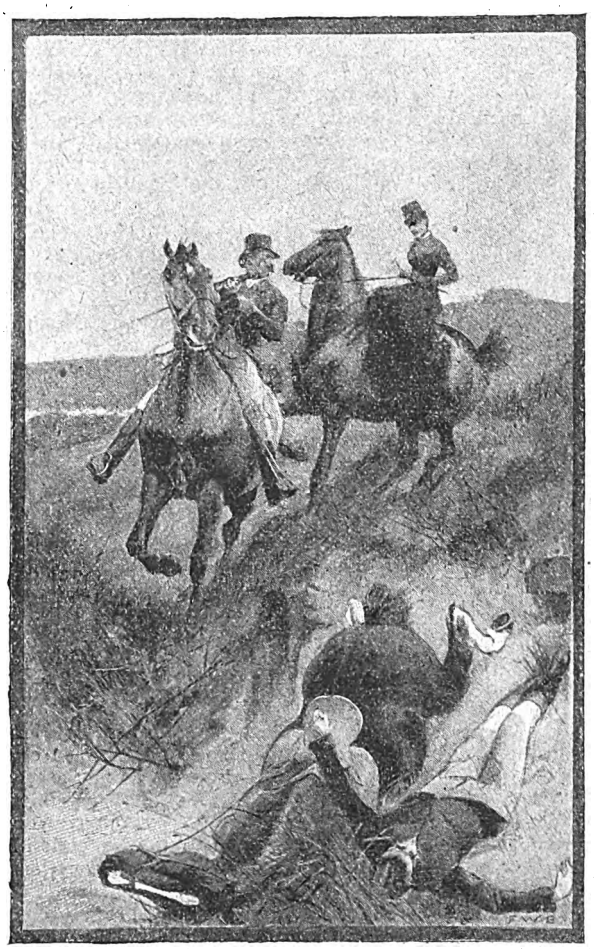
More than one group of men lounged about the room where a side-table, supplied with liqueurs, spirits, and potash, supplemented the tea and cakes that were calculated to last the ladies long beyond any legitimate dinner-hour. To the two or three in attendance at the tea-table, was added at the hostess's summons, a fair man, the perfect fit of whose cords and tops detracted indirectly from his undeniable good looks, by necessarily dividing any appreciative observer's attention with them.

"Come and tell Miss Forester about to-day's sport and to-morrow's fixture, Captain Gower," called out Lady Lucy, "she is our riding lady."

Captain Gower, between draughts of whiskey and seltzer, plunged at once into descriptive detail, while, with the double action of which bright wits are capable, he criticised Sara's expressive face, deciding half-a-dozen times, in less minutes, for and against her claims to beauty. On his own possession of it, every woman he had ever met had decided as she bowed to him, but he had the indifference to abstract beauty not uncommon with men possessed of it in an unusual degree, and Miss Forester's piquant face, with its wide mouth, short nose, and square little chin, took his fancy strongly.

"It's a big country," he said, "and you will like it. Does Gascoigne mount you? Ah, then you will be sure to go. Lady Lucy, what does Miss Forester ride to-morrow?"

"Don't ask *me!*" answered his hostess in her high-pitched, merry voice. "I know *nothing*, ask Frank. By the way, isn't he in?"



They found him at the bottom of the gravel pit, side by side with his horse.

"We left him at the 'Coach and Horses,'" laughed Captain Gower in return. "He says there is only one thing he can't get in his own house—a decent glass of beer."

"Was Charles Benham out to-day?" asked a new arrival.

"Out and got a crashing fall; no bones broken, though. It ought to frank him for the rest of the season, I suppose?"

"Should do," said Fred Somers. "By the way, who is his heir when he comes to his inevitable end? does anyone know? He has no near relation."

"I am willing to run for it," observed Captain Gower, glancing at Sara by an impulse for which he would have been puzzled to account. "Who'll back me for the prize? I've never seen the man, understand."

"Ten thousand to one against it," said Fred Somers.

"Not a sovereign more than fifty," corrected Mrs. Mercer, a lively *habituee* of country houses. "All the world knows Captain Gower's luck, and that the only certainty is what is unexpected."

"My chance should be better," said Lewis Gascoigne, a younger brother of the squire. "We were

Digitized by Google

all one two hundred years ago; more by token Benham grows more like our mutual great-grandfather every day."

"The likeness to Sir Walter is very striking," added Lady Lucy. "They were all talking of it last time he dined here."

Miss Forester, though a little puzzled, listened to these furtive remarks with interest. The subject of them was known to her by name through a family feud, which had hitherto made any mention of it sound like a fog horn through the dense moral atmosphere bound to prevail at the time.

Her father and the Benhams had been cousins, but she was entirely ignorant of the cause of an estrangement so complete that in the second generation Charles' ownership of an estate in North Midshire had been a reason for Mr. Forester objecting to his daughter's visit in the same county. It is not necessary to particularize it here.

The origin of a family feud is wont to be insignificant and have its root in some spirit of greed or vanity that has spread from its root to a size that alone gives it importance.

Whether a question of game preserving, legacy hunting, or trespass, the feud has thriven and spread, and for years the Foresters and Benhams had only had that kind of interest in each other that a Servian may have in Bulgar, or some pious theologian in the devil. It is necessary to know the enemy's position.

Youth being at its best perverse, Charles Benham and his bruising form of horsemanship was still occupying a place in her thoughts when, after the distractions of comic songs, dressing, and a parade across two intervening reception-rooms, Sara found herself at eight o'clock seated next to Captain Gower before a pile of moss, ferns, and flowers, called conventionally the dinner-table.

An old acquaintance sat on her left hand, and it was not until the meal was half over that her new friend succeeded in attracting her attention. Then, with his eyes lifted to a painting on the opposite panel, he called her attention to it by the trivial-sounding remark:

"I have never made up my mind as to the taste that hangs one's ancestors as permanent witnesses of one's greediness."

"You wouldn't have family portraits in a dining-room, you mean," asked Sara.

"Yes; wasn't it put well?"

"Very," she answered, laughing, "in the form of a problem. But why should they be out of place?"

"Don't let us argue; but doesn't that handsome fellow opposite look supercilious, as if, having known the table loaded with sirloins and nut brown ale, he despised made dishes and hot-house flowers? I thought so last night."

"It is a beautiful face. Who is it?"

"Some ancestor of the Gascoignes, I know, and that's all. It's a face that sticks by one somehow, but you prefer blue eyes to brown?"

"Yes," she said simply, and then catching sight of the flash in his own, saw she had fallen into a trap. Nevertheless, for a few minutes the impression of his face drove from her mind the stronger one the portrait had produced.

The pictured cavalier regained his ascendancy later, however, and though the talk drifted down an easy current to the field and the chase, the grave eyes surmounting the straight lines of nose and moustache rested upon Sara throughout the meal, consciously to herself,

THIRTY SEALED ENVELOPES CLAIMED.

£300 ALREADY PAID.

THE Editor of *Pearson's Weekly* has sent out fifty men, each with a Sealed Envelope containing a letter entitling the recipient to the sum of £10. To secure one of these Envelopes it is only necessary to ask one of the Ten-Pound Men the question, "Have you got that Ten-Pound Note?" and at the same time to show a current copy of *Pearson's Weekly*. Full details of the scheme will be sent on application to Room 36, Pearson's Buildings, Henrietta Street, London, W.C.

TEN TEN-POUND LADIES

have also been dispatched all over the country, each of whom will deliver up the Sealed Envelope to the lady who fulfills the conditions mentioned in *Pearson's Weekly*. No gentlemen need apply.

Copies of the song, "Have You Got that Ten-Pound Note?" are now ready, and may be obtained from all music-sellers and newsagents for 1s. 4d., or direct from the Song Department, Pearson's Buildings, Henrietta Street, London, W.C., for 1s. 6d. Postal Order (not stamps) post free.

A prize of £10 is offered to the person from whom we receive the best anecdote relating to the Ten-Pound scheme. All attempts should be sent in envelopes addressed: TEN-POUND STORY EDITOR, Pearson's Buildings, Henrietta Street, London, W.C., before Monday, November 19th.

The following are the names and addresses of the winners of Ten-Pound Notes up to the time of going to press:

READING (No. 46).—In Market Square after football match, by Mr. R. Willoughby, Grove House, Vicarage Road, Teddington.
NORWICH (No. 1).—By Mr. H. E. Baker, 4 Beaconsfield Road.
LUDGATE HILL STATION (No. 33).—By Mr. John Lotan, 22 St. Anne's Chambers, E.C.
SOUTHEND (No. 27).—On the cliffs, by Mr. Charles Lee, 1 Agnes Terrace, St. Mary's Avenue.
WIMBLEDON (No. 36).—By Mr. R. Gautier, 132 Clarence Road.
BRIXTON, LONDON (No. 30).—In a private house, by Mr. W. W. Tonkin, 5 Grove Road, S.W.
SOUTHAMPTON (No. 12).—In a hotel smoking-room, by Mr. Charles Wright, 30 Oxford Gardens, N. Kensington.
LINCOLN (No. 9).—On a motor, by E. C. Baldock, 68 Portland St.
WORCESTER (No. 3).—By Mr. A. Welling, 12 The Foregate.
CITY ROAD, E.C. (No. 10).—By Mr. A. Bowman, 413 City Road.
PRESTON (No. 23).—In the street, by Mr. William H. Wayne, 19 Hurstfinch Road, St. Helens.
ST. ALBAN'S (No. 11).—By Mr. John Roe, Hatfield Road School.
SHEPTON MALLET (No. 40).—In the George Hotel, by Mr. W. Cotton, Coxbridge Street, Pennard, Glastonbury.
PLYMOUTH (No. 18).—In Union Street, by Mr. R. J. Martyn, 4 Albert Road, Morice Town, Devonport.
TEIGNMOUTH (No. 8).—By Mr. W. G. Hole, Teignmouth.
MOTHERWELL, N.B. (No. 44).—In the street, by Mr. Archibald Brown, Market Place, Carluke.
SAWBRIDGEWORTH (No. 21).—On a 'bus, by Mr. Albert T. Page, Sawbridgeworth, Herts.
MUSWELL HILL (No. 28).—In the street, by Mr. James L. W. Ash, 34 Cricketfield Road, Hackney Downs.
MAIDSTONE (No. 15).—In the post-office, by Mr. Charles W. Ward, 30 Milton Street, Maidstone.
EXETER (No. 19).—On station platform, by Mr. Albert House, 8 Lansdowne Terrace, Holloway Street.
TRAFALGAR SQUARE, LONDON (No. 5).—In Trafalgar Square, by Miss May Grammer, 154 Elgin Avenue, Maida Vale.
CROUCH END, LONDON (No. 37).—£10 card, in a private house by Mr. J. D. Southall, 38 Rosebery Gardens, Crouch End.
DUBLIN (No. 38).—At Nelson's Pillar, by Mrs. S. Fitzpatrick, 13 Killarney Parade, Dublin.
KINGSLAND, LONDON (No. 6).—£10 card, in a tobacconist's shop by Mrs. Pezaro, 86 High Street, Kingsland.
EASTBOURNE (No. 42).—£10 card, in a grocer's shop, by Miss Winifred Eldridge, 337 Seaside, Eastbourne.
GLASGOW (No. 43).—In the Central Station, by Miss Annie Hamilton, 12 Blythswood Drive, Glasgow.
LOUGHBOROUGH (No. 2).—£10 card, in a tobacconist's shop, by Mr. George Tyler, 35 Cattle Market, Loughborough.
TRAFALGAR SQUARE, LONDON (No. 20).—In Trafalgar Square, by Mrs. K. Redgrave, 14 Burnley Road, Stockwell.
BELFAST (No. 47).—At Oval football match, by Mr. John N. O'Hara, Grand Hotel Metropole, Belfast.
RUNCORN (No. 29).—£10 card in house, by Miss Kathleen Ormsby, Tower House, Greenway Road.

Digitized by Google

and followed her from the room with lingering watchfulness.

Lady Lucy, from the head of the table, was unconscious of Sara's divided interests. "That won't do at all," she thought, with a nod of her clever head that fortunately accentuated a political formula her neighbour was at the moment propounding.

"A younger son, and Sara without the ghost of a fortune except what she can get by marrying." Nevertheless, she was regretting the rigidity of the social necessities that frowned upon what she conceived was a mutual liking; though she was not going to yield her present scheme, now brought to its inital stage, without trouble, which was nothing less than the healing of a family feud and the marriage of a penniless girl to her wealthy cousin. Just now Rupert Gower looked like standing in Charles Benham's light.

Sara, unconscious of the game in which she was being played, went up to her room that night after an evening merry enough to have made her forget its character, and prepared for sleep with no more serious reflection than that suggested by the sight of the hunting kit set out for her use next morning.

She lay down in the canopied bed without noticing the waving of the tapestry that the draught from the chimney occasioned, and fell asleep at once.

The hall clock was striking three on a deep toned bell when she awoke, suddenly and completely. The firelight gleaming red and dull, only half lighted the moulded ceiling and heavily hung walls, but as she turned on her elbow away from it, a cavern of coals fell in and flamed up from the hollow with a glare as bright as day.

The figure of a man stood in the full light, his eyes fixed on her own. It was a steady, unemotional gaze, that precluded any suggestion of fear or surprise, and she returned it with a vague feeling of expecting him to speak. His face, with its dark eyes, seemed familiar, and as she looked she saw that he was the cavalier of the dining-room portrait,—but dressed and with the same perfection of detail—as Captain Gower had been when she met him a few hours earlier in the tea-room. His hunting crop was in his hand and his head was bare; a red line crossed one temple, and he raised his hand to it as he spoke: "The pace is tremendous," he said in a level and somewhat harsh voice. "Lie well away to my right."

"When?" Sara asked, and could neither have accounted for the question or its form.

"You hear the time," answered the young man. "His point Markdean. You will remember."

There was a long pause, during which his gaze seemed to sadden to the intensity of Vandyke's portrait, following Sara's as she dropped back at last on her pillow with the same wistful expression with which the pictured eyes had seemed to watch her from the dining-room.

She raised herself again. "You are hurt?" she asked involuntarily, for she did not feel as if he needed help.

"It is a mere nothing," he answered, "and the end is near."

There was such an intensity of expression in the harsh tones that Sara covered her face in her hands and shivered. When she looked up again, the place where he had stood was empty.

She was fully awake, and she set herself to consider whom she had seen and why he came. Real and yet unreal, alive and yet a figure of the past, his presence had been a fact and no dream. How had he entered the room, how left it, and who was he? No inhabitant of the Abbey, certainly no visitor; a modern sportsman as to his dress, an ancestor of the house by his features. Sara's conjectures became confusion, and she fell asleep.

The ideal hunting morning of song is not necessarily productive of good scent; nevertheless, proverbial sayings have weight, and the bitterness of a whistling north-easter is intensified by its direct opposition to accepted perfection in winds. A north-east wind with a rising glass was, it is true, approved of Huntsman Goodall, but when the Carmel party mounted on January 13th, the glass was, as it chanced, falling, and the biting wind was ferretting for its victims in every corner of the cloistered quadrangle. Rupert Gower lifted Sara on to her horse with an expression that was less orthodox than forcible, and during the short ride to covert divided his remarks between abuse of the blast and equivocal encomiums on his hunter.

"Grand water-jumper, but won't face timber; as fast as the mail, but pulls like anything; capital in dirt but money thrown away if you get on the hills," all of which pullings-off from the horse's value would have remained unrecorded in another mood.

Fred Somers, on Sara's other side, rode with his hat crammed down upon his head and the lids of his eyes lowered, so that their unfailing twinkle was invisible; but now and then a word of chaff, directed to Gower, escaped him, showing his cheerful spirit was undaunted; and, indeed, as one of that noble army of martyrs, "a one-horse," he was inevitably keen upon even the off-chance of sport.

The day was so opposed to social amenities that the Master put his hounds into Lower Shaw with exceptional punctuality, and the Carmel party, coming up ten minutes late, found the field scattered to likely positions for getting away.

Half-a-dozen foxes were on foot at once, but none seemed inclined to face the open, and the first hour and a half was spent in the woodlands with nothing more satisfactory to show for it than spasmodic, ringing runs along and across the rides, with a chopped fox as the result.

The master then made a move for a small wood at a distance of three miles, which lay in a promising hollow, was unexceptional in its harbour of a stout fox, and offered the best chance he could give his hounds of sport for the day.

Pipe's Spinney was, however, for once drawn blank, and a neighbouring gorse proved as unsatisfactory, while another draw roused a fox that took them straight back to Lower Shaw and was lost.

The fifteen minutes served to warm the blood of horses and men, and though there were some defections on the part of those who thought to save their horses for a better day, a strong field took the chance of an improvement in the afternoon, and followed the Master as he led them at a sharp pace towards a covert lying on the edge of his country known as "The Wilderness."

"The day seems changing," said Fred Somers, riding up to Miss Forester's side as they reached it, "and I suspect we've got one chance. This is the stiffest side, and if you like timber and we get away you'll be in luck. Your horse likes it I know."

Sara was just beginning a remark about the sudden dropping of the wind, and what was to follow, when a fox stole out of the covert a hundred yards in front of them, and with a sudden crash of music half the pack were at his brush.

Digitized by Google

"In luck, and no mistake!" said cheery Fred, ramming his hunting-flask into its case, while his companion sat down and let her horse go. For ten minutes the pace was fast enough to tell on the worst mounted, and when they checked on the plough and the first flight got a pull at their horses, Sara found herself one of half-a-dozen where fifty had been. Her host, Frank Gascoigne, was up, as were the Master and his wife, Gower, Fred Somers, and a powerfully built young man on a white-legged bay, for which Sara recalled having seen him, in the distance, exchange a clever cob he had been riding in the morning.

He was in front of her, and she was contrasting the ease of his seat with his breadth and apparent weight when Gertrude made certain of Bajazets' challenge, and the hounds swinging unexpectedly towards her drew a remark from the Master that gave her a shock of recognition.

"Markdean, as I'm alive!" he said to his wife.

"Never knew a wilderness fox make that point before," and then, with "Markdean!" in her ears, Sara found herself riding at a high thorn fence that was awkwardly broken by hedgerow timber.

Her perfectly-bitted horse flew it between two closely planted oaks, landing her in a grass field that was divided along its breadth by a stiff post and rails, over which she followed Fred Somers, all unconscious that Gower's anticipated failure at timber was to be localised by a heavy roll over behind her at the spot where she had had it.

She was on good terms with hounds, and had the quasi-satisfaction of seeing three riders drop back to her, while she and the Master, who was fifty yards in advance of her, followed the line at a pace that, good as it was, was unavailing to prevent the distance increasing between them and the flying hounds.

The "pace was tremendous." The phrase occurred to her just as the thundering of coming hoofs in the hard turf of the hillside they were breasting made her look round.

The white-legged weight carrier plunged past her, and as he did so the rider turned in his saddle and looked at her.

He had lost his hat as his horse crashed through the tree boughs at the thorn fence, and the broken cord was dangling at his back; his head was uncovered, and as he rode by, his forehead showed a sharp line across one side, where a branch had cut it.

He raised his hand to it, and as he did so Sara saw he was the horseman of her vision, even to the details of the low-growing hair and the expression of his eyes. At the same time his was the face of the dining-room portrait alive before her

Her horse sprang jealously after his, and for some seconds they were riding side by side, stretching up the sharp pitch that led to the sheep-grazed table-land across which the hounds were streaming. Her companion never turned his head, and yet as they galloped the words of the night before came to her as plainly as if he had spoken them. "Lie well away to my right. Remember."

The hounds were inclining to the left, when, far away down the opposite slope of the hill and blue with distance—an open, well-fenced country lying between—lay the dark line of Markdean Wood.

The Master was out of sight. Sure of his point, he had slipped down the hillside, and was riding to nick in with his hounds, while in the plain below a little knot of skirters were bent on overtaking him for the sake of his lead.

HE DIDN'T EAT THE DONKEY.

Ah, there's where it is, you see. It's not the work so much as the worry that knocks us out and sends us prowling about after drugs and doctors.

But how are we going to stave off the worry? You'll have to ask that question of a wiser chap than I am; it beats me.

"It was worry," Mr. Salsbury says, "that told on my health—worry and anxiety over my business. I got into a very low and depressed condition; the energy and snap seemed clean gone out of me. I was worried about this too—one worry on top of another.

"So I did what anybody would, in that shape; I went to see a doctor. He appeared bothered to tell what ailed me, and finally said he thought I was suffering from a weak heart, and gave me medicine on that theory.

"It did me no good, however, and I only grew weaker and more nervous than I was before. I was very constipated and my appetite kept dwindling away until there was hardly a rag of it left. I have heard of people starving from lack of victuals, and here I was—starving from lack of desire for food and power to digest it. In the end it's all the same.

"At last the doctor gave me some medicine to salivate me. It made my head, from the crown to below the eyes, quite black; and also my hands as far as the wrists. I can assure you I was a sight to look at."

Mercury, probably. A dangerous thing to put inside the human body. A man who knew what he was talking about once wrote a piece of poetry on this medicine. Here are the last four lines:

"And when I must resign my breath,
Pray let me die a natural death,
And bid the world a long farewell
Without one dose of calomel."

So say we all of us.

"I got so weak I could hardly lift my hands," adds Mr. Salsbury. "Then something helpful happened. A man threw into my house a pamphlet telling of Mother Seigel's Syrup. I read the book and sent for the Syrup, and on going to bed I took a big dose—away beyond the directions—a teaspoonful and a half. In the early morning my bowels were opened *for the first time in a week*.

"Then I felt hungry and told my wife *I could eat a donkey and half his breakfast*, but I contented myself with a meal easier of digestion. After that I got my strength and spirits back like hauling in a line.

"When the doctor called again he said: 'My word! but you are picking up.' I was, but the remedy was Mother Seigel's Syrup. After two bottles I was all right, and tackled by business with a light heart. All this came to pass when I lived in Grimsby."—W. G. Salsbury, Upgate, Louth, Lincs., December 19th, 1899.

Mr. Salsbury is now manager of Bellamy Brothers, Mineral Waters Manufactory, Upgate, Louth, and is well known there.

Digitized by Google

Sara and her companion were alone on the line, which led straight over the plateau, and down the further slope of the hill. He glanced back at her once as he topped a stone wall, though the plunging movement of his horse he could neither check nor guide called for all his attention. At the same moment a church clock in the valley struck three, and turning away from him, Sara was soon well away to his right, and on the right of the line of hounds.

She saw him no more.

Down the hill again, she was able to improve her position and ultimately, after another forty minutes of steady riding, in which the skirters had the best of it, she came up with the fast converging field, just as the hounds ran their fox into Markdean Wood in the South Midshire country. There he went to earth, and as it was impossible to dig and the horses had had enough, the Master, mindful of the time and of the fifteen miles that lay between him and his kennels, gave the word for home. As he did so, he glanced round.

"Where's Benham?" he said to Fred Somers, who was mounting again for the ride back.

"He followed the line up the hill, I fancy," returned Fred. "I have not seen him since the young one bolted with him, just after the hounds picked up the scent again."

"He's mad to ride that horse, I told him so," observed a member of the hunt. "He'll bring him to grief inevitably."

"I should shoot him at once," said another.

"Or send him up to Tattersall's 'to carry a lady,'" grinned Fred.

Rupert Gower looked at Sara.

"Was that your bruising cousin, then?" he asked. "You saw him last, I suppose?"

"He was riding the line to a yard, straight over the hill," said Sara. "I was on his right."

The Master turned in his saddle.

"Hounds skirted the gravel-pits," he said quickly. "I wish I had a horse to send back. With that young one he might be killed."

"He was quite out of hand," returned Sara, changing colour. "Captain Gower, can't we go back? My horse can do it, I am sure."

"Of course, if you wish it," Rupert returned. "We are miles from home, and Benham, I should fancy, is the sort of man to be able to look after himself; but——"

"Come," she said, and swung off at a trot.

* * * * *

They found him at the bottom of the gravel pit, side by side with his horse. He lay quietly on his back, with no appearance of injury, but his neck was broken; the horse, with a fractured shoulder, was a few feet from him, as if the violence of the shock on landing had crippled him, and the half roll-over unseating his rider, Benham had been pitched on the head, never to move again.

It seemed to Sara, as she sat by him with his head on her lap, while Rupert rode off through the falling rain for assistance, as if the only duty she could now do him softened the remembrance of the feud with which he was associated, and as she closed the eyes that had looked so strangely at her, the tears that fell from her own, if partly the result of physical fatigue and excitement, came chiefly at the thought that the pluck of the dead man before her must certainly have won for him her obstinate father's liking, if circumstances had not stood all his life in the way of their meeting. She was too kind-hearted not to regret the past ill-feeling, which looked as ill-feeling does when viewed by the strong light of eternity, small and pitiful to a retrospective eye.

So Charles Benham died and was buried, and Rupert Gower reigned in his stead. The will, upon which the Carmel guests had speculated idly, proved to be made absolutely in favour of the young cousin Charles had never wittingly seen and Sara found herself, as his heir, a rich woman and owner of the best appointed hunting-box in North Midshire.

Mrs. Mercer hugged herself on her acute reduction of the odds against Rupert, but Lady Lucy, who was speculative, puzzled herself untiringly over the appearance of Sir Walter Gascoigne, in the form of Charles Benham, to Sara in the room he had always been traditionally said to haunt.

Sara herself did not care to talk of it. The story was a tragic one to her, despite its happy ending, and for years she carefully avoided the hill where, one January afternoon, the sharp report of a gun had seemed to divide her life into two parts, as its charge sent the half-broken hunter to follow the Master whose death he had occasioned, into the unknown land.

AMES SAVILE.

MRS. SNIFFWELL: "Why, Bridget, you have been eating onions!"

Bridget: "Shure, mum, you're a moind reader!"

"SHE's a woman for people to rave over."

"Indeed?"

"Yes; she lives in a flat and practises singing six hours a day."

FOOTBALL WHO'S WHO.

Cloth, price 1s. net.

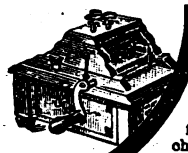
Post Free 1s. 3d.

Contains the biographies of nearly 1,000 of the best-known players, together with statistics and much general information relating to all the prominent Association Clubs. It gives information as to the various leagues, cups, and other trophies, rules, fixtures, etc., etc., and will be found invaluable to all followers of football.

Copies may be had from any Bookseller or from the Publisher,

17 HENRIETTA STREET, W.C.

Digitized by Google



THERE is not a musical instrument made that can approach the "Orchestral" for beauty of tone, cheapness, and ease of manipulation.

DRAPER'S

ORCHESTRAL ORGANETTE

is a real organ in miniature, containing two full sets of reeds and three stops. Productive of wonderful variations of tone and effect. Can be played at sight.

A CHILD CAN PLAY IT.

PRICE 35/- A Marvel of Cheapness. Cash returned if unsatisfactory. Also supplied for Easy Payments. WORTH £4:4:0

THIS IS FREE!

Everyone can have a copy of our handsome new Catalogue of Organs, Jewellery, Watches, &c., FREE on application.

J. M. DRAPER,
Dept. 366,
Organette Works,
BLACKBURN.

THE MOST NUTRITIOUS.

EPPS'S

GRATEFUL—COMFORTING.

COCOA

BREAKFAST—SUPPER.

DRUNKENNESS

CURED. This can be done with or without patient's knowledge. Send me a stamp and I will tell you how. (Send no money.) Address, in confidence, Mrs. C. H. (Room 8), 195 Oxford Street, London, W.

SULPHOLINE LOTION,

For clearing the skin from Spots, Blemishes, Redness, Roughness, giving a Beautiful Complexion and pleasing appearance.

SHILLING BOTTLES.

VARICOCELE.

Every man suffering from Varicocele and the allied troubles, should send for treatise, describing their Causes, Symptoms, Results, and Successful and Painless Treatment without surgical operation or the use of cumbersome trusses and electrical appliances. Will be sent sealed, post free, three stamps.

S. S. MURRAY,
7 Southampton Row, London, W.C.

ALL FAT PEOPLE

can safely Reduce Weight and cure Corpulency permanently by taking TRILENE TABLETS (Regd.) for a few weeks. They are small, agreeable, harmless, and never fail to IMPROVE both HEALTH and FIGURE without Change of Diet. An English Countess writes: "*Your Trilene Tablets act admirably.*"

Send 2s. 6d. to THE TRILENE CO., Sole Proprietors, 66 Pinsbury Pavement, London.

SAMPLES OF TESTIMONIALS.

Princess Liechtenstein writes from Landsberg, Austria: "Pray send your excellent tablets directly." Mr. Canham, 87 Alexandra Road, Norwich: "Tablets cured my wife of extreme stoutness; it has never returned." Mrs. H. Cox, 28 Watnall Road, Hucknall Torkard, writes: "The Tablets reduced me 1½ stone." Mrs. S. Alexander, 102 Dixon Street, New Swindon, says: "They reduced me 2lb., and I am cured." Mrs. Darnley-Smith, of Landscove Vicarage, Ashburton, says: "Tablets have reduced me very much." Mrs. Crossley, of Rose Hill, Torver, Coniston, says: "I weigh much less and can breathe so much easier; I am delighted."

HAVE YOU TRIED KEATING'S LOZENGES FOR YOUR COUGH?

ANY DOCTOR WILL TELL YOU "there is no better Cough Medicine."—One gives relief: if you suffer from cough try them but once; they *will* cure, and they *will not* injure your health; an increasing sale of over 80 years is a certain test of their value. Sold in 1s½d. tins.

BIG PRIZE SCHEME

For MARCH, 1901.

25,602 PRIZES, value £10,000

LIST OF PRIZES:

1	Cash Prize £50	£50 0
1	Cash Prize, £40	40 0
10	Handsome Pianos, in walnut, £40 each	400 0
5	Cash Prizes, £25 each ...	125 0
10	Gents' Bicycles, Freewheels, £17 17s.	178 10
10	Ladies' Bicycles, Freewheels, £17 17s.	178 10
10	Cash Prizes, £10 each ...	100 0
20	Jones's Sewing Machines, £8 each	160 0
20	Cash Prizes, £5 each ...	100 0
50	Rolled Gold Lever Watches, £2 10s. each	125 0
100	Cash Prizes, £2 each ...	200 0
50	Dinner Services (56 pieces), £2 each	100 0
50	Folding Bed Chairs, £2 each	100 0
50	Ladies' Travelling Trunks, £2 each	100 0
200	Cash Prizes, £1 each ...	200 0
200	Ladies' Leather Hatboxes, £1 each	200 0
100	Basket Arm Chairs, upholstered, £1	100 0
400	pairs Blankets, 15s. per pair	300 0
200	½-doz Electro-plated Forks, large, 15s. per ½ doz. ...	150 0
200	½-doz. Electro-plated Forks, small, 15s. per ½-doz. ...	£150 0
500	Ladies' Umbrellas, 15/- ea.	375 0
500	Gents' Umbrellas, 15s. each	375 0
400	Best Electro-plated Teapots, 15s. each	300 0
400	Handsome Meat Carvers, with Steel in Case, 15s. set	300 0
1000	Cash Prizes, 10s. each ...	500 0
1000	pairs Bed Sheets 10s. each	500 0
1000	White Linen Table Cloths, 10s. each	500 0
1000	Ladies' Umbrellas, 7/6 each	375 0
1000	Ladies' Leather Purses, 7/6 each	375 0
200	½-doz. Table Knives, 7/6 per ½-doz.	75 0
200	½-doz. Dessert do., 7/6 per ½-doz.	75 0
2000	Ladies' Dress Lengths, Navy Blue Serge, 7/6 each...	750 0
2000	Cash Prizes of 5s. each ...	500 0
4715	Ladies' Leather Handbags, 4s. each	943 0
4000	½-doz. Fine Linen Cambric Handkerchiefs, 2/6 per ½-doz.	500 0
4000	Handsome Work-boxes, 2/6 each	500 0
25,602		£10,000 0

CONDITIONS OF COMPETITION.

Every tablet of Watson's Matchless Cleanser is enclosed in a Wrapper, with signature up the centre of same. Save the WHOLE Wrapper (tops of Wrappers will be disqualified), and send, postage or carriage paid, to Joseph Watson & Sons Limited, Whitehall Soap Works, Leeds, not later than MARCH 31ST, 1901. Each package will be counted as one lot; separate entries must be sent under separate covers. If any parcel arrives, postage or carriage not being fully paid, such parcel will be refused. Be careful to see that the full postage is paid. Each parcel sent in must contain the full name and address of sender, and number of Wrappers sent in must be marked on the same paper. On outside of parcel write legibly "Prize Competition." The prizes will be awarded in the above order to the senders of the highest numbers of Wrappers. A list, giving result of the Competition, will be sent with each prize when it is sent out. Every wrapper must have first contained soap. No employees of Joseph Watson & Sons Limited will be eligible. All prizes will be despatched about April 25th.

WATSON'S MATCHLESS CLEANSER

The Best Soap for all purposes, still holds the lead. Quality perfect. Is the Housewife's Friend. It saves her health, her strength, her wealth; washes her clothes with ease and leaves them sweet and pure, and will not injure the most delicate fabric. It has the largest sale of 1-lb. tablets in the world. Sold by all Grocers, Oilmen, &c., throughout the United Kingdom. Buy it. Prove it and secure a Prize.

THE "GEO R. SIMS" HAIR RENEWER "TATCHO"

"While you wait"

LARGE TRIAL BOTTLES TO-DAY. 1s. 6d.

Sent Post Free in plain package, twenty one stamps.

MRS. BROWN POTTER, whose beautiful hair is the envy of her sex, writes:

"I Use only 'TATCHO.'"

If your hair is falling or failing, you have your remedy. Don't hesitate. Use "TATCHO." The result will surprise you and will be intensely gratifying. It is sold in bottles by Chemists and Hairdressers all over the world, 2/9 and 5/-, or may be had direct in plain sealed package, post free, 2/11 and 5/3. Address:
The Geo. R. Sims Co., 81b Great Queen St., London, W.C.

Digitized by Google

Transposed Letter Competition.

First Prize	**£5.**
Second Prize	**£2.**
Third Prize	**£1.**

LIST No. 2.

AENP; GRLO; HSTU; EILV.

Here are four sets of letters, and prizes will be awarded to the competitors who send in the longest words containing the letters in each of their combinations.

For example, the following words contain the letters IST in their different combinations: fIST, ITSelf, SIT, STIpend, ouTSIde, adverTISe.

CONDITIONS.

1. Write your attempts on one side of the paper only, and keep until two other lists have appeared.

2. All words must appear in Nuttall's Standard Dictionary.

3. The letters of the combinations must either be underlined or put in capitals in the words in which they occur.

4. In the event of a tie, the prize will be divided.

5. The Editor's decision is final, and competitors must enter on that understanding.

RESULT OF BRAIN GYMNASIUM.

Nos. 229 to 234.

THE prize of £2 has been awarded this week to Mr. Percy Longhurst, of The Nook, Sutton, Surrey, his attempt being the first correct one dealt with.

A copy of "Hagar of Homerton," by Mrs. H. E. Dudeney, has been sent to each of the following:

C. D. Stephens, Fratton, Portsmouth.
J. M. Child, Clarence Street, Derby.
D. G. Jelley, Cantwell Road, Plumstead.
Miss Emma Cheil, Gillingham Road, Gillingham.
A. Gresham, Bradstock Road, South Hackney.
C. H. Poynter, Exmoor Road, Southampton.
W. Gyde, Warley, Essex.
H. F. Birch, Boleyn Road, Stoke Newington, N.
F. Lucas, Paynes Road, Freemantle, Hants.
W. H. Glover, Brundrett's Road, Chorlton-cum-Hardy.

SOLUTION OF BRAIN GYMNASIUM.

Nos. 235 to 240.

No. 235.

A R E A
R O A N
E A S T
A N T W E R P
E M I R
R I P E
P R E Y

No. 236.

C has M
H ydr A
A nge R
U tte R
C orollar Y
E lb A
R ampan T

No. 237. 660 inverted becomes 990, which, being divided by 3 fives 330, i.e., the half of 660.

No. 238.

L y R e
E m B roil
O r I son
H e N na Heilbron.

No. 239. "A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush."

No. 240. Bon-bon.

SHORT STORIES ADVERTISEMENT RATES.

Single column, per inch, per insertion	£0 10 0
Double ,, ,, ,, ...	1 0 0
Full page inside, facing page of matter, either white paper or 2nd or 3rd page of cover, or back page, per insertion	10 0 0
Half-page ,, ,, ,, ...	5 0 0
Quarter-page ,, ,, ...	2 10 0
Eighth-page ,, ,, ...	1 5 0
Front page, whole ,, ,, ...	12 10 0
,, half ,, ,, ...	6 5 0

All spaces above one-eighth of a page are charged at per page rate. Series discount: 5 per cent. for 13, 10 per cent. for 26, 15 per cent. for 52 insertions.

Black blocks are charged 25 per cent. extra. All advertisements are subject to approval. All copy must be sent in by Noon on Tuesday, Nov. 6th, if intended for the issue on sale Nov. 20th, and dated November 24th. The Proprietors reserve the right to hold over or suspend the insertion of any advertisement without prejudice to other insertions on order. All communications should be addressed to the Advertisement Manager, "Pearson's Weekly" Offices, Henrietta Street, London, W.C.

Printed and published by C. ARTHUR PEARSON Limited, Pearson's Buildings, Henrietta Street, London, W.C.

Digitized by Google

ATLAS LOCKSTITCH MACHINE.

Works by hand or treadle. Guaranteed 4 years. Equal in quality and size to any machine **39/-**

To ensure satisfaction, we will send machine on receipt of 5/- P.O. for **ONE MONTH'S TRIAL.** Balance can be paid **5/- Monthly.** Call or write for designs and Samples of work.

THE ATLAS SEWING MACHINE CO.
188B High St., Camden Town, London, N.W.,
63 Seven Sisters Rd., N.; 14 High Rd., Kilburn.

WHY BE FAT?

When a lady, who has discovered a simple means of Self-Cure will be happy to send particulars of same to any sufferer from this distressing complaint. Free on receipt of stamped addressed envelope. ADDRESS:

Mrs. TREVOR WELLS,
63 *HIGH HOLBORN, LONDON, W.C.*

POST FREE THREE STAMPS

A Treatise on the Modern and Successful Treatment of Nervous Diseases and Exhaustion, by local absorption.

Fully up to the advanced ideas on the subject.
THE MARSTON CO.,
59 and 60 Chancery Lane, London, W.C.

DEVONSHIRE CREAM

(Really Genuine.) In Patent Air-tight Tins.
½-lb., 1/4; 1-lb., 2/4; 2-lb., 4/-, including Tin and Postage.

Mrs. Conyers,
MORCHARD BISHOP, DEVON.

A SUM

OF

from 12s. to 25s. per week.

can be earned in spare hours or evenings by either sex everywhere. Send addressed envelope for particulars to Box 24, Eclipse Works, 89 Aldersgate Street, London.

Royal Magazine 4d.

"WORTH A GUINEA A BOX."

BEECHAM'S PILLS

FOR ALL

BILIOUS & NERVOUS DISORDERS,
Sick Headache, Constipation, Wind and Pains in Stomach, Impaired Digestion, Disordered Liver, and Female Ailments.

SALE OVER SIX MILLION BOXES YEARLY.

In Boxes, 1s. 1½d. and 2s. 9d. each, with full directions.

Prepared only by the Proprietor,

THOMAS BEECHAM, St. Helens, Lancashire.

Sold by all Druggists and Patent Medicine Dealers everywhere.

KOKO FOR THE HAIR

Photo. from Life. The original, with other fine heads of hair, may be seen at 113 Regent Street, London

KOKO
FOR THE HAIR

KOKO FOR THE HAIR

Is a tonic, cleansing, invigorating preparation, causes the hair to grow, keeps it soft and pliant, imparts to it the *lustre and freshness of youth*, eradicates dandriff, *prevents hair from falling*, is *the most cleanly* of all hair preparations, and is *perfectly harmless.*

OLD PEOPLE LIKE IT

for its wonderful power to *invigorate decayed hair*, and induce an entirely new growth when that is possible.

MIDDLE-AGED PEOPLE LIKE IT,

because it keeps dandriff away, and makes the hair grow thick and strong.

YOUNG LADIES LIKE IT

As a dressing, because it gives the hair a *beautiful glossy lustre*, and enables them to dress it in whatever form they wish, where it will remain.

CHILDREN LIKE IT,

Because it keeps the hair and scalp cool and clean, *allays irritation*, and keeps the hair in whatever position desired.

THEY ALL LIKE IT,

Because it is as *pure as crystal*, perfectly colourless, contains no poisonous substance, no sugar of lead, sulphur, nitrate of silver, or grease, and does not soil or colour *the scalp, face, or the most delicate fabric in clothing*, produces a wonderfully pleasant and cooling effect on the head, and *no other dressing is needed* to give the hair the most elegant appearance possible. Try it once, and you will use no other.

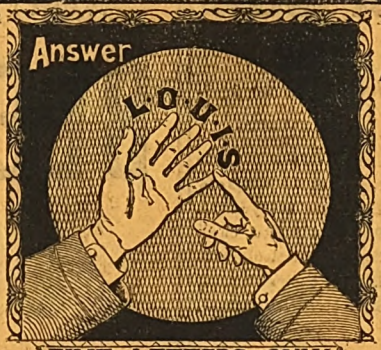
IT CONTAINS NO COLOURING MATTER OR DYE.

KOKO FOR THE HAIR

Digitized by Google

HOW DO YOU SPELL

VELVETEEN?



FIVE LETTERS ONLY.

Don't Forget this when you buy.

EVERY YARD IS STAMPED

L-O-U-I-S.

Reckitt's PARIS Blue.

The Best is the Cheapest.

Height 11½in. Width 7in. Depth 5in.

THE "RYE" ALARUM 18/-

Brass Flag.

Carved Oak Battlement.

Enamel Dial.

"Seconds," "Hour," "Minute," "Alarum" Hands.

Polished Brass Mounts

Solid Oak Case.

OUR CASH-WITH-ORDER-PRICE IS ONLY 16/-

OR

FREE TRIAL FOR 2/6

J. N. Masters Ltd. will send to any reader of *Short Stories* this 18/- Alarum on receipt of 2/6.

If you approve of it you send 3/- on receipt, and 2/6 each month for five months.

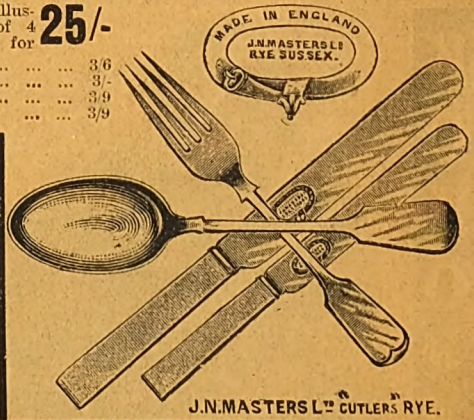
If you do not approve of it, we will refund the cash sent if Alarum is returned at once.

50 Articles (Illustrations of 4 of them) for **25/-**

6	Table Knives	3/6
6	Dessert ,, ...	3/-
6	,, Forks	3/9
6	,, Spoons	3/9

OUR WHOLESALE CASH-WITH-ORDER-PRICE

For this 25/- parcel of cutlery is 22/- only.



J.N.MASTERS Ltd CUTLERS RYE.

OR

J. N. MASTERS Ltd. will supply any reader of *Short Stories* with this 25/- parcel of Cutlery on monthly payments as follows:

You send us 2/6 deposit, and we will send you this 25/- Parcel on approval.

If you approve of it, you send 2/6 on receipt, and 5/- each month for 4 months.

If the Parcel is not approved of, we will refund your money if the Parcel is returned to us within 7 days.

EACH PARCEL CONTAINS

		Prices separate.
6	white Bone Table Knives...	3/6
6	,, ,, Dessert ,, ...	3/-
6	good quality Table Forks...	5/3
6	,, ,, Dessert ,, ...	3/9
2	,, ,, Table Spoons..	1/9
6	,, ,, Dessert ,, ...	3/9
6	,, ,, Tea Spoons ...	2/-
1	pair Sugar Tongs	1/-
1	only Sugar Sifter...	1/6
6	good quality Egg Spoons .	1/6
2	,, ,, Salt Spoons ...	1/-
2	,, ,, Mustard Spoons	1/-
50		**29/-**

J. N. MASTERS LTD., WATCHMAKERS, JEWELLERS, ETC., RYE, SUSSEX.

Digitized by Google

6 WINNERS IN FOOTBALL COMPETITION GET £16 13s. 4d. EACH.

SHORT STORIES

A WEEKLY MAGAZINE FOR HOME AND TRAIN

No. 619. FOR WEEK ENDING NOVEMBER 10TH, 1900. [ONE PENNY.

GIGANTIC BANKRUPTCY SALE CATALOGUE.

Re BRITISH CARPET WEAVING CO., late of Old St., London.

F. HODGSON & SONS, of LEEDS, have purchased for Cash the whole of the business goodwill, and effects from Official Trustee in Bankruptcy. Illustrated Sale Catalogue of Brussels, Axminster, Velvet, and Foreign Carpets and Hearthrugs can be had Post Free, if mentioning SHORT STORIES, 10/11/1900.

4/6

To readers of SHORT STORIES, 10/11/1900. On receipt of Postal Order or stamps value (Regd.) we will send you the **Largest Genuine Reversible Carpet in Brussels Finish, with Rug,** ever sold at the Price direct from the Looms to any address on receipt of amount. Suitable for drawing-room, dining-room, bedroom, &c., bordered and woven in Brussels Patterns, as an advertisement for our goods, thus saving any middle profit. Remember, these are woven, and are made of a material almost equal to wool.

Thousands of these Carpets have been already sold at double these prices.

SPECIAL OFFER.—2 Carpets and 2 Rugs, 8/-.

Prodigious sale of the "PRUDENTIAL"

BRUSSELETTE CARPETS

Admittedly The Marvel of the Age.

Woven and Reversible, rich Brussels and Turkey Patterns and Colourings, superior quality, with handsome Border to match. A Marvel of Excellence and Beauty. These Carpets are superb Imitations of real Brussels, and except by the closest scrutiny, the difference cannot be detected.

6 ft. by 6 ft.	2/11	REDUCED SALE PRICE.		6 ft. by 7½ft.	3/11
6 ft. by 9 ft.	4/5	7½ft. by 9 ft.	5/11	9 ft. by 9 ft.	7/6	9 ft. by 10½ft.	8/6
9 ft. by 12 ft.	8/6	10½ft. by 12 ft.	11/6	9 ft. by 15 ft.	12/6	12 ft. by 12 ft.	12/9
12 ft. by 13½ft.	14/6	12 ft. by 15 ft.	15/9	12 ft. by 18 ft.	19/6	12 ft. by 21 ft.	22/6

When ordering, please mention if for Bed, Dining, Drawing, or Sitting Room, and any particular colour preferred.

A Reversible Hearthrug (Reg.) to match, **sent for 1/6 extra, size 2yd 1yd. A Stock of 10,000 Patent Wadded Quilts, Toraliums, or Bed Covers, Reversible** (as illustration). Covered with Oriental Soft Sateen, and on reverse side another beautiful floral design. Size 56in. by 60in.

These Quilts are offered below anything in the Wholesale Trade, and cause the greatest consternation to the buyer, wondering how they can be produced for the money.

AT AN ENORMOUS REDUCTION TO CLEAR OUT.

Sale Price

3/6

each, postage 6d. extra.

SPECIAL OFFER: 3 Quilts for 10s., or 6 for 19s. 6d., or 12 for 38s. Cheques and P.O.'s payable to—

F. HODGSON & SONS, WOODSLEY ROAD, LEEDS.

Allen Foster & Co.

THE LONDON MANUFACTURERS

Buy Direct at First Cost from the Leading Firm of London Manufacturers.

DESIGN No. 2130.

TEN-AND-SIXPENCE.

The Famous Sacque Back Coat and Skirt Costume can be ordered with the coat made double or single-breasted, produced in the **Specialite Serge** or **Venetian Cloth,** all colours. It has a velvet collar, and the skirt is cut full with the box-pleated back—grand value for **Half-a-Guinea.** Testimonials from all parts. Securely packed, and sent carriage paid 6d. extra. This Coat and Skirt also makes up exceedingly well in the **Pretoria Tweed** or **Melton Coating.** Price only **17/6**; carriage paid, 6d. extra.

10/6.

Design No. 2130.

PATTERNS FREE.

Design No. 2131. 10/6

Write for NEW WINTER SKETCH BOOK AND CATALOGUE OF BARGAINS.

PATTERNS & ORDER FORMS POST FREE.

Ladies are invited to call and inspect goods at our new Showrooms,

47 Golden Lane, E.C.

Business hours 9 a.m. to 7 p.m., Saturdays 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

DESIGN No. 2131.

HALF-A-GUINEA.

The Fashionable three-quarter Sacque Jacket, 30-in. long. Made in a superior Beaver Cloth in Black, Fawn, Brown, and Royal. This Jacket has a Chesterfield front with the new side pockets. Price only **10/6**; carriage, 6d. **The greatest value on the Market.** Send for one. All sizes in stock. In sending order, give bust measurement under arms. Money returned if not approved.

DESIGN No. 356.

SEVEN-and-SIXPENCE.

The Latest Fashion in Skirts. The new pleated flounce skirts made in good Black and Navy Serge. Six rows of stitching down each seam—a very smart Skirt. Price only **7/6.** Carriage 5d. extra. All sizes in stock. Send for one.

PATTERNS FREE.

ALLEN FOSTER & CO.,

THE LONDON MANUFACTURERS,

47 Golden Lane, Barbican, London, E.C.

Digitized by Google

"WORTH A GUINEA A BOX."

BEECHAM'S PILLS

FOR ALL

BILIOUS & NERVOUS DISORDERS,
Sick Headache, Constipation, Wind and Pains in Stomach, Impaired Digestion, Disordered Liver, and Female Ailments.

SALE OVER SIX MILLION BOXES YEARLY.

In Boxes, 1s. 1½d. and 2s. 9d. each, with full directions.

Prepared only by the Proprietor,

THOMAS BEECHAM, St. Helens, Lancashire.

Sold by all Druggists and Patent Medicine Dealers everywhere.

ASTHMA

WHY is it generally thought that there is no cure for Asthma, CHRONIC BRONCHITIS, Shortness of Breath, BLOOD SPITTING, &c.?

BECAUSE the usual treatments only confine themselves to combating single symptoms instead of attacking the root of the disease.

BE SURE THERE IS ONE

ABSOLUTE LASTING CURE.

Sufferers will receive, Post Free, FREE OF CHARGE, particulars of the Famous WEIDHAAS' HOME TREATMENT, when applying to Paul Weidhaas, Hygienic Institute, 16 T.A., Buckingham Road, Brighton.

Mr. Weidhaas has tried the treatment on himself, after having been given up as incurable, and cured himself, and had then practised it for over 19 years in many thousands of special cases. Many having suffered for over 40 years have been cured by his treatment (in some instances even at the age of 70 or 80 years), after having been GIVEN UP AS INCURABLE.

No interference with daily occupation. Send description of complaint, and mention if you suffer from COLD FEET.

Read the following Testimonial, one out of scores received:—

BRONCHIAL ASTHMA (7 Years' Standing) CURED.

I am only a working man (bricklayer by trade), and out of eight years I had only been able to work a few weeks altogether. I feel that you have made my fortune, for it seemed as if I were never to be able to work in comfort again. For weeks and weeks before I came under your treatment I could not go to bed. When I did I could not think of lying down, but had to be propped up almost in a sitting posture. I can lie down now in perfect ease and comfort, and wake up refreshed and strengthened for my day's work. Hitherto I never woke up without a feeling of misery. Before the treatment to walk on level ground was sometimes hard work; now hills do not come amiss to me in the least. I used to feel as if I should drop with suffocation, and the slightest exertion or worry would make the attack worse.

Norwich. BENJ. E. GOWEN. (Full address on application.)

Mr. B. E. GOWEN. (From a photo.)

THE DIRECTOR is prepared to pay £1,000 to any Charitable Institution if the above is not a genuine extract from the patient's own letter. The original may be seen at the Paul Weidhaas' Hygienic Institute by any bona-fide inquirers.

CURABLE

COMPLEXION

Those who desire a nice white Skin, free from Blemish, should use CRICINE TOILET CREAM. It improves the Complexion wonderfully, and acts as a tonic to the skin. In two sizes, 2/6 and 5/-, post free. A sample 2/6 jar will be sent on receipt of 1/3 in stamps.

The CRICINE Company,
REGENT HOUSE, REGENT STREET, LONDON.

TOO STOUT.

I was for years, by chance I came across a simple home remedy that reduced me from 17st. to 10st. 12lbs., and I will willingly send particulars free to any sufferer enclosing stamp. Mrs. L. E. FELL, 195 Oxford Street, London, W.

VIE D'OR FOR THE HAIR.

THE AMERICAN TREATMENT.

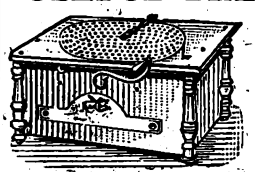
Vie d'Or puts 10 years on the life of the hair.

SOLE AGENT:
GUSTAV ROSSELLI, 4 New Park Street, Park Lane, LEEDS.
Price 2/9 post free.

HOME NOTES

1D. WEEKLY.

USEFUL PRESENTS.



HAND ORGANS from cash. Made in three sizes, in black and gold case. Full tone. Six metal tunes, plays all songs, hymns, or dance music. Sent on receipt of 5s. P.O., if desired, balance 5s. monthly. Send for list of tunes, prices, &c. ATLAS, CO, 1823 High Street, Camden Town, London; 63 Seven Sisters Road, N.; and 14 High Road, Kilburn. 20/-

VARICOCELE.

Every man suffering from Varicocele and the allied troubles, should send for treatise, describing their Causes, Symptoms, Results, and Successful and Painless Treatment without surgical operation or the use of cumbersome trusses and electrical appliances. Will be sent sealed, post free, three stamps.

S. S. MURRAY,
7 Southampton Row, London, W.C.

THE MOST NUTRITIOUS.

EPPS'S

GRATEFUL—COMFORTING.

COCOA

BREAKFAST—SUPPER.

BIRKBECK BANK

Southampton Buildings, Chancery Lane, London.

2% on CURRENT ACCOUNTS, on the minimum monthly balances when not drawn below £100.

The BIRKBECK ALMANACK, with full particulars, post free. FRANCIS RAVENSCROFT, *Manager.*

HOLLOWAY'S PILLS & OINTMENT.

PRE-EMINENT FOR 60 YEARS.

Digitized by Google

SHORT STORIES

No. 619.] [One Penny.

For the Week Ending Nov. 10th, 1900.

GRANDFATHER'S WILL.

"There's nothing very much you can do, Miss Judith. Keep him quiet, and don't worry him about taking nourishment; as to the medicine, well, I don't think I'd urge it against his will. Likely to be a long affair? Well—no, my dear young lady, I fear not. We could hardly hope for a recovery at Mr. Warrington's time of life; eighty-two, did you say? Dear me, I hardly thought he was so old. Well, goodbye, my dear, goodbye, sure you wouldn't like anyone sent to help you? No—well, then, I'll look in again to-morrow."

Judith Warrington stood, and watched the doctor's phaeton out of sight. Far as the eye could reach, his was the only figure to be seen; along the wide expanse of moorland stretching beyond the fields ripe for the harvest, the heather, swayed in lazy undulating waves, filling the air with the sharp pungent odour inseparable from the breezy uplands of a moor-side farm.

The girl stretched out her arms, and took a long, deep breath, as though she could never get her fill of the spice-laden air. Presently, she moved towards the farmyard gate, stopping to pick a red carnation and a sweet-scented clove.

She was a well-made woman, tall, with long lithe arms, a supple figure, and a grace of movement, which, with the warmth, and depth of her rich colouring, were foreign to the fashion of beauty round Moorstables; the women of the district being for the most part, like their cattle, lean and brown.

She raised her face, to meet the full glow of the sun, curving her warm ripe lips into a smile, as the rays fell, hot as lover's kisses on her round white throat, and finely moulded cheek.

"I could almost fancy it was Dick," she muttered: then with a sudden frown, and change of attitude, she fell to plucking the petals of the flowers she carried, strewing them on the sun baked-path, with swift, relentless fingers.

"That's how I would like to serve Madge Bartlett though for all her pinky cheeks, and yellow hair, Dick thinks no more of her than thistledown," and she laughed in a defiant, mirthless sort of fashion.

The flowers destroyed, she went back slowly to the house. "Mollie," she cried, to a weary looking woman by the fire, "the Doctor says grandfather won't last longer than a while, he may go off at any minute."

All rights reserved.]

"Lord save us, you don't say so, Miss Judith, and you cousin Richard not at home, and master's will, and al beside, dearie me, it's sudden."

"What do you mean Mollie? I thought grandfather made his will last Christmas."

"It ain't a bit of good for you to look so fierce, Miss Judith, master tore up that 'one 'cos Richard angered him; I did hear tell, that the old man had left the farm to his cousin, Robert Stichell, master allus did cotton to him a bit,—being so near himself, he liked Bob's mean, close-fisted sort o' ways."

"You're not telling me the truth, Mollie, it's no good pretending you 'heard say,' you're keeping something back—something I mean to know. It's no use, Mollie, I'll make you speak before I've done; now, will you answer me or—" Judith's long fingers tightened on the woman's arm, gradually sliding down, until they clasped the thin, and withered wrist, turning and twisting, till the wretched creature screamed, though more in apprehension, than from actual pain.

"Will you answer?"

"Lord forgive me, you're a wicked woman, Judith," cried the poor old thing, "I promised master, and I'm skeered to break my word."

Judith leant forward once again, but with a shrill cry the woman seized her hand.

"I'll speak," she said, "Miss Judith—oh don't—don't; master sent for Lawyer Heydon one day when you and Dick were out. He left the farm to Robert Stichells, because he said 'Dick was a fool and you were worse,' and 'nary a one of you should have a penny,' and he made me sign my name—Margaret Hall—at foot of it, as plain as print. That's all, Miss Judith," she added as the girl stood sullenly before her, "you've a bad, black heart and if it wasn't for fear of what you'd do to master, I'd leave you all alone this blessed night, to see him die."

"You'd best take care, Mollie, grandfather's not dead yet, and if I tell him you've been talking of his secrets, he'd turn you out, as soon as look at you."

The woman shivered as if the girl's speech recalled some awesome memory, and watched the tall slight figure up the stairs, with a cowed expression in her faded, year-dimmed eyes.

Grandfather Warrington lay in a stupor, in the old

Digitized by Google

"It's no use, Mollie, I'll make you speak before I've done."

oak bed; lost to every other sense, he still retained desire for warmth, and even with the glorious August sun flooding the room, a small wood fire burnt brightly in the grate. Judith flung back the lattice window, and crouching on the floor, studied her face in the small glass which hung upon the wall. She picked a spray of clematis through the open window, and arranged it in her hair, and turning in the collar of her gown, tried to fancy she was dressing for a ball.

In the flush of youth and beauty, her health and strength seemed almost insolent in contrast with the old man on the bed—feeble, palsied, and yellow as a sun-dried pea. She turned her head and smiled at the comely face that even the cheap bit of mirror could not utterly distort, cast down her eyes, showed her white, even teeth, as the play actress had done, on one never-to-be-forgotten day, when she and Dick had stolen off to the fair, thereby incurring her grandfather's wrath.

"Get out, you good for nothing, idle hussy, get out I say."

The glass fell from Judith's hand, the flower tumbled from her hair, grandfather Warrington galvanised into life was watching her with his bright, beady eyes, keen as a ferret's.

"You're ill, grandfather," she retorted, "and ill people don't understand what they say, so I'll forgive you this time. Lie down," she added, threateningly, "or I'll make you."

The old man glared like a trapped fox. For years he had ruled Judith, and his whole household with a rod of iron. She was the daughter of a recreant son of his who had married "a foreign woman," and got served rightly—in the local opinion—for his pains; foreign, in this case, not meaning the native of another country, but merely of a distant Shire.

Probably the cold looks, and colder words with which she had been greeted, had something to do with the "foreign woman's" early death, for she died when Judith was but two years old, and her husband, having, apparently, exhausted all his strength in the one act of rebellion he had ever dared to perpetrate, deprived of his partner in revolt, died shortly after; and Judith was given, grudgingly enough, food and shelter, by the old man, together with Richard, the only child of his eldest son, who, with his wife, had died of a malignant fever, some years previously.

"Give me my stick," the old man muttered threateningly, but the girl moved it even farther from his side.

"You can't hurt me now," she said, "it's my turn this time, grandfather."

A light breeze had sprung up, and the fresh air, while it merely cooled the hot blood in the young woman's veins, chilled the sluggish current of the old man's life, until he shivered, and tried to draw the clothes up tighter round him.

Judith noticed the movement, and left her writing at the table, to pull the window to.

"Judith, I'm dying," the voice sounded hoarse and strained. "Give me some drink, some drink, I say."

She came leisurely to the bed side, and placed a document in front of the old man, then, quickly returning to the table, she held out to him a pen with one hand, and a glass of water in the other.

"Drink first," she said, "and then sign this, at the bottom. It's your will," she added, "leaving the farm to Richard. There's nothing mentioned in it about me. I want Dick to have it all. Sign grandfather," and she tried to force the pen into his trembling fingers.

He shook his head and motioned her away.

"You don't think you're going to better me, do you?" she said, "you *shall* sign, I say you shall."

With a sudden effort the old man sat up, his long gaunt arms stretched out, his face alight with ineffectual rage, and baffled anger. Suddenly, his lips parted in the ghastly mockery of a smile, a cunning leer clouded the brightness of his small black eyes, and a hoarse chuckle contracted the muscles of his throat.

"You were allus a smart girl, Judith," he croaked, "you've got the better of gran'father haven't you? You're a bonnie lass, my dear, a bonnie lass, but gold is better than good looks, my lass, better than good looks."

He peered at her from under the shawl, that was wrapped round his head, and chuckling in a hoarse, mirthless sort of fashion signed his name, in somewhat faint, but quite distinguishable characters.

"Gold buys love, my dear," he said "all the world over; and never a Warrington yet, except your father, simple fool, who didn't look at the setting of a pretty face, afore he took it."

For the first time, Judith grew frightened at her own daring, was it possible that Mollie had lied to her about the previous will, could grandfather mean that Richard would not marry her unless she had money? Visions of Madge Bartlett with her dowry of £200 flitted through her mind. "Grandfather," she said, "what do you mean, tell me, here—drink this," and she held the

Digitized by Google

glass once more up to his lips. But with a strange accession of fury the old man dashed the tumbler to the ground.

"Get out," he screamed, "get out, or else I'll revile you,"

He raised his hand, his lips opened,—terrified at his gleaming eyes, and shaking head, the girl rushed to the door, and called for "Mollie."

He was still sitting up when the old woman came, and pointed to the document for her to sign. She obeyed his gesture unquestioningly, and then he pointed to Judith, watching her with a malignant grin, as she wrote in her clear firm hand upon the paper. Then once more the look of dulness settled on his face, covering it like a mask; he fell back rigid, and immovable, and so remained, until next night he died.

"I didn't think your grandfather would have gone off quite so suddenly," said Lawyer Heydon, to young Richard Warrington, as they drove over to the farm. "He was such a hearty looking man, that one forgot he was over eighty, I suppose."

Dick nodded, but not being at any time given to loquacity, made no other sign of comprehension. "It's a fine property," the lawyer went on, "a fine property and no mistake. The old man was bad to beat at a bargain, that I must say."

Dick smiled, and glanced round contentedly at the acres, and acres of cornfields, the hay stacks that filled the air with their faint sweet scent, the barns, and granaries groaning with plenty, against the background of the old farmhouse overgrown with clematis and honeysuckle.

She placed a document in front of the old man.

A tall figure was standing watching for them in the road, with eager eyes, and hot flushed cheeks, for hours Judith had been waiting there to catch the first sight of her cousin Dick.

The dog cart stopped at the rickety gate, and slowly and deliberately, the young man got out to meet her.

"Well Judith, my lass, and how are you?"

He was a tall loose-limbed man, with sleepy eyes, and a stolid face, which rarely changed its habitual expression of satisfied good humour. For the rest, his blood coursed somewhat sluggishly through his veins, which accounted for the torpidity of his emotions. Such as he was, however, Judith nourished for him an all-absorbing passion; Dick was to her another sun, giving forth even greater warmth and happiness than the god of the summer heavens himself.

The lawyer glanced at the pair of them, with his shrewd grey eyes. Like most men of middle age, he was even more susceptible to the influence of a pretty face than those who were less mature, and, while appreciating the force of beauty, could yet be tolerant to the faults of its possessor, even when they clashed with individual comforts. Throughout the country side Judith had no more sincere admirer than Lawyer Heydon, who was popularly supposed, to own no god but money bags, of which he had a goodly store.

Together they went into the old oak parlour, where Robert Stichells and Mollie were already waiting, the latter firmly clutching the will which Judith had forced her grandfather to sign the night before he died, and which no threats would induce the old woman to give up.

Lawyer Heydon opened the will in his possession and in his pleasant voice announced the disposition of the property.

"Margaret Hall," he stated, "had been already provided for, and to Robert Stichells was left his cousin's kindly wishes for increased prosperity. To Richard Warrington was bequeathed the farm, the money in the bank, and all the personal property; with a charge of £300 a year on the estate to be paid to Judith Warrington, in the event of the two cousins not marrying each other."

Dick stared abstractedly at the ceiling; had he been left to make his choice, Madge Bartlett would have been his selection for a wife, for as far as his slow brain ever decided anything, he had made up his mind some time ago, that when the old man died he'd "marry Madge." But even Madge could not be worth a sacrifice of £300 a year, and so he dismissed all thought of her, and accepted Judith's rapturous whisper, "Oh, Dick I love you so," with immovable serenity; after all Judith was a fine woman, and £300 was an awful lot of money.

For a moment the girl had forgotten the other will, but Mollie's shrill though feeble voice brought back the recollection with a quick, sharp pang—of course Mollie had deceived her, and told her about Bob Stichells in revenge for her unkind treatment; and her grandfather, wroth at her conduct, had let her have her own wicked wilful way to punish her, and at her own wish had signed away her—no, not her happiness, it should not be.

With a quick movement, she clasped old Mollie round the waist, and, in a low voice besought her to keep silent—she felt a sudden dread that Dick, if he once heard of the other will, would not wish to marry her—and she would die without him.

"Mollie, dear Mollie, listen, give it to me, I beg you."

But with a shrill cry the old woman pushed her back.

"Here's another will," she said, "that master made the night afore he died."

Digitized by Google

"All my property I leave absolutely and unconditionally to Richard Warrington."

"It's not in form," said the lawyer, with a pitying glance at Judith, "but I am bound to say it's perfectly legal." Dick brought his eyes down from the ceiling and smiled brightly. Decidedly Judith was a fine figure of a woman, but blue eyes, pink cheeks, and yellow hair were far more to his taste, and then Madge Bartlett had £200!

"I told you, that evil would come to you, Miss Judith," said Mollie in the high-pitched quavering voice of old age, "you've a bad heart and you'll have a bad end."

But Lawyer Heydon cut her short, and beckoning to Robert Stichells hurried from the room, leaving the cousins by themselves.

"Dick, you won't let it make a difference will you, dear? You do love me, don't you?"

"I can't say as to love, Judith, I allus thought you a fine figure of a girl, but £200 is a lot of money now-a-days—a lot of money, and a tidy fair-haired little body for a wife is something more to my taste than a woman over tall."

"Dick"—she panted, "you don't mean what you say—that girl—with her milk and water face and silly smile—to put her before me. Ah! don't punish me so sorely for my love. Mollie told me a black lie about grandfather's will, that he had left everything to Robert Stichells and so I made him sign another, leaving it all to you—because I loved you, loved you, Dick."

But that was more than Dick could comprehend; all he could grasp, was that his cousin Judith had forced his grandfather into doing something that he didn't like. That was sufficiently alarming to make him fear her for a wife, nay, she might compel—as by superior force of mind she had before compelled him to a course contrary to his liking—to marry her at once.

He edged away from her.

He edged away from her, and laid his hand upon the door.

"I'm just a bit knocked over, Judith; I'll see you by-and-bye, I'm going over to Madge Bartlett now."

And the tall, loose-jointed figure went stolidly out, and Lawyer Heydon, venturing at last, to look for Judith, found her white-faced, and despairing, huddled on the floor.

"I'm a wicked woman," she moaned, "a wicked woman, and I have been punished."

* * * * *

Moorstables had a deal to talk about that winter; first, grandfather Warrington's death, followed by his strange will, next, Judith's sudden journey to London, and Dick's marriage with Madge Bartlett; and as soon as that sensation had blown over, Lawyer Heydon astonished everyone by selling his practice, and disappearing from the county, leaving no clue as to his whereabouts.

Then, when that topic was exhausted also, the fact that Dick's wife was a shrew, and that Dick, himself, more often than not, sought refuge from her nagging tongue in the bar parlour of the "The Crown and Arms" furnished ample food for gossip, year in and year out.

But even that—engrossing, as it was, paled into nothingness beside the fact, that some one had bought the old manor house up the hill, a number of workmen being engaged pretty well all night and day to get it ready.

The new tenants arrived one summer evening, exactly four years after the death of grandfather Warrington, and all the world, his wife, and children, flocked to church the following Sunday to catch a glimpse of them.

"Who would have thought it, my word, but she's a beauty, looks like 'my lady' don't she? and as pleasant as possible, and so is he. Certainly Judith's done well and no mistake."

And if there was any lingering trace of doubt, or misgivings, in Judith's mind, as to whether she had "done well" or not, in marrying Lawyer Heydon—or rather Sir Alton Heydon, to give him his full title—(bestowed for distinguished political services)—if there was any lingering doubt, it was for ever dispelled at the sight of her girlish idol, Richard Warrington, who with a lagging step, sheepish and henpecked, followed his shrill-voiced red-faced wife. As he passed her, with a shamefaced sort of nod, she looked up at her husband—tall and dignified, the touch of snow among his crisp dark hair adding distinction to his presence. And as she met his eyes, all that was left of the old Judith, hard, cruel, and unforgiving, passed away for ever, leaving her heart simple, and trusting as a little child's.

"Alton," she said, "how could you marry such a wicked, wicked, wicked woman?"

He glanced at her fondly, her tall stately figure, her deep dark eyes, and clear cut face, always beautiful to him, but doubly so under the softening influences of her winsome womanly grace.

"My dear," he answered, tenderly, "I always loved you, even when you grieved me most; the Judith of long ago, an untrained and misguided girl, long since is dead, buried, forgotten, but, in her stead, is Judith, the woman I adore, my loving, tender-hearted wife."

J. K. PROTHERO.

Digitized by Google

A Thought-Reading Experience.

"Do I believe in thought-reading?" The detective repeated the question in his usual quiet and decided tone. "Certainly. I have done a little of it myself. Do I believe that it has any practical utility in the detection of crime? Well"—after a pause—"I think that the best way to answer that question is to narrate a personal experience, if you are willing to hear it."

We were quite willing to hear it; the suggestion pleased us greatly, for the evening was getting slow. The manner in which we expressed our desire was a plain indication to the detective to go ahead at once. He did so somewhat after the following fashion:

Mr. John Dixon was a commission agent in the City; he had what was termed a small suite of offices at the back of the first floor of a large building, but as a matter of fact it was really one large room divided into three by means of match-boarding. There was his own private room, the partitions of which were double and the door covered with green baize; then a kind of waiting-room, and beyond that was the largest apartment of the three, which was occupied by three clerks and a specimen of the indispensable office boy.

Mr. Dixon was one of the many men who prefer some other occupation than that in which they find themselves. He by no means neglected his business, but he was fond of machinery and spent a good deal of time in trying to devise some machine which would revolutionise something or other, he was not particular what. That was his ambition, and he worked away for the love of the thing, money being a secondary consideration.

One day Mr. Dixon made application for the services of a detective and I was told off for the job. Mr. Dixon thought it best that I should go to his office in order to be posted in the details of the robbery, and at my suggestion he let me into his private office through a private door, and then locked both the doors of the little room in order to avoid interruption.

The commission agent told me that he had devised a very valuable machine; he had just completed the drawings, and they had been stolen. He said at least three firms would give a lot of money to get hold of such drawings, and went into rhapsody about his invention. I took it all quietly; all inventors are like that, and think that the child of their brain has never been equalled and never will be.

"It was done late last night or early this morning," said Mr. Dixon. "I often stay here after business hours so that I may have a little quiet time to work out my ideas. It is very seldom that my clerks have to stay after time. Last night I stayed here just to put a few improvements into the plans. I thought my clerks were gone, and I opened that door into the middle room in order to have more air. I had the plans laid out on this desk and was quite engrossed in my work, but all at once a slight cough caused me to jump from my seat and I saw one of my men, Arthur Symes, looking at me.

"I do not remember exactly what he said, but it was something about having stayed to finish some work; he wanted to know if I wished the outer door to be locked, and he seemed very confused. Yes, I suspect Symes. I took that fellow out of the gutter; he applied for the post and looked very shabby, but he was very straightforward as to the reason of his shabbiness. He had been weak enough to be led into betting; had 'borrowed' a small sum from his employer, and had been found out before he could replace it; he had been dismissed, and had been out of work for some time.

"Something about him attracted me. I am rather soft-hearted and I decided to give him another chance in life. He would not have the handling of money here. He has served me well for three months, but I have lately found that he is always short of money, which is an inducement to steal."

"Not a good record," I observed. "The plans were taken from your drawer without the lock being forced, so the thief must have had a key. Have you mentioned the loss to your clerks?"

"Yes. I was so staggered that I went straight into their room and said that some plans had been stolen from my drawer. Symes turned red."

"That's rather a pity, as it puts them on their guard. Now, I take it that you wish to recover the drawings, and that the punishment of the criminal is a minor consideration with you?"

I had judged aright; Dixon was anxious that no one should know of his invention just yet. However, if the plans had been disposed of, the detection of the thief would lead to the discovery of the purchaser and the restitution. Dixon would at once patent the invention so as to forestall any copying. But at present he was powerless to protect himself, as all his data had been destroyed and he only had the details that were on the finished drawing.

I left Mr. Dixon and decided to shadow Symes. I had hinted to the agent that if we called Symes into the private room and charged him point-blank with the theft, he might confess; but his employer said that such a course was unfair and against his principles.

A scrutiny of Symes told me that he was weak and likely to be led away. I shadowed him for the rest of the day. The next day, at my suggestion, he was sent out several times on various errands, but he went straight about his business and I could gather no evidence. After leaving the office, he went straight to his lodgings. An hour later he came out and I followed.

Digitized by Google

He went to a hall not far off where some social entertainment was to be given. My heart gave a little jump of delight as I remembered that I knew the gentleman who got up these entertainments, and that I had on one occasion, at another place, given a thought-reading séance at his request. A scheme flashed through my mind, and I at once resolved to carry it out.

I entered the hall, and almost the first person I saw was my friend; he welcomed me heartily, and I had no difficulty in persuading him to let me give a short thought-reading entertainment. The soirée was a free and easy affair, the object being to keep young people from frequenting entertainments of a less healthy character. I did not tell him exactly what I was driving at, but induced him to help me to the extent of getting Symes to test my skill.

The idea of a thought-reading séance was welcomed with acclamation by those present, and I was soon at work. I remember that it struck me as peculiar that Symes should go to a place of this kind if he were bad, but I concluded that he was not wicked at heart—he was weak and easily fell into temptation.

Symes was third on the list for having his thoughts read. As I began on the first candidate, a young man, I remarked, in a tone of pretended gravity, that if he had committed any crime—theft or murder—he must try to conceal his thoughts, as I should assuredly find him out. There was a laugh at this, but I had an object in view and I pursued it.

"Suppose I am a detective, and you are a man who has stolen something from your employer—say, some documents or plans," I continued. "Now, I will show you what would result. You would think about those plans; you couldn't help yourself, and you would give away your secret to me. The same remark applies to evil thoughts of all kinds; hence the necessity for young people to do and think only what is right."

This little homily pleased my friend and the young people, but I could see that Symes was becoming uneasy. Just what I wanted. If he had taken the plans he could not help thinking of them.

Of course, my first customer did not interest me; I succeeded fairly well with him, although he tried to fog me. The second was a young girl who gave me no trouble. The result in these two cases earned for me a certain reputation. Then it was Symes's turn; he tried to draw back, and I seized the opportunity.

"No, no!" I cried cheerily. "There's no getting away! If you've stolen the plans, you must put up with it; you may try to hide your thoughts, but I shall read them."

There was a general laugh at this reference to my homily; my remarks were taken by the others as a huge joke, which was quite natural. Symes's countenance, however, indicated that he regarded it as a grim reality.

I went through the usual performance, and I had difficulty in restraining my delight at the result. Symes was simply giving himself away. His thoughts were confused, but the prominent idea was "Mr. Dixon's plans."

"I am accused of stealing the plans," was one thought which I deciphered, and around this were parts of sentences, all confirming me in the belief that he was the culprit. There was also a reflection of his previous fall, and the words "sold—possum bill."

I knew that the last two words could not be correct, and it suddenly flashed upon me that it was a corruption, or a misreading, of the name of the firm to which the plans had been sold.

"Do you know the name of the firm which sounds like 'possum bill'?" I asked.

"Pawson and Beal!" gasped Symes, and his face was a study.

"Exactly!" I cried. Then, turning to those present, I said: "You see, ladies and gentlemen, he is thinking of something that has been sold to Messrs. Pawson and Beal!"

Symes nodded; he could not speak. I dismissed him and tried another, after which I said that the séance must close, as it exhausted me.

I left the hall and went to the railway station, where I took a ticket for Wimbledon. I was elated with my success and determined to see Mr. Dixon at once at his private address.

It did not take me long to relate what had passed. Mr. Dixon was alternately furious and despondent. Of course, Pawson and Beal would be only too glad to get hold of the plans, and as we even now had no legal evidence it would be impossible to get those drawings out of their clutches. We discussed the matter, and ultimately decided that Symes should be called into the private office the following morning and bluntly told that he was the thief. I was certain that on seeing me, he would confess, and then our coast would be clear.

"The scoundrel!" cried Mr. Dixon vehemently. "To rob me of my plans after what I have done for him!"

"What is that, father?" It was the voice of his daughter, who had just entered the room.

Dixon, it seemed, had not mentioned the affair to her, so he now briefly told her that his much-prized drawings had been stolen.

"Drawings?" queried his daughter. "I suppose they are the drawings of a machine, like those which are in your coat upstairs?"

"What!" roared Dixon. Then he tore from the room.

When he reappeared he held some drawings in his hand, and he looked crestfallen.

"Here they are, safe enough," he admitted. "I see it all now. In my absorbed frame of mind I must have put them into my pocket instead of locking them up in my drawer. I wore that coat only on that day, because this one had got wet. I have not worn it since, or even looked at it."

I felt inclined to say uncomplimentary things about inventors and the preoccupied frame of mind common to them; and what I said to myself about thought-reading need not be repeated. There was a point that required clearing up—How did Symes play into my hands? This was cleared up satisfactorily.

Symes had heard, on the important evening, some remarks unconsciously made aloud by his employer while absorbed in altering his drawings. These mutterings told him that the plans were valuable and that Pawson and Beal would give a lot for them. Symes was a nervous man and, having regard to his past career and to what had occurred on the previous evening, he had jumped to the conclusion that he was suspected of the robbery. This preyed on his mind and made him continually think about it. My homily had worked upon his nerves; he was so scared at the idea of being accused that he could not keep from thinking of the robbery, and so had helped me to make a blunder. Yet I could not blame him, for it was quite natural. I had played on his nerves and reaped the reward. I have never since resorted to thought-reading in the detection of crime.

GEO. KNIGHT.

Digitized by Google

THE ADVENTURES OF AN ACTOR.

IV.—Virtue's Champion.

We were playing *The Midnight Murderer* at a black hole of a mining town called Slaghill. I revelled in the title-*rôle*, and gloried mightily in the hisses and howls that greeted my realistic delineation of this double-dyed villain—a veritable king of heavy parts—Nathan Darkwater by name.

The local papers called me uncompromising and truculent, and my landladies, after seeing the play, did they happen to be of an emotional nature, at times would scarcely re-admit me into their houses.

Such was my first taste of fame, and I enjoyed it thoroughly, but I little imagined it would ever cost me so dear.

The inhabitants of Slaghill, being an unusually rough set of colliers, howled more than ever at my want of morality.

In the scene where I thrash a little collier's boy and then throw him into the river with intent to drown him, they let go the flood gates of their indignation with a vengeance.

Had it not been for the rescue of the child by the ever timely comedian I might well nigh have expected a rush upon the stage.

I have never before seen an audience look more like crossing the sacred line of the footlights. They showed their temper again when I tortured the leading man, having got him into my power through his own chronic stupidity. It might be argued that the ill-treatment would have a beneficial effect upon him, for he was blinded and dulled by an unnecessary excess of truthfulness and honesty, but that was not the way they looked at it.

Having gone through my list of murders, at the end of the last act I was caught red-handed committing the final deed. Then came the triumph of virtue and the capture of Mr. Darkwater by the police. Cries of "Shoot him," "Kill the brute," followed my exit between two weak-kneed policeman.

It was evidently a great grief to the audience that I did not suffer death before their eyes, preferring, no doubt, that the darling of their eyes, the comedian, or the second favourite, the leading man, should be the avenging angel; forgetting that according to all laws of probability such an act would seriously compromise the commi'ter.

However, the author of this classic drama saw fit to depart in this one particular from precedent, so we had to abide by his decree.

The performance was over, and having removed my war paint I prepared to leave the theatre and seek our usual house of refreshment. I got as far as the stage door when I met Cavendish, our leading man, who held the door with one hand waving me back with the other.

"Go back! go back!" he cried.

"What for? What is the matter?"

"Get out by the front, look sharp, for they have come to mob you, kick you to death perhaps."

"What rot you are talking," said I, advancing, "What game is this you are playing? For if you take me for a 'mug,' you are mistaken, and I should advise you to try elsewhere."

"Don't be an idiot; I'm not 'kidding.' There is a big fool of a collier outside who has taken the play in earnest and has come to kill you, so he says, for he is certain the two bobbies he saw take you off would never be able to hold you."

"He is about right there."

"Jimmy (the comedian) is talking to him outside, trying to explain, but it is not much use."

I listened and could hear the murmur of many voices outside, Jimmy's above the rest, making a street corner speech, trying to enlighten the savages of Slaghill—a hopeless task. So it was really true. I felt it implied a compliment to me.

"Well, this is the funniest thing I have heard for a long time. The man must be mad. Why did you not send for the police?"

"The police! Why, you know in this place they would sooner kill a bobby than not. Besides, he has a whole crowd of them with him, the roughest in the place, who have come to see the fun and help a bit too, if needs be."

Jimmy's voice suddenly ceased, there came a heavy hammering upon the stage door, and a deep, gruff voice said: "Open the door. Dost thee hear, or I'll jolly well breck it daan."

I burst out laughing at the humour of the situation. This infuriated the collier outside, who thumped at the old stage-door more vigorously than ever,

Digitized by Google

"If you's the bloke what's laffin'," he cried again, savouring his words with nearly as many oaths, "send him aat, and I'll kick his head off in a fair feyght. I knows thy laff, Mr. Darkwater."

"Now don't be a ninny," said Cavendish, "come on, follow me while there is yet time. For I'm not going to stand here for the door to fall on me."

I ran up the steps after Cavendish, had hardly reached the stage, when with a crash the door burst in and in a trice a score of roughs were on our track. Cavendish dived down a passage to a side door leading to the front of the house. I, knowing myself to be the quarry, hardly liked to trust to the side door being open, so I jumped the footlights and the orchestra rail, landing on my hands and knees in the pit. The curtain as usual was up for the night, but the headlights were still burning. On my way across the pit I unfortunately looked back to see what my pursuers were doing, this gave them a sight of my face, and with a yell they were after me leaping from the stage in among the forms and benches of the pit, tumbling one on top of another. A few severe injuries, I afterwards learned, were the result of that leap. The foremost among them was a big collier who, I had no doubt, was virtue's champion. I soon skipped over the benches and following Cavendish's shout found him feverishly undoing the front door.

"Heavens, it's a near thing," he said, as we banged the door after us, "you will have to run for your life. I'll run with you to the top of the street and then we will separate, and perhaps they will follow me."

As we hoped, they had some difficulty in finding their way out of the theatre, so we had half a street start and looking back we saw now only about a dozen emerge from the front of the house.

Being a bright, moonlight night they espied us immediately and shouting like fiends followed hotly upon our heels, the big collier again leading.

A man hunt was just the thing to please them mightily, better sport almost than football, and woe betide me if I were caught, I should be treated about as mercifully as a welsher.

They would take their cue from the usual blood and thunder melodramas they were accustomed to see and deal rough justice accordingly. The big collier, I had no doubt, was the only one in earnest, the remainder would look upon it as a joke to see a good fight, or saving that, to mob a man upon the slightest pretext.

At the top of the street Cavendish and I parted; he went towards the police-station to get aid to stop this farce if possible.

Our stratagem did not work however, they knew me and remained hotly in pursuit. I dived in and out small streets, and made for the outskirts of the town; once in the country I could easily hide in some ditch.

Never in my life had I run so, I hardly thought myself capable of such fleetness of foot. Thank goodness I was distancing them, and if I could judge by their cries, having lost sight of me, they had spread.

Once in the country, scrambling over hedge and ditch, I made a bee-line across the fields to a cemetery in the distance and climbing the rail was soon safe among the tomb-stones.

I lay on the grass exhausted, this at any rate would give me breathing space.

I had had scarcely ten minutes respite when I heard voices behind me and could hear them climbing the high iron railing; they had seen me climb those rails. I crept on hands and knees among the tombs until I had the little chapel between us, and then I ran to the opposite railings and scrambled over.

Across the fields I went in the shadow of a hedge, and up a hill, upon the top of which stood a colliery. I was half way up the hill when they again caught sight of me, so my hope of shelter in the buildings of the colliery was frustrated.

Over the top of the hill I went and down the other side.

Then I doubled like a coursed hare, round to the left, and sat in a ditch to watch their next move. After laboriously climbing the hill, the four now remaining scanned the country round.

Boots were evidently better to run in than clogs, and I now felt fairly secure so long as the country was open, rather beginning to enjoy the chase; it was not half bad fun when one felt in some degree safe.

Their council of war on the top of the hill was brief.

Two went to the colliery and the other two with unerring judgment came straight towards me.

If I moved I was sure to be seen, still there was no help for it, so I decamped. Yes, they saw me and the scamper soon began again. I was getting rather tired and very much blown, so I planned a lengthy detour with intent to return to the town and seek the shelter of my rooms. I went straight out into the country again, this time doubling to the right, and the ruse was quite successful for I saw them all run to the left. As I rounded the colliery hill on my way back I could see no sign of them, and fondly hoped they were still crossing the fields in the distance.

I passed the cemetery at a walk and quietly made my way into the town. For the moment I was nonplussed as to where I was, I had lost my bearings completely. I went first to the right and then to the left until at last I reached an open space which I knew to be near my own dwelling-place. Carefully I looked round the corner of the street before venturing into the open. There were workmen's sheds in the centre, and as I was obliged to cross I made for these as an intermediary cover. I had hardly reached them when from the opposite side of the waste ground who should appear from out a street than the big collier, all alone.

It seems we had each completed a half-circle, entering the town at different points, and meeting here. I slipped behind the sheds, but all too late—he had seen me, and I heard his clogs patter on the hard ground as he ran towards them. Should I bolt back the way I had come, or dodge round the sheds? I hesitated, and the next moment it was too late—he had reached the sheds. Then began the game afresh, cat and mouse this time.

"Come aat and feyght me, thoo dirty divil," he roared, hurling a brick at my disappearing feet as we slipped in and out between the sheds.

"Go home to bed, you mad fool!" shouted I back, throwing a big stone at him as he came round again.

"Mad? I'm not mad, thoo black fiend!" and another stone just missed me.

"Idiot, do you know what you are doing?"

"Aye, and thoo will an' all when I gets a-ho'd o' thee," came the reply.

We careered around those sheds exchanging stones, threats, and abuse until the pace slowed from weariness. I could hear his clattering clogs upon the stony ground while he could not hear the fall of my leather-shod feet, so I had a distinct advantage. Oh, if help would only come from Cavendish, or some of our fellows! What were they doing? I was fast losing my temper, a thing I do about once in five years. Why should I, I asked

Digitized by Google

myself, be so undignifiedly harried about by a mad brute of a collier? Why not go out and fight him and take the consequences? I should have done so long before had he been an ordinary man, for I was not altogether a stranger to the art of boxing, but I had seen those clogged colliers fight; kicking each other senseless was their idea of the game; a ghastly sight enough to unnerve anyone. At the next pause I sought a parley.

"I'll come out and fight you," I shouted, "if you will promise me you won't use your clogs. No kicking! That's not my style of fighting."

"I won't promise you nowt," was the answer.

"Then you will have to run round here all night, that's all!"

With an oath he was on me and round we went again. I parleyed again with the same success.

"All right, all night," I yelled, and flung another stone at him. After a time there came a long pause. I supposed he was thinking or meditated some new stratagem.

Was he creeping round either side? No. Was he climbing a shed? No. Yes, he was thinking—a painful process to one of his mental calibre.

"Drat thy style," said he at last.

"Thanks," I replied.

"Why for can't thoo kick?" he asked.

"Haven't any clogs on."

"Well—that being so—I'll promise."

"Swear it!" I shouted.

And he swore a mighty oath in a thoroughly unprintable form.

It sounded safe enough, so pulling off my hat and coat I ran out into the open, he was after me in a moment and for a minute we stood facing each other.

"I'll give thee what for for beatin' yon little lad as thoo did, burnin' th' hero wi' hot iron bars, and murdering yon uther chaps," he said, with a savage glee.

"Don't be an ass," I retorted. "It was all pretence."

"None o' thy lies," he shouted, and we closed. My policy was to dance round him, avoid his blows, and get one in when I could. My tactics were successful, for I could clearly see I was not getting the worst of it. But my style of boxing was new to him and irritated him exceedingly.

"None o' thy prize feyghting; stand still," he gasped.

"Rats," I replied, and landed him one just above the belt.

It was a lucky shot for me, and I was making the running for some time after. Then he lost his temper, forgot his fearful oath and began his own peculiar style of fighting, viz., kicking. I remonstrated, but it was of no avail. Still, I found I could easily dodge his flying feet, but that necessitated more movement, and I was painfully conscious that my opponent had twice the staying power I had. I could not last very long and then it would be all over with me. Once by a feint I was lucky enough to catch his elevated leg and with all my strength hurled him backwards to the ground. But nothing seemed to hurt him. He got up a raging fiend and fought madly. It was then I had to use all the care I could exercise to prevent him closing. Had he done so my light weight would have been useless against his ponderous bulk.

The game was nearing a close for me, blows were falling more and more frequently to my share, when I suddenly heard a shout, my name called, and the tramp of several feet. I had no breath to answer, but for one half-second I turned my head to see whether friends or foes approached. It was an unlucky move for me. I looked back at my foe just in time to ward off a blow. I parried it so awkwardly that my feet slipped and I measured my length upon the ground.

Unable to check his rush the collier fell on the top of me, knocking the last remaining breath out of my body.

When I recovered consciousness I was being carried home by Cavendish and Jimmy.

My late adversary was struggling with two policemen.

Ever since we parted Cavendish had sought high and low for me, and was just on his way home, having given up the search.

I was not much the worse for my adventure next day, but I shall never forget Slaghill.

The tale soon spread through the town and business went up with leaps and bounds.

For my safety virtues representative was kept close that week.

Some time after these events a well known fifth-rate star came to play Hamlet at Slaghill, the performance so affected the mind of my late adversary that he took up his permanent abode in a lunatic asylum.

Just a parting word to melodramatic authors—please kill your villains at the end of the piece.

DOUGLAS VIGORS.

[**Next Week: LEFT IN THE LURCH.**]

WHO WILL BE THE FIRST TO CAPTURE A TEN-POUND LADY?

Since last week two more Sealed Envelopes have been claimed, the lucky capturers being:

Mr. Thomas Kidman, 5 Brook Street, Bedminster, Bristol,

who captured No. 45 at a football match at Bristol, and

Mrs. J. Menzies, 85 Seymour Buildings, Seymour Place, London, W.,

who captured No. 24 at the Crystal Palace.

£320 HAS NOW BEEN PAID AWAY, and there are still fifty Sealed Envelopes awaiting claimants.

Up to the present no one has been able to capture a Ten-Pound Lady. There are ten of them about the country anxious to get rid of their Sealed Envelopes. No gentleman need apply, as these Envelopes are for ladies only.

The celebrated song

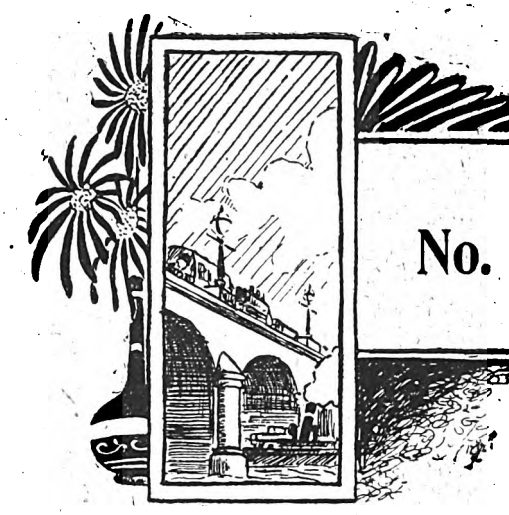
"HAVE YOU GOT THAT £10 NOTE?"

is now on sale, and can be obtained from all newsagents for 1s. 4d., or direct from the SONG DEPARTMENT, Pearson's Buildings, Henrietta Street, London, W.C., for 1s. 6d. Postal Order (not stamps) post free.

A prize of £10 is offered to the person from whom we receive the best anecdote relating to the Ten-Pound Scheme. All attempts should be sent at once in envelopes addressed: TEN-POUND STORY EDITOR, Pearson's Buildings, Henrietta Street, London, W.C., not later than Monday, Nov. 19th.

Full particulars of the Scheme will be sent on application to Room 36, Pearson's Buildings, Henrietta Street, London, W.C.

Digitized by Google



No. 3 PELICAN PLACE.

ALTOGETHER an unmistakable bit of old-world London. You might very well have missed it, the entrance to it from the main road being alike narrow and unnoticeable. Few, even town-bred people, knew of its existence, while its inhabitants had (and, so far as can be known, still have) about them that pleasantly curious air of other-day life; that quiet, peaceful, almost dreamy personality, redolent of faded rose leaves, spindled-legged furniture, sampler-work, and the tambour frame.

The houses in Pelican Place are, outwardly speaking, in every respect akin to their tenants.

Plain dwellings they are, of dark, weather-stained brick, the quaintest feature of their whole quaint appearance being the doorways. Overhanging each of these is a semi-circular wood canopy, beautifully carved, while in some instances the side posts are exquisitely wrought fluted pilasters of the same material.

The "Place" is a *cul-de-sac*, the four houses at the extreme end being slightly elevated upon a sort of platform, access to which is by four flights of steep stone steps.

Each small flagged courtyard is screened by an iron railing.

It is with the dwelling in the right hand corner of this block—No. 3—that we have now more particularly to do.

Thurza Dean lived here with her father, the blind organist of the neighbouring church of St. Ethelburga. They occupied the upper portion of the house, in the lower part living Hannah Stanesby, an elderly widow.

John Stanesby, her husband, had been dead nearly six months now, leaving her a legacy of loneliness and sorrow. Childless she was not, in the strict sense of the word, although so to all intents and purposes. A son, an only son she had, but whether he were now alive or dead, she knew not.

Six years before, he, then a lad of twenty, had quarrelled with his father, the result being that he left the house, completely disappearing out of his parents' life. From that day up to the time of his mother's widowhood, no word or sign had he made, until Hannah had come to mourn him as only a mother can mourn for the son of her love.

As boy and girl, Ned Stanesby and Thurza Dean, had grown up almost side by side. Together had they studied, played and wrangled, no man forbidding them. Many a battle had doughty Ned fought for the protection and honour of his little friend.

As years went by, and the so-called discretionary ones were well in sight, they became more reserved and constrained in their relations one with another. At any rate, Thurza did.

This state of things lasted until one day, under the leafy shade of one of the great trees in Kensington Gardens, Ned told the old, old story. Both young, they yet deemed themselves old enough to know their own minds, popular opinion to the contrary notwithstanding.

Possibly, the course of true love might have elected to run smoothly, but for two unfortunately opposing reasons.

One Bartley Hunt, a nephew of Hannah's, and by no means a good friend of Ned's, had also designs of his own upon Thurza's heart and hand. It was, therefore, with feelings of intense chagrin, ill-disguised, that he saw Ned so unmistakably preferred to himself. By nature an unscrupulous schemer, he cast about him how he might, Jacob-wise, supplant his cousin.

With his aunt and uncle he stood fairly well, with the latter especially, old John openly admiring his successful business plodding. In this respect was Bartley in marked contrast to Ned, who loved to saunter through life upon the sunny side, taking the good as it came, and good-humouredly hanging his responsibilities upon the nearest and most convenient shoulder.

Still, for all this, was Ned was a lovable chap—more than could be truthfully said of his rival. Fair-haired, tall and broad he was, with his ready smile and happy disposition, a lad formed to win the average maiden's heart. And Thurza was far above the average maiden, both in body and soul. Like her lover she was fair, but with the large dark eyes which, so they say, go to make perfect beauty.

Unlike Ned, however, she was small, daintily so, and still more unlike him, in that she had an innate and firm sense of duty. Blind she was not to Ned's undeniable faults, but she was gently kind to them, in the hope that some day she would be able to win him to steadfastness of purpose, all for love of herself.

The other disturbing element in their little love drama was the attitude of old John Stanesby towards Thurza's father. He was possessed of an unreasoning dislike for the blind organist.

To himself he could not explain it, further than that he "despised" (so he said) "a man who earned his living by grinding tunes for other fools to listen to." This dislike, while it did not actually include Thurza, unconsciously had its natural effect in causing John to regard the girl with no more than the ordinary feelings of neighbourliness. It was with Hannah that Thurza, her-

Digitized by Google

self motherless almost from her birth, made common cause, the two being fast friends.

Maybe it was their love for this same scapegrace Ned that so bound them together, although in any case it is easy to imagine an affectionate interchange between the younger and the elder woman.

Briefly then, Bartley Hunt determined upon treachery, a course of action not altogether unfamiliar to him. Aware of old John's prejudices, he sought to turn them to his own purposes by a crafty insinuation as to the true position of affairs between Thurza and Ned.

Obstinate at all times, and stiff-necked to a degree, the old man was roused by Bartley's insidious suggestions to tax Ned with the fact of the engagement, winding up his tirade with the bitter expression of his determination to prevent by every means in his power the marriage of his son to Eli Dean's daughter.

His arguments were illogical, his manner intemperate, and Ned, whose filial affection went largely into the "mother scale," first of all hotly repudiated his father's right to coerce him in any way, and then, the quarrel reaching a point where a peaceable settlement was impossible, went away in a rage.

All this was soon known to Bartley Hunt, the string-puller, who forthwith proceeded, though with judicious caution, and a politic waiting that did credit, at least, to his knowledge of human nature, to make himself an almost necessary figure in the daily life at No. 3.

There was no blustering persecution of the object of his love. Thurza would immediately have resented that. Rather did he by a patient, untiring devotion, seek to break down the barriers of her disinclinations for his society. Ned's departure without a word of farewell of any kind, he diplomatically employed as a strong argument in his own favour.

This inexplicable neglect of Ned's to give her his confidence before taking the irrevocable step, had hurt her. The clay of the idol had peeped out from beneath the robe her own love had woven round it.

To Hannah alone could she look for any real support in the struggle. His mother must believe in him, selfish, headstrong though he might have been.

By Hannah's side Thurza felt strong in her resolve to leave her heart in Ned's keeping whatever might happen or wherever he might be. But, oh! that ceaseless dropping of the water of persistence upon the stone of mind and will. The latter must wear away; it is a law of our nature, as unalterable as that of the Medes and Persians.

As time went on Bartley became more and more assured in his manner towards his victim.

He assumed in her presence a protective air, and that as by right. Like a bird under the fascinating gaze of its would-be captor, Thurza felt bit by bit her resolution giving way, her loyalty to Ned becoming, even against her will, weaker every hour.

Then came John Stanesby's death, hastened, so Bartley Hunt did not hesitate to whisper, by his son's disobedience and desertion.

The loss of his ally quickened the schemer's movements.

"Thurza," he said one day, "don't you think I deserve my reward?"

He had met her by accident, alone, in the "Gardens," near the old tree, so full of memories for her.

"Reward—what reward?" she wearily answered him. "I've nothing to give; you know I've nothing to give."

"Thurza, haven't I been patient, these six years nearly now? Can there be any doubt in your mind as to what I want to repay me for the long waiting? Won't you marry me, dear, and soon?"

She shivered, although the day was warm and sunny.

"What do you want of me—love? I haven't got that to give. If you want this," holding out her hand, "perhaps you ought to have it, now that you have pleaded so long for it."

"Is that all, Thurza! only the hand? isn't your heart to come with it?"

For an instant he feared he had made a mistake, as in her eyes a momentary gleam of strange, unwonted fierceness flashed and disappeared.

"All! if I were to promise you more I should be telling an untruth. Go away now; don't follow me; I want to be alone."

He had to be content; anyway it was victory; it would be his own fault could he not improve it, and in the end reap the full reward.

* * * * *

At this time the war in South Africa was working to a close. Men had lately heard of the gradual drawing in of the net which should enmesh the straggling guerilla chiefs and their followings, and so end the protracted struggle.

It was on the day when Lord Roberts' dispatch, announcing the annexation of the Transvaal, reached England, that a sober little wedding party stood before the altar of St. Ethelburga's. The man and the woman come there to plight their troth looked, both of them, as unlike happy bride and groom as could well be.

Bartley Hunt has taken his wife from her father's hand; the blind man has groped his way to the organ-loft, to break out a while later into the glorious Wedding March, when the clink of spurs, together with a swinging, military tread is heard coming up the centre aisle.

The ceremony is over and all heads are turned to see a tall, stalwart figure in the undress uniform of a troop sergeant-major of a regiment of Hussars making his way towards the little party at the east end of the church.

It is Thurza who first recognises him. Deathly pale she withdraws her hand from that of her husband. Hannah, who now, too, knows her son, who stands silent, his eyes fixed on Thurza, goes over to him, and places two trembling, withered hands upon his arm.

Gently, very gently he removes them, and moves a step nearer to the central pair.

The face, bronzed almost out of knowledge, is not the face of old, inasmuch as it is now contemptuously and grimly stern. Then for a second his features relax somewhat, and take on a tender, wistful look, his eyes never wandering from the face of his lost love.

The attempted word-picture has been infinitely longer in the painting than was the incident itself in the enacting.

The look given. Ned!—Sergeant Ned!—Scapegrace Ned! brought himself smartly to attention; firmly placed his mother's arm within his own.

"They told me in the 'Place,'" he said quietly, "when I could make no one hear at No. 3. I wish you joy. Come, mother."

Turning upon his heel he departed the way he came.

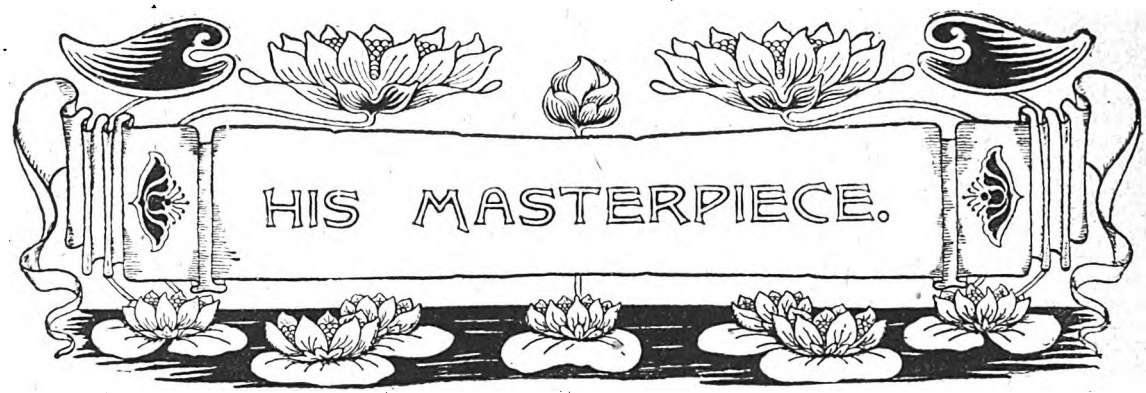
* * * * *

Upon September 6th, 1900, the following appointment was gazetted:

"Troop Sergeant-Major Edward Stanesby, late 11th Hussars, invalided from South Africa, to be barrack master at Winchester."

RALPH ENDERBY.

Digitized by Google



"ANOTHER failure?"

The words were uttered in a tone denoting inquiry, sarcasm and disappointment. The speaker was pretty, we might say beautiful; a woman of twenty-five and in the full enjoyment of health.

Those who can read character in the face would have said that she was capable of deep feelings, whereas the casual observer would have regarded her as vain and capricious, with which qualities more or less selfishness is combined.

In reality, both judgments were correct; it required some crisis to provoke the profound emotions.

The words had been addressed to her husband, a man about twelve months her senior. He was one of those men who are generally described as "of good address;" he was attractive enough in appearance to win the smiles of the fair sex, but possibly the most noticeable feature of Arnold Brassey was his great confidence in his ultimate success. He would make a fortune and a name—at some future time; of that he was quite certain, and the belief made him speak on the subject with such assurance that other people were led to believe the same. Yet this was not a mere boastfulness; he was a capable man as a journalist, and his expressions of confidence in final success were innocent of all intention to deceive.

In his hand he held a letter, just arrived, telling him that a certain firm of publishers regretted that they were unable to see their way to bring out a certain novel which he had submitted to them and informing him that the manuscript was at his disposal. Arnold did not care to remember the exact number of similar disappointments that had fallen to his lot during the three years of his married life; he had tried his hand at plays, novels and collections of essays, but all to no purpose. He had nearly broken down in health through overwork, but it seemed as if fate had decreed that he must remain in his present obscure position.

But he had a double disappointment to bear, for the attitude of his wife cut him to the quick. She had been waiting for the success of which he had so confidently spoken during their courtship—waiting for it because of the increased pleasures and comfort it would bring to her; and now it seemed farther off than ever, she was getting tired and was reproaching him instead of sympathizing with and encouraging him.

"I shall try again," returned Arnold, trying to show no resentment at the tone in which his wife had spoken. "I shall succeed, and then these productions of mine which have been refused will be sought after and lauded to the skies. Don't be vexed, Nellie; we shall forget these troubles in the bright future."

But he spoke with less enthusiam, less confidence, than ever before.

Mrs. Brassey shrugged her shoulders with as much expressiveness as any French woman could have done.

"I am tired of this waiting for what doesn't come," she replied pettishly. "If I had known, I should not have——"

She stopped abruptly.

An almost imperceptible shiver passed through Arnold's frame; the significance of this unfinished sentence was clear to him.

She had married him quite as much for the position which she hoped he would give her as for love of him—perhaps more so.

He loved this woman with all his heart and would have been content with the proverbial cottage and crusts, provided that he had her love; but she was looking for gaiety and pleasures which he had not given to her.

"It must come soon, dear," he said appealingly.

But she was vexed too deeply to think of the effect of her words upon him. During the past few days her pride and her vanity had been sorely wounded by what she had read and heard of the doings of society, and her heart was full of bitterness.

"It will never come," she cried bitterly. "You do not possess talent to produce a masterpiece. You will never make a name!"

She quitted the room, and Arnold was left to reflect on the past and the present. His mind wandered back to the time of their engagement; the happy hours they had passed together in rural lanes and bye-ways, by the sea and at home; then the happiness of the first month of their married life came to him with startling and almost painful vividness.

How they had looked forward to the bright times when he should have made a name! And how different everything seemed now! He groaned aloud, for he felt that there was at least a grain of truth in Nellie's last words; if he really had talent, would it not have shown itself by this time—would he not have forced his way to the front?

Well, she wanted more pleasure; she wished to go about and see life; he would try and gratify her wishes.

His present resources would not warrant such expenditure, but he could borrow—his credit was good—and he would give her what she desired, trusting to good luck to enable him to meet his liabilities later on. He did not stop to reflect on the honesty of this course; he did not wish to think about it.

Summer was beginning and Arnold, changing his

Digitized by Google

tactics by degrees in order not to arouse suspicion in the minds of his wife and other people, gradually "launched out," as he termed it. He took his wife to one of the most fashionable watering places and put up at the best hotel, leaving her for a day or so at a time in order to return to town for work. From there they went to another similar sea-side resort, and so on all through the summer Nellie was gratified by a constant round of gaiety.

Returning to town, he succeeded in obtaining access to some of the principal society functions, thanks to the good offices of a wealthy gentleman engaged in company promoting and other lucrative businesses, and this in return for having obtained the publication of that gentleman's portrait and career in a society paper.

Mrs. Blair, the wife of the company promoter, took a fancy to Nellie, so that the latter was often included in invitations while her husband remained at home or at work.

"You're not such a bad sort of a husband, after all!" said Mrs. Brassey playfully to Arnold on one occasion. "I have had a splendid time lately."

"I am glad that you are happy, dear," was Arnold's quiet reply. But his face clouded as he turned from her; the weight of debt was pressing upon him and as yet he had found no means of freeing himself.

A disquieting rumour came to Arnold; his wife was more often out without him than with him, and he heard that marked attention was being paid to her by a man of position.

This was not disquieting to him from one point of view, for he had implicit faith in Nellie's inherent goodness, but it caused him a bitter pang to know that the society of some other man was more attractive than his own to his wife.

He thought of going to some function without her knowledge and watching her to see if rumour had spoken truly, but he found Nellie frequently mentioning this man in her chatter after her return or whenever she recounted her doings.

It was true, then! She was drifting away from him; only the bond of marriage kept her from forgetting him.

She came home from a theatre late one night and settled herself in an easy chair in order to give him an idea of the play; she was very tired and she dropped asleep.

Her talk had been more about Mr. and Mrs. Blair and Mr. Anthony than about the drama, and as Arnold looked at the sleeping figure he remembered that she had not expressed the least regret at his not being present.

He buried his face in his hands, and, in spite of himself, the tears came into his eyes—tears of vexation and bitterness at his failure to write something really good as well as at his failure to retain the love of his wife.

He could not endure this mortification; he felt that he must take up his pen and write something—anything! Why was it that he could not produce a novel or a play good enough even to be accepted? A kind of rage seized him; he pushed back his chair, brought the ink and some sheets of paper to the table, sat down and began to write feverishly, scarcely knowing what he did. The paroxysm passed away after a few minutes' work; he read in a calmer mood what he had written, and found that he had begun a play based on his own life. He took up the pen again and continued; his whole soul now seemed to be flowing out with the ink from his pen.

"Oh, dear!" exclaimed Nellie, opening her eyes and looking about her. "If I haven't been asleep in this chair ever so long! You are up and at work very early, Arnold, aren't you?"

"Yes; I have some work to do which must be done," was the brief answer vouchsafed by her husband as he put the sheets together and locked them in the drawer.

Two or three times during the next few days Nellie found that her husband had been up early in the morning in order to work; this excited very little curiosity on her part, for she was enjoying the pleasures of the winter season, and when in the company of Mr. and Mrs. Blair and the ever present Mr. Anthony she scarcely gave a thought to what her husband might be doing.

Time passed on and Mrs. Brassey arranged to accompany her friends to the theatre to witness the first performance of a new drama, which, according to certain paragraphs in the newspapers, was likely to draw crowded houses.

It was a study of life, a drama of the emotions, and promised to be thrilling. The author's name was also new to the public; nobody had ever heard of Mr. H. Shiner.

Across Nellie's mind there flashed a thought that her husband's masterpiece still remained unwritten, yet here was a man—a novice—able to write a play that was good enough for one of the best theatres; but she dismissed the thought quickly, as she had no complaint to make now that he was enabling her to go about as she desired.

The house was crowded and the audience waited impatiently for the play of the evening to begin. Nellie Brassey was an occupier of a box with her friends the Blairs and Mr. Anthony.

She had not betrayed any particular interest in the forthcoming drama, and almost yawned as the curtain went up; but after the first few words a curious expression appeared on her face and she became all attention. What were the words to which she was listening?

They carried her back to the time when Arnold and she were lovers; it seemed that the speeches uttered by the two chief characters were those of Arnold and herself. Yes, this was her own life which was being unrolled before her!

As the play proceeded, all doubt on that point vanished. In a dazed fashion she followed the drama; first the courtship—how happy it had been, she thought; then the married life and the growing discontent of the wife at the non-production of the great work that was to bring fortune to them, and the final taunt about her husband's incapacity. So much was familiar to her, but the rest was new.

The author touched but lightly on the further doings of the wife; but dwelt on the effects of that taunt upon the husband. He painted in thrilling words the agony of the journalist in the inward struggle between two courses—that of utter abandonment and that of gallant endeavour; he made the husband cry for the love and sympathy and help which were denied to him, but which he had a right to expect. Then came the design of writing his own career. The audience were told the inmost thoughts of the tortured husband and his final triumph. Nellie did not know how the play ended, for by this time her thoughts rendered it impossible for her to follow the dialogue.

She heard, as at a distance, the plaudits of the audience and the calls for the author; she knew that he came timidly before the curtain, keeping near the side,

Digitized by Google

but she did not look. She knew who the author was, and she dared not meet his eyes.

It was a revelation to her; she knew now how Arnold had suffered while she had been enjoying "life." Life! The word seemed a mockery in the light of her present knowledge. How did her existence during the past year compare with what it might have been had she acted the wife's part and stood by her husband's side? Yet she had nearly driven him to destruction.

She was aroused by the rising of her friends as they prepared to depart.

Mr. Anthony offered his arm as a matter of course, but she politely declined.

"I am sorry that I cannot accept your escort to-night, Mr. Anthony," she said firmly. "My husband will escort me home."

"Your husband!"

The tone of surprise and sarcasm with which the words were uttered stung her deeply; she flushed a little as she remembered that she had brought this upon herself, but she replied in the same firm voice.

"Yes. Mr. Shiner is the assumed name under which my husband has written this play. I shall meet him at the stage-door unless he meets me before I can get there."

When she saw Arnold, her courage failed and she stood before him as one awaiting a verdict.

In spite of the presence of others, he went up to her and kissed her, for the look on her face told him the truth.

"Forgive me, Arnold," she intreated in whisper. "I have been—"

But he interrupted the sentence with another kiss and she was happy.

E. LINGEN.

The Windows Opposite.

I HAD been knocked down by a cab in the streets of Paris and taken to a hospital. I was hurt about the head and shoulders, and, though I had no broken bones to mend, I was so badly bruised that the doctor told me I wouldn't get out for a month. Hard up though I was in a financial sense, I had enough money in my pocket to get me into a pay ward, and they gave me one of the fourteen cots on the third floor front. It was summer, and I was close to the seventh window counting from the left.

The routine of a hospital for an injured man is a monotonous one. After the first three or four days they put me on full diet and gave me books to read, but I could not leave my bed, and it was against the rules to converse with the other patients. It was read, sleep, think and plan, with one visit a day from the doctor. I could not see the street from my window as I sat propped up in my cot. The only sight to greet my vision was a quaint old house opposite. The structure was two storeys high, and I could see the upper halves of four windows. The house looked very old and was in a sad state of neglect and untenanted. I don't know why I should have been interested in that house except that a sick man will turn to the veriest trifle to make a diversion, I saw by the state of the windows that the house was tenantless, and yet I had the curiosity to question the nurse about it.

"That house has been empty for years," she replied, "and as the estate is in Chancery it will probably fall down before the heirs come into possession. You cannot see so far down, but the lower doors and windows are boarded up to keep tramps out. I have often wondered if the place has not a ghost."

I fell into the habit of watching those four windows as closely as if I had been employed as a watchman. It seemed that if I waited long enough I should see a face at one of them. When evening came, there was an electric light somewhere which caught the front of the old house, and I would watch those windows until the nurse enjoined me to turn away and go to sleep.

It got so at last that I felt certain of making a discovery, and one evening, when I had been in the hospital nine or ten days, the face I had looked for appeared at one of the middle windows. It was that of a man.

The window was a hundred and fifty feet from me, but by the assistance of the electric light I made out the face very clearly. It came into view gradually, as if the man slowly advanced across the room, and it remained at the paneless sash for a full minute. It was the face of an evil man. It was dark and bearded and the eyes travelled up and down and across the street as if looking for danger. Whoever the man was

Digitized by Google

he was no tramp, nor had he a lawful right in the house. As he left the window I called to the nurse and told her of his presence, but she laughed and replied:

"Ah, but we are not to concern ourselves about what goes on over there. If it is some prowler who has broken in, the police must take care of him."

I now had something to occupy my full attention, and I gave up everything to watch the windows opposite. Nothing appeared next day, but at about half-past eight o'clock in the evening I saw the same face again. There was more boldness in the way the man approached the window, and he seemed to feel himself more secure as he surveyed the street. If he were not a fugitive in hiding, why should he be taking peeps at the neighbourhood? A vagabond, having entered to obtain shelter for the night, would keep clear of the windows. On this second night the man seemed to be looking intently at the footpath running in front of the hospital, and by-and-bye he started and turned away as if he had received some signal. When the nurse came, I told her of the incident. She was as much amused as before.

"You certainly have a mind for mysteries," she laughed, "but if you become too interested you will develop a fever and have a relapse. When you are able to leave us, you can tell the police about the man, who will probably turn out to be a shadow."

I gave the windows but little attention in the daytime after that. The face appeared on the third evening at the same hour, and I felt so sure that a confederate made signals from the pavement that I took a convalescent into my confidence. He was an old soldier who was being treated for an old wound and was allowed the run of the place. I told him of the face and the confederate, and he was interested at once. It was arranged that he should be in front of the hospital at half-past eight and watch for the confederate, and luck attended him. He saw a well-dressed but evil-looking man make signals to the man at the window. The signals were made with a folded newspaper and would not have been noticed by any one not on the watch for them.

"Now then," said the old soldier as he returned and reported, "we have a mystery. Luck has thrown it in our way that we may make a few goldpieces. Let us work it out together and share the reward."

None of us in the ward had seen a newspaper for a week. They were not forbidden, but none of the patients seemed to care for outside news. Next morning the soldier went out and purchased the papers for the previous five or six days, and as we looked them over we found a sensation. A boy ten years old, the son of a rich iron founder, had been kidnapped and spirited away, and it was stated that the whole police force of Paris was on the *qui vive*. The kidnapping had taken place three days before I saw the face at the window, and I was arguing that our mystery could have nothing to do with it when the soldier said:

"It is at least twelve miles from here where the lad was picked up. He was probably hidden somewhere else for a day or two, but the scent got so hot that he was moved. Don't you fear that he is not in the old house opposite at this very moment."

"Then we should inform the police."

"Pooh! We must wait for a reward to be announced. Never slap luck in the face."

On the fourth night and the fifth night the face appeared at the window at the usual hour, and the same man made the usual signals. As the police were yet at fault, those signals must have meant that things were all right for the kidnappers. It was now eight days since the boy had been taken, and as no trace could be had of him it was believed that he had been killed or taken out of the country. The papers gave it to the police pretty hot, and it was intimated that the father was ready to pay almost any sum to have his child restored.

"Now we are coming nearer to it," said the old veteran. "What the kidnappers have been waiting for is the reward, but we must be ahead of them. You have some money, but I have none. You must give me enough to take me across Paris to the father."

It had come to be understood in our corridor that we had some scheme, but we refused to answer any questions. The soldier started off one morning, and before noon he was holding an interview with the father of the abducted boy. The distracted man was willing to give his last franc, but the soldier stopped at 20,000.

He got a promise in writing that he should be paid that sum when the boy was delivered up, and then he went to the police to find if there was a reward for any particularly desperate character. There was. It was believed in police circles that the kidnappers were two escaped convicts, and there was a reward of 10,000 francs on the head of either. When it had been agreed to give him half the reward, the veteran gave our mystery away. The police waited until evening and then caught the confederate in the street after he had signalled his "All right." Half-an-hour later they surrounded the old house, broke their way in and not only found the other convict, but found the kidnapped boy a prisoner in one of the rooms. The lad had been fairly well treated, but had been closely guarded every hour since he had come into the man's hands. He had seen only that one man and had been told that he would be set at liberty when his father had paid 250,000 francs as a reward.

The old soldier divided fairly with me, and we were not only enriched by the double reward, but were the means of returning to custody two as desperate criminals as ever broke bars. It was considered an incomprehensible thing in the hospital, and the doctor, nurse and fellow patients were never tired of saying:

"How strange! You lie in your bed and look at the windows of an old house over the way, and lo, there come 15,000 francs rolling in to you."

C. B. LEWIS.

COOK (to policeman): "How neatly you carve that leg of mutton!" Then with a sudden outburst of jealousy: "I believe you have deceived me! I am not your first love."

"I SAY, Pat, did you count all those pigs?"

"Every mother's son of them except one."

"And why did you not count him?"

"Arrah, then, sir, but he was so frisky and ran so much about I couldn't do it at all, at all."

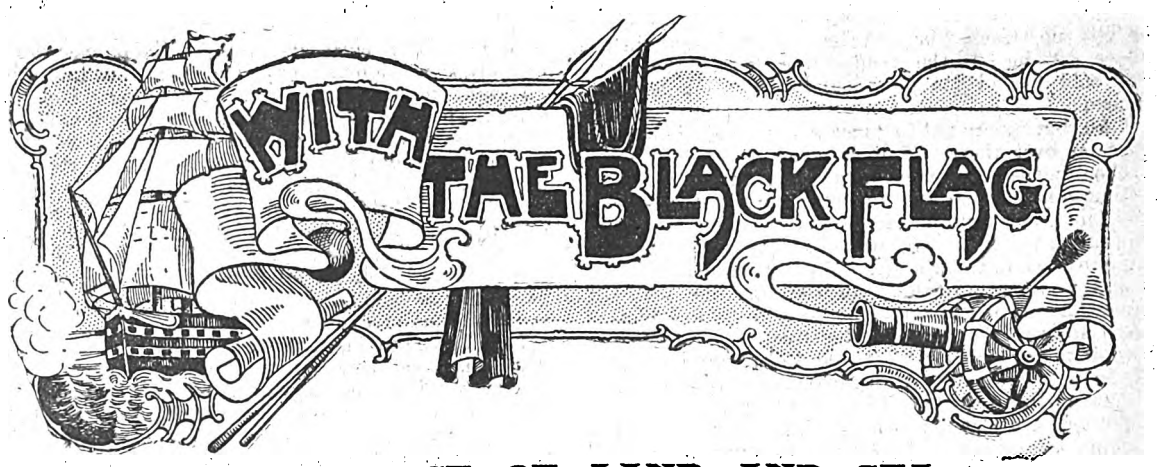
TEACHER: "Johnny, how many different kinds of force are there?"

Johnny: "Three kinds."

Teacher: "Name them."

Johnny: "Bodily force, mental force, and the police force."

Digitized by Google



A ROMANCE OF LAND AND SEA.

By William Westall.

Author of "With the Red Eagle," "The Phantom City," "Nigel Fortescue," etc., etc.

PRINCIPAL CHARACTERS.

Major Wyvenhoe, commander of an expedition which went out from England to help the Venezuelans in their struggle for liberty.
Captain Cautley, who is in charge of the ship which took the expedition out.
John Ready, the servant of Wyvenhoe.
General Ariamendez, ex-Governor of Pampatar and Vice-President of the Venezuelan Republic.
Don Iago Santleo, a friend of Wyvenhoe.
General Urdenetta, Governor of Pampatar, a bitter enemy of Wyvenhoe.
Bolivar, Supreme Chief of the Venezuelan Republic.
Tamanac, an Indian Cazique, and great friend of Santleo.
Master Wyvenhoe, the leading man at Manoa.

CHAPTER XX.

At Manoa.

The Manoeros were evidently of mixed blood, European and Indian, yet though many had the lank hair, and other characteristic features of the aborigines of the land, the complexions even of the most coppery were comparatively light, and not a few were as white as Rosalind, Santley and myself.

Some combined the characteristics of the two races, all were well-proportioned and none ill-looking; the men muscular and powerful, the girls agile and graceful with beautifully rounded arms, and exquisitely moulded hands, ankles, and feet to match.

On the other hand, some of them had rather large mouths and thin lips, but these defects were amply atoned for by the abundance of their hair and the pearly whiteness of their teeth, which, as the young ladies were rather given to mirth, were often displayed.

But the company who came to meet me and the people whom I saw in the village might be the pick of the basket. I had still to see the common folk.

The houses were scattered about in picturesque irregularity, without regard to present or future streets and roads, and as all were single-storied and each had its own garden, the village occupied a good deal of ground.

Wood and sun-dried mud, or bricks, were the building materials of Manoa, the smaller dwellings were oblong or square, the larger arranged round a patio or court, Venezuelan fashion, but the place was far cleaner and more orderly than any Venezuelan village or town I had seen, and the people had an air of prosperity and gaiety which greatly pleased me.

They were of a kindly nature, too, and hospitable. I had to shake hands with everybody, and was introduced to all the chief men, whose names struck me as being in strange contrast with the circumstances and the locality. Among them were Gifford, Thynne, Clark, Cross, Faey, Farrar, Upton and Connock with all of which I had been familiar from my earliest youth, for were they not the names of Gilbert Wyvenhoe's companions as set down in the relation of his travels and adventures? I could almost believe they still lived, and that the next surprise in store for me would be meeting them in the flesh.

The judge invited me to his house, observing that it was his right to entertain me, and that he claimed it both as his duty and a privilege. I accepted the invitation, as the saying goes, with both hands, for he had been very kind and Rosalind's eyes were very bright.

Master Wyvenhoe's house was one of the largest in the village, a house of many rooms, with a patio, a verandah and a spacious garden. His wife, still a fine woman, was obviously of Spanish descent, though how any lady of that race had found her way to Manoa passed my comprehension.

She had two other daughters, Diana and Beatrice, only a shade less fair than Rosalind, and a stalwart son. All spoke English, my hostess with a slight accent, and somehow or somewhere the young people had picked up a few modern phrases, and their manner of speech was less quaint than their father's.

I had no sooner made myself as presentable as the absence of my kit permitted than supper was served in the verandah, to which an appetite, sharpened by that tremendous climb, enabled me to do ample justice; a very good supper, soup, boiled fowl, venison, yams, plantains, bananas, maize cakes and palm wine. For plates we had trenchers, the spoons and forks were made of wood, the drinking vessels of the rinds of gourds, cutlery seemed scarce.

Nevertheless we had an enjoyable meal, and it had been more so, save for one circumstance. The girls waited, which did not comport with my idea of the fitness of things.

It was, of course, very pleasant to have Rosalind standing behind my chair and helping me to this or that, and I think she divined how highly I appreciated her ministrations, and how much rather I would have ministered to her.

Supper over, the ladies withdrew and we three men pre-

Digitized by Google

pared to smoke, but as this was not exactly what I wanted. I remarked that it was the custom in England for gentlemen to join the ladies, or be joined by them, after the evening meal.

"We have the same custom here when only members of the family are present," replied the judge gravely as he filled his pipe.

"Do me the favour to consider me a member of the family, as in a sense I am, being in some sort your kinsman," I said.

On which Master Wyvenhoe laughed genially and bade a servant call the ladies, who came, smiling pleasantly, and when the old man told them that I insisted on being treated as a member of the family they smiled all the more and drew their low wicker chairs up to the hammock in which the judge and I were sitting. But for a while the lasses, though they looked bright and alert, said little or nothing, not out of shyness or diffidence, but because, as I learnt afterwards, it was the custom in Manoa for young people, especially young girls, to refrain from offering remarks until their elders had had their say.

Moreover, all were more eager to listen than to talk, and Master Wyvenhoe set the ball rolling by asking me as many questions as would have taken a whole day fully to answer. He wanted, first of all, to know why I had come to America, next a detailed narration of my voyage thither and subsequent adventures, then a full, true and particular account of the Wyvenhoes from the earliest period of their history to the present time, and a few other things.

This was both alarming and disconcerting, the more so as my curiosity touching Manoa and the Manoeros had increased rather than diminished, and I was eager to learn their history. So I proposed a compromise, saying that after I had given an account of the English Wyvenhoes I hoped he would kindly reciprocate by giving me an account of the American branch of the family, and how his ancestor Walter Wyvenhoe, and the other adventurers had discovered Manoa. Then I added:

"Don't you think that would be fair, Mistress Rosalind?"

They all seemed rather surprised at this appeal, but the young lady answered readily:

"Quite fair, kinsman, but if it pleases you I would liefer hear your answers than your questions."

"Well said," exclaimed her father, "only fair is fair——"

"And I shall be more than fair; I will answer two questions to your one," quoth I, and on this condition the bargain was made.

What I said I need not repeat, I shall set down merely the gist of what I gathered from Master Wyvenhoe then and afterwards, as touching the various things about which I most desired information; and being the custodian of the record wherein the first colonist had given an account of themselves and their adventures he could tell the tale better than anybody else.

After parting with Gilbert Wyvenhoe they continued their quest, being sustained in the hope of finding El Dorado as much by the stories heard from the Indians, many of whom believed in the existence of some such place, as by their own infatuation, wandering hither and thither, scaling mountains, struggling through forests and morasses making long detours to avoid enemies, and often in conflict with Spaniards and unfriendly natives.

Luckily, however, the latter were few, for the wanderers, knowing that their only chance of saving their lives and reaching their goal was to conciliate the Indians, spared no pains to this end, on several occasions making common cause with them against their oppressors.

Whenever the adventurers tarried long in a place the Spaniards were sure to get wind of them; more than once they were hotly pursued and escaped destruction only by the goodness of Providence. So they kept moving on—either by chance or the overlooking of Providence, ever westward—until, at length, they found themselves in the very heart of the Continent, and within sight of the Cordillera of the Andes.

It was very pleasant to have Rosalind standing helping me to this or that.

By this time they had quite lost their reckoning and abandoned all hope of finding Manoa. Their only thought was of returning to England. But how? Those whom they had left in charge of their three ships, hidden in a creek of the Orinoco, the *Bold Venture*, the *Good Intent* and the *Virgin Queen*, had doubtless (despairing of their return) either sailed away or been taken by the Spaniards.

Moreover, to regain the coast by retracing their steps seemed impossible, the distance, by their computation, being not much less than two thousand miles; half their number had perished by the way, and the survivors, weary, footsore, sick and discouraged, desiring nothing so much as a long rest in some region where the natives were kind and the Spaniards unknown. Afterwards, they would try to gain the Pacific coast where, with Heaven's help they might peradventure find a means of returning to England.

So with this intent they pushed on, and finally lighted on the place which eventually became their home.

The Indians in possession were of a higher type than any whom they had previously encountered, better looking, of a lighter hue, some being almost white, also more intelligent. At the outset the Huacos, as they called themselves, were hostile and suspicious, but on finding that the strangers desired to be friendly and did not belong to the hated race they laid aside their distrust and gave them of their best.

The Huacos came from the other side of the Andes, whence they fled to escape from the Spaniards, who had conquered their country and enslaved their people. Their great fear was that the Spaniards might discover their refuge and treat them in like manner, for which reason their Cazique besought the Englishmen to settle in the valley and help them to defend it against their enemies, offering as an inducement, land, wives, and cattle.

For a while the Englishmen hesitated. It was hard to renounce all hope of returning to their native land, but seeing that the countries through which they would have to

Digitized by Google

In front and rear, and on both flanks, they were assailed by unseen foes.

travel, as also the entire Pacific coast, were in the hands of the enemy, getting back to England was well nigh, if not altogether, impossible.

Hence there seemed to be no choice; moreover, the valley was fertile, the climate delightful, and last, though perhaps not least, the Huaco women were comely, being even better looking than the men. So, moved by these considerations and thinking that if they went further they were likely to fare worse, the wanderers closed with the Cazique's offer, and as the place had no name they called it Manoa, since though it possessed neither cities of silver nor mountains of gold, it gave them what was far more precious, peace, plenty and freedom from care.

Yet the exiles could not forget their old home, and resolved from the first to remain as English as they might and take such measures as, they trusted, would prevent their descendants from becoming heathens or falling into savagery.

To this end they taught their wives and children English, refusing to hold converse with them in any other tongue. When the children grew up it was laid upon them as a command to teach their descendants in like manner, and as some of the Englishmen lived to be nearly a hundred years old, and were held in great honour, the learning of English became almost a sacred duty.

The settlers had brought with them a Bible and a Book of Common Prayer and three or four other books, out of which they used to read aloud for the instruction of their little ones by many of whom the art was acquired, as also a knowledge of writing. In this way English was kept up as the second mother tongue of the Manoeros, though it was spoken fluently only by the better educated, who were of course the better off, for even in this primitive community there were social distinctions.

Some men had prospered more than others, and these, being the abler, naturally took the lead, and the position which they won was maintained by their descendants.

Nevertheless, there was nothing like tyranny. The population was too limited for representative institutions, and office had become the appanage of certain families, among whom, as I gathered, there was occasionally no little rivalry.

My host was practically a dictator, solely however, by virtue of his personal and moral qualities. His decisions were accepted without demur. But "criminal business" he had none. Theft was unknown; in the absence both of poverty and money, there was no temptation to steal, and the people were besides too unsophisticated to be dishonest. It was all very simple and very patriarchal.

One of the colonists' first proceedings was to explore the mountain. The Cazique protested that it was impossible to get to the top, but some of their number were sailors, all were enterprising, and after divers abortive attempts they succeeded, and by right of first occupation and the Cazique's consent became the owners of the mountain where they took up their abode, greatly preferring it to the plain, for it was both a fortress and a fine estate.

They made the track described by the judge as being practicable for cattle, the Indians helped them to build huts, fell trees and sow crops, but they still kept and turned to good account the pastures in the plain which the Cazique had given them.

Their flocks and herds multiplied, they learnt the uses of the palm tree, and other contrivances; the Huacos, among whom were weavers and other artificers, made them garments, and so it came to pass that the Englishmen had everything they needed, though not all they desired; their greatest want being perhaps tools and iron, which were very scarce.

Yet they were never quite at ease, fearing that the Spaniards might hear of their presence in the country and come on them unawares; for though the mountain was impregnable, they had horses and cattle in the plain and were under a pledge to make common cause with the Huacos in the event of their being attacked.

The danger was undeniable and it behoved the settlers to make such preparations to meet it as they might. Firearms they possessed, but no gunpowder, and none was to be had; so, all having learnt archery in their youth, they made them long-bows and cloth-yard shafts tipped with iron wood, built butts and practised assiduously.

The Indians were also archers, archers, however, who poisoned their arrows, yet the Englishmen, much as they hated the Spaniards, refused to adopt so unmanly a device, for those wounded by these cruel missiles were seldom killed outright but died hours or, it might be, days, afterwards in great torment.

Three years after the wanderers' arrival in the valley what they had feared came to pass.

One day a Huaco, who had been hunting in the mountains, brought word that a strong force of Spaniards had been seen to the north.

This was enough.

Whether the news were true or not they must make ready, and as they had chosen a captain and decided beforehand on a plan of campaign, no time was lost in vain talk.

Digitized by Google

The only opening into the valley from the north was through a pass so narrow that it could be traversed only in single file.

This the Englishmen and their Indian allies, Huacos and others, seized, blocked the mouth of it, loosened the rocks on either side, and lay in ambush along the heights and among the bushes.

When the last of the Spaniards had entered the trap the attack began.

In front and rear, and on both their flanks they were assailed by unseen foes. Arrows pierced them, rocks fell on them. They bore themselves bravely, but it was like fighting against Fate. All died except a poor remnant of the rear-guard, who escaped only to be killed by other enemies as they recrossed the Andes.

Whether the force was an ordinary exploring and surveying expedition, or directed especially against the Huacos and the Englishmen the latter never knew. Be that as it might, they had no further trouble of the sort, and only once were their descendants threatened with a similar danger, which they met as the first had been met and with a like result.

This immunity they no doubt owed to the jealousy with which they kept from the outside world the fact of their existence and the whereabouts of their dwelling place. They could trust their Indian friends not to betray them, and when any of their young men, tiring of the sameness of their existence, wandered forth to see other lands they were required to take a solemn oath never to say or do aught, directly or indirectly, which might cause anybody to suspect that there existed such a place as Manoa or such a people as the Manoeros.

"You are not keeping your word, kinsman," interposed Rosalind.

Some who went never came back, others returned with news, new ideas and books, by which better educated Manoeros set great store. Several brought Creole wives. It was in this way the judge had brought his wife.

Until Santley's return, he was the most travelled man in the community, having been to nearly every city on the Pacific coast, voyaged as far north as California and there fallen in with some "English" Americans, from whom he had learnt things that vastly surprised him, and who, I have no doubt, were equally surprised by his knowledge of their language, the quaintness of his speech and his ignorance of recent history. They gave him several English books, which were highly prized, and had been read in public meeting again and again.

Santley had gone forth with a companion, Edward Cross, visited Cartagena, Caracas, Jamaica, Trinidad and other places. When Santley joined the patriots Cross returned to Manoa. Some time afterwards Santley's father, who was well stricken in years, fearing he had not long to live, and desiring to see his son, sent his compadre, Tamanac, to seek him and bring him home, an undertaking in which, as we know, Tamanac succeeded.

"How about the sinews of war, in these cases?" I inquired. "Travel is costly and as I understand you have no money."

"But we have what answers the same purpose—gold," answered Master Wyvenhoe. "It is found in divers streams that run from these mountains eastward. Indians bring it to us in the shape of dust, for which we give them such articles as we produce and they lack. Some of our people are skilled in weaving, tanning, carving and turning and make many things which the Indians are glad to buy for gold, and of the gold we make rings and other trinkets with which we please our young women and some of our old ones do adorn themselves. Other use for the precious metal have we none, save to pay our wherewithal when we go abroad."

"So here nobody covets gold."

"At any rate, nobody has need of gold; iron is far more useful and almost as scarce. But we have found some ore and are beginning to smelt it. The English Americans I met in Mexico showed me how it was done. They were mining people."

I put it to the judge whether in the event of the patriots expelling the Spaniards it might not be well for the Manoeros to renounce their isolation and enter into friendly relations with the people of Columbia and Peru.

"No, no, that would not do at all. To my thinking 'twere better for Manoa to perish utterly than to pass under the yoke of priests and politicians. If we cannot live our own lives in our own way let us die."

"Well, you are perhaps right. It would be a great risk. But I don't quite understand what the priests have to do with it."

"We are not religious. They would try to convert us and that would breed trouble."

"Do you mean you have no religion?"

"Only the simple religion handed down to us by our forefathers; and what was good enough for them is good enough for us. We observe Sunday, and one or other of us reads passages from the Bible to all who are willing to hear, and exhorts them to fear God, and explains that fearing God means being honest, truthful and industrious, loving one another, and keeping the commandments."

"You have no rites and ceremonies, then?"

"None. I fear you will think us heathens. But it is possible to be very religious without being good. The Spaniards and Creoles are very religious. They go to mass every day. When I was at Lima I went every day, for nothing gives me so much pleasure as sacred music. It was glorious. When I heard the organ pealing and the choir chanting, and the gorgeously arrayed priests intoning,

Digitized by Google

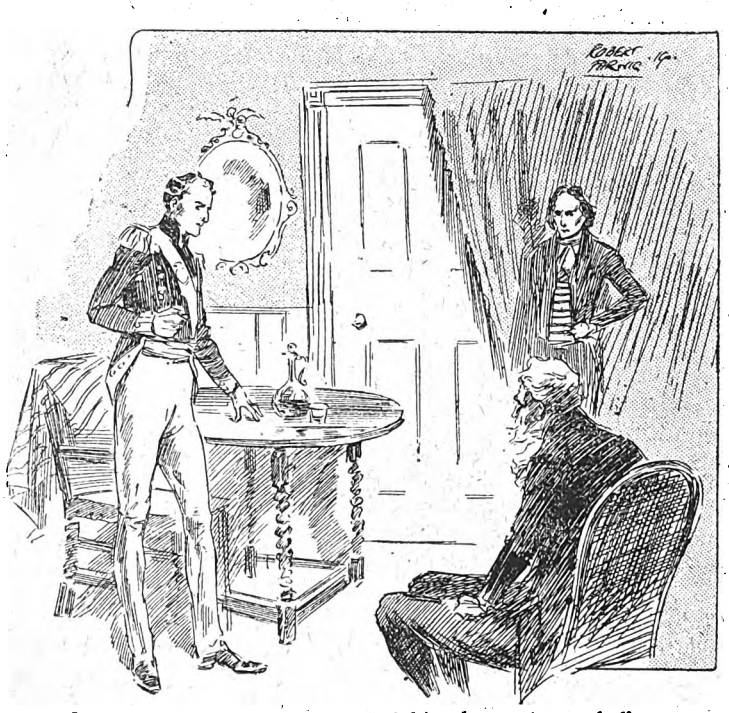
I felt as though I were in Heaven; but when I saw gangs of prisoners chained together in the streets, and heretics burnt at the stake, and political offenders garotted on the Plaza, I thought I was in Hades. Never in my life was I so rejoiced as when I got back to Manoa."

"I don't wonder, all the same——"

"You are not keeping your word kinsman," interposed Rosalind, to whom her mother had just made a whispered communication.

"Not keeping my word. That is a grave charge, Mistress Rosalind," quoth I in surprise.

"Nevertheless, true. You said that if my father answered you once you would answer him twice, yet you are asking continually and answering nothing."



I was about to bid my host good-night, when a strange feeling came over me.

"The charge is true, and I am afraid I have nothing to urge in my defence. All I can do is to plead guilty, and throw myself on the mercy of the court."

My compliment missed fire; the ladies had never heard of the graces, so I had to explain again, rather lamely, for I had forgotten their names, whereat the young ladies seemed somewhat disappointed, but by way of illustrating my explanation, and as I hoped, propitiating them, I quoted a line of Prior's which I happened to remember:

"The loves delighted and the graces played."

I had done better to let poetry alone.

"What are the loves?" queried Beatrice, a bright-eyed maiden of fourteen or fifteen summers.

"Why were they delighted?" demanded Diana.

"What did the graces play at?" asked Rosalind.

It would have been easier to say that I could not tell them for my attempted further explanation proved so disastrous a failure that I besought them to put me out of my misery by passing sentence forthwith.

On this the sisters put their pretty heads together, and after a whispered conference Rosalind announced my doom. For the remainder of the evening I was to answer questions and ask none.

"Very well," I said. "Who will begin?"

"My father, of course."

"Nay, you lassies must settle that among yourselves. I am not going to meddle," put in the judge.

"Diana is the eldest, let her begin."

"Oh, but I cannot, there are so many things I want to ask that I don't know what to ask first," exclaimed Diana helplessly.

"Beatrice, then."

"Give me one minute to think," said Beatrice.

"Never mind about thinking. Ask whatever may occur to you," quoth I.

"How old are you?"

It was now my turn to be taken aback, but I answered promptly, amid general laughter:

"Twenty-seven."

"Only twenty-seven! You look years older than that. Rosalind was the nearest, she guessed twenty-nine. I guessed thirty-three, Diana thirty-six."

"Don't let thy tongue run so fast, child," put in Rosalind chidingly—she was barely two years her sister's senior. "After so hard a journey our kinsman may well look older than his age. Moreover, thy question was unseemly."

"Thee ask him one then."

"May I, kinsman?"

"Of course. Am I not undergoing my punishment?"

"I hope you will not consider it a punishment to give us an account of your home. You said a little while ago that you had a place in the country. It would be very pleasant to hear more about it, how old it is, how large, what like, and whether it was built by one of your forefathers, who was perhaps one of ours, and whatever else you may like to tell us, for all of which we should be greatly beholden to you, should we not, father?"

"Thou art right, lass, we should," said the judge, and I responded to Rosalind's request with good will, for the way in which it was put pleased me even more than the theme she had chosen, and Wyvenhoe Court was the dearest spot to me in all the world.

When I had finished my description and answered several incidental questions, Mistress Wyvenhoe suggested that I must feel very tired and the judge declared it was bedtime. On which the ladies retired, and I was about to bid my host good night, when a strange uncanny feeling came over me, as though the ground under my feet were shivering.

"What is that?" I exclaimed.

"So you felt it, too! A sort of quiver, was it not?"

"Yes."

"It happens sometimes, though being so slight it is not perceived by everybody."

"What is it?"

"Nobody knows exactly. I believe it is occasioned by the river. When there has been heavy snow on Mount Lofty and, may be, heavy rain lower down, the river rises to a great height and the sudden rush of water——"

"Causes a vibration?"

"Yes, a slight vibration."

"Not a slight earthquake, you think?"

"We have no earthquakes here. Only that slight vibration caused by the river, which not one person in ten observes," said the judge rather sharply as though he were resenting an imputation on the fair fame of his beloved mountain. And, then we exchanged good-nights and betook ourselves to bed.

(To be continued.)

Digitized by Google

PEARSON'S WEEKLY

FOOTBALL SKILL COMPETITION

£100 PRIZE AWARDED EVERY WEEK.

Result of Competition No. 2.

THE following six competitors sent in the correct results, and the prize of £100 has therefore been divided between them, each competitor receiving £16 13s. 4d:

W. Owens, 4 Pindar Street, Everton, Liverpool.
Mrs. J. W. Page, Ivy Bank, Wroxham, Norwich.
J. Auckland, 10 Beacon Street, Lichfield, Staffs.
David Gillespie, 12 Keir Street, Pollockshields, Glasgow.
D. Pope, 5 Vernon Place, Birkenhead.
T. W. Scurrell, 34 Brunswick Avenue, Beverley Road, Hull.

The football matches named below will be played on Saturday, November 10th. To the competitor from whom we receive the correct result of all these matches we will pay the sum of ONE HUNDRED POUNDS. If no competitor gives all the results correctly, the HUNDRED POUNDS will be awarded to the person or persons most nearly correct.

FOOTBALL COUPON No. 5. Matches to be played on Saturday, November 10th.

MATCHES TO BE PLAYED ON SATURDAY, NOV. 10TH.	Free	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
1 NOTTS FOREST v. 2 DERBY COUNTY																			
1 LIVERPOOL v. 2 ASTON VILLA																			
1 BLACKBURN ROVERS v. 2 SUNDERLAND																			
1 WEST BROMWICH ALB. v. 2 SHEFFIELD WEDNESDAY																			
1 MANCHESTER CITY v. 2 NOTTS COUNTY																			
1 WALSALL v. 2 BURNLEY																			
1 SMALL HEATH v. 2 CHESTERFIELD																			
1 NEW BRIGHTON v. 2 LEICESTER FOSSE																			
1 WOOLWICH ARSENAL v. 2 NEWTON HEATH																			
1 QUEEN'S PARK RANG. v. 2 SOUTHAMPTON																			

The clubs engaged in each match are numbered 1 and 2. To fill in the above coupon, insert in the space provided the number of the club selected to win. To predict a draw, put X. THE FIRST COUPON IS FREE. A penny stamp must be inclosed for each coupon used in addition to the free one. Nine extra coupons may be used for Sixpence, and eighteen extra coupons for One Shilling.

I send in this coupon as a competitor for the prize advertised in this paper, and subject to the conditions printed on this page:

Name and address.....

THINGS TO REMEMBER.

1. Coupons may be sent either from "Pearson's Weekly" or "Short Stories."
2. All coupons must reach us not later than Friday, November 9th, first post.
3. Competitors should cut out the whole coupon, score it as directed, put their name and address in the space provided, and send to "COUPON No. 5," Pearson's Buildings, Henrietta Street, W.C.
4. All coupons are at senders' risk, and if they go astray, from whatever cause, we do not accept responsibility.
5. Competitors must attach their private address to their attempts. No prize will be sent to any post-office, refreshment rooms, or other places at which letters are called for. Attempts bearing such addresses will be disqualified.
6. In the event of a tie the prize will be divided.
7. Competitors may send in any number of attempts.
8. It must be taken as a condition of the competition that anybody competing therein agrees to abide by the Editor's final decision.

Intending competitors in the above would do well to procure a copy of "The Football Who's Who," which contains valuable information and statistics showing the previous records of the various clubs, and the particulars of the points of about a thousand of the best known players. This book will be found of great service in determining the chances of the teams engaged. It only costs a shilling, and may be obtained of all booksellers, and post free for 1s. 3d. from the Publisher, 17 Henrietta Street, W.C.

Digitized by Google

SHORT STORIES ABOUT BABIES.

We devote, every week, two pages of *Short Stories* to pithy, humorous anecdotes similar to those which appear in these columns. A prize of £1 1s. will be sent to the reader who submits the best storyette this week, and a copy of "The Impudent Comedian," by F. Frankfort Moore, to each of those whose attempts are used. The anecdotes may be either original or selected; in the latter case the source *must* be stated. The prize of One Guinea offered for the best Storyette in this competition has been won this week by Mr. George Daniels, of 20 Princess Street, Accrington. Attempts this week must deal with Stories about SNAKES, and must reach the Storyette Editor, *Short Stories* Office, Henrietta Street, Strand, London, W.C., by Monday, November 12th. Post-cards only, please.

Baby's First Tooth.

A FEW months after the birth of a friend's baby the whole town was aroused one night by a terrible commotion at his house. He was leaning out of the window, shouting at the top of his voice and then he would brandish a revolver and fire it.

The police thought that burglars had entered his dwelling, and while they were bursting open the back door, a rumour spread that the house was on fire. The engine soon arrived, ladders were raised, and they commenced to play on it.

The policemen broke open the front door and rushed in, the owner of the house meeting them on the stairs.

"Come in—come right upstairs, gentlemen, and see it."

"See what?" inquired the Chief of the Police.

"Why, the baby's tooth. It's just cut one."

"But I thought burglars were in, or the house was on fire."

"I never said so," he replied. But that baby's tooth cost him a good round sum for damages and repairs.

G. D.

Wanted to Remedy the Mistake.

BOBBIE had long and earnestly desired a baby brother and a pair of white rabbits.

The answer to both wishes came on the same morning, but not in a manner satisfactory to Bobbie, for there were two baby brothers and only one white rabbit. Bobbie was greatly disgusted at the mistake.

The next day his father found the following notice tacked on the gatepost:

FOR SAIL
ONE NICE FAT BABY
OR
I WILL SWOP HIM FOR
A
WHITE RAB-BET.

A. B.

Improving the Landscape.

"PLEASE, mum, if the twins is asleep, will you let ma borrow your perambulator?"

"But you haven't any baby."

"No, mum; but there's a man comin' to photograph our house, and ma thinks the perambulator would look awful nice standin' in the front garden."

H. B. T.

"If I Were a Mother."

IT was washing-day, and Johnny, aged two, had been allowed to wander a little.

At dinner-time he returned, with his pockets dripping with pitch.

"Oh, you naughty boy!" said his mother, "I shall have to tell father of you."

Johnny eyed her tearfully and replied:

"Well, muvver, if I was a muvver and you were a naughty boy, I shouldn't tell father."

S. A.

Securing an Encore.

IT was Fido's first bath, and with eyes bluer and rounder than the saucers in her doll's tea-service Baby Doris rapturously watched the process of soaping and laving, from which the pup emerged as white and spotless as driven snow.

Then, with her own tiny fingers she rubbed Fido down and wrapped him up in warm flannels, after which, with a pretty pretence of weariness she fell asleep by his side.

But not for long were her sweet baby eyes closed in slumber.

Happening to look out of the window a few minutes later, mother was horrified to see baby rolling Fido in a half-dried pool of rain-water, while she screamed, in a voice of mock distress:

"Muvver, muvver, det de tub out aden. Naughty Fido's been an' dot unwashed!"

R. A. H. G.

After the Explosion.

THERE is a little mother in Wales who has a sixteen-months' infant son who is the apple of her eye, and whom she evidently regards as something of a heavy-weight.

She resides a few hundred yards from the scene of a recent colliery explosion, and her house was one that felt the shock.

A friend afterwards expressed his sympathy.

"And did you really feel the explosion?" he asked.

"Yes, indeed," she replied; "it shook the house from garret to cellar."

"What did you think was the matter?" he curiously questioned.

"I thought baby had fallen out of bed," was the unexpected answer.

E. E.

Digitized by Google

Not an Uncle.

GRANDPA: "Well, Fred, you're an uncle now; you ought to be proud over it."

Little Fred: "No, I oughtn't to; I ain't no uncle."

Grandpa: "Why not?"

Little Fred: "'Cause I'm an aunt. The new baby's a girl."

J. M.

Mr. Bowser's Baby Elixir.

MRS. BOWSER, on returning from a visit to her mother the other evening, found her lord in the midst of an evil smell in the kitchen, bottling a villainous looking compound of his own manufacture.

"I have here," exclaimed Mr. Bowser grandiloquently, "a concoction of roots, herbs, gums, and bark, which I guarantee——"

"What is it?" interrupted Mrs. Bowser; "dog poison?"

Mr. Bowser glared.

"It is an elixir," he snapped, "for fractious infants, and I am about to put it to a practical test," and seizing his bottle he left the house.

Just down the street a woman stood gossiping with her back to a perambulator, in which an infant wailed and screamed like a second-hand set of bagpipes.

Bowser crept up and applied the bottle to the lips of the performer.

The fumes partially asphyxiated the child, and the mother, alarmed at the sudden cessation of the melody, turned round.

"You willan!" she gasped, "would you poison my kid? You——!!!"

When Bowser emerged from the dust-up, his own dog would not have known him, and no prizefighter was ever in sorrier plight.

Mrs. Bowser let him in at the front door.

"Wouldn't it have been wiser to have tried the elixir on the mother first?" she said soothingly; but for once Bowser had no retort ready.

E. C.

Sceptic and Believer.

A YOUNG man, who looked as if he might be about twenty-five years old, was sitting in the waiting room of the station. On his knee was a year old baby.

Presently the baby began to cry, and the awkwardness and helplessness of the young man was so marked as to attract general attention.

At this point one of the waiting passengers, a fat and amiable-looking man, crossed the room and said to the distressed baby-tender:

"A young woman gave you that baby to hold while she went to see about her luggage, didn't she?"

"Yes."

"Well, now, I knew it as soon as I saw you. You expect her back, I suppose?"

"Of course."

"Ha! ha! Excuse me, but I can't help laughing. A woman once played the same trick on me. I was in Leeds. You're caught, young man. She took you for a soft 'un."

"Oh, she'll come back," answered the young man as he looked anxiously round.

"She will, eh! Ha! ha! ha! What makes you think so?"

"Why, because she's my wife, and this is our first baby."

"Oh—um—I see," muttered the fat man, and he was in such haste to get back to the other side of the room that he nearly fell over a passing pug dog.

G. E. G.

What's the Matter?

"WHY, Tommy, what's the matter?" asked the indulgent mamma of her four-year-old son.

"Nurse won't div me a pretty fing in the pail of water," said Tommy, sobbing.

"Tell her if she doesn't give it to you this minute, I will tell papa," replied his mamma.

Tommy soon returned, saying, "She won't div it to me."

"Nurse, how dare you refuse to give dear little Tommy what he wants!" said mamma, appearing on the scene. "Here is your master; perhaps you will obey him."

"What is it my Tommy wants? Give it to him instantly, nurse, or depart from the house!" said papa.

"I am very sorry, sir," said the nurse coolly, "to have annoyed you, but I cannot give him what he wants, for how can I give him the moon that is shining in the pail?"

Papa and mamma return to the house dejectedly.

F. W.

A BOOK FOR LADIES.

The Art of Beauty.

By A TOILET SPECIALIST.

Crown 8vo, cloth. Post free, 1s. 2d.

Some of the Chapters are:

THE CURE OF STOUTNESS	Chap. I.
THE CURE OF LEANNESS	,, II.
THE FIGURE	,, IV.
BAD COMPLEXIONS: HOW TO CURE THEM	,, V.
THE COMPLEXION	,, VI.
THE HAIR IN HEALTH	,, VII.
THE HAIR IN ILL-HEALTH	,, VIII.
MOLES, WARTS, AND SUPERFLUOUS HAIR	,, XIII.

C. ARTHUR PEARSON LIMITED, Henrietta Street, W.C.

WHO WANTS KRUGER'S HAT?

DON'T you think it would look nice on your drawing-room table, or under a glass case on your mantel-piece? Well, there is no reason whatever why you should not get it. As you probably know, the Editor of *Pearson's Weekly* has bought it, and is offering it as a prize in a simple competition. All you have to do is to send in what you consider the funniest joke you ever heard. It may be either cut from a paper or written up by yourself. In either case you must affix to it a coupon which will be found in the current number of *Pearson's Weekly*.

Kruger's Hat would be a splendid thing to show your friends on Christmas Day.

Digitized by Google

AN UNCONSCIOUS PRIZE.

"NED, I've a serious proposal to make."

"What is it, Jack?"

But Jack was slow in responding and it was clear that the subject was a very serious one.

His brows were knitted and his forehead wrinkled. He wished to speak, yet was diffident about giving expression to his thoughts.

Ned watched him narrowly, and his own face assumed in sympathy an appearance that was as serious as that upon the countenance of his friend.

"Out with it, old chap!" exclaimed Ned at length.

"It's like this," began Jack with just a show of nervousness, and placing his cigarette on the ash tray. "We've been good friends for years, haven't we? And we don't want to begin to be otherwise after all this time, do we?"

"Now what's the matter?" asked Ned, following the other's example by placing his cigarette on the ash tray. "Let's have it and never mind the palaver."

Jack Myers looked round the club room to see that they were alone and began.

"Look here, we are both sweet on Emily Inglis—" He stopped short as if he had said too much, but an affirmative nod from Ned settled that point. "Well, that's agreed."

"And we have reason to believe, from the nice way in which she treats us, that she—that she—."

"Yes," assented his companion, who was more inclined to go straight to the point. "She thinks a good deal of us; whenever we see her at a cycle meet, or a soirée, or anyw here else, which is pretty often, it seems to me that she shows more favour to us than to anyone else."

"That's what I was coming to, Ned, and I think we may admit that she has shown no preference for either of us. In short, our chances are about equal."

Ned nodded.

He began to have some idea of what his friend was driving at.

"We are both sensible fellows," resumed Jack, now more at ease, "and we know very well that we can't both have her. On the other hand, I believe that her feelings towards us must be just at that stage when she would fall in love—violently in love—with either of us if the other fellow were not there to divide and distract her attention. It's a sort of 'how happy could I be with either,' you know."

"You don't think that it is our fate to marry a certain person—our counterpart, the one destined for us, and all that sort of thing?" Ned sighed.

"No, I don't; it's all bosh!" was the emphatic rejoiner. "If that were so, you would find a man marrying a woman who is out in Australia or some other country more often than is the case at present. So the case stands like this: We are both fond of the girl, and she would be fond of one of us, if there were only one of us. That's clear, isn't it?"

It was not put quite so clearly as Jack imagined, but Ned knew what was meant.

"The question is, then, which one of us shall retire," pursued Jack. "How shall we decide it?"

It was a difficult matter to decide. Both young fellows were fair specimens of manhood, and their social positions and prospects were equal. Naturally, neither cared to give way; and they could not ask the girl herself to decide, because she had hitherto shown no preference, and it would be unfair to force her on the spur of the moment to make a choice—unfair alike to her and to them.

Various suggestions were made—that they should abide by the result of a toss, that the one who first saw the girl should be the one to stay or the one to go away, and so on, but there was too much chance about those suggestions and they were rejected. Finally, as the best way out of the difficulty, they agreed upon a bicycle race for several miles along a country road, the loser to retire and leave the other to go in and win the girl.

"In the circumstances," remarked Ned as they rose to leave the comfortable room of the cycle club, "I do not think that this arrangement can be considered disrespectful to Miss Inglis, whom we both admire."

They had not left the club house far behind them when they met Miss Emily Inglis—met her so suddenly on turning a corner that they were quite taken aback and had some difficulty in collecting themselves quickly enough to answer her greeting without appearing foolish.

It was no wonder that the young fellows were "sweet," on her; and at that particular moment she looked so bewitching that in the breast of each young man there suddenly arose a feeling of jealousy towards the other.

"I am sorry that I shall not be at the meet to-morrow afternoon," said Miss Inglis after they had exchanged a few sentences of the usual kind about the weather and similar topics.

"Not be there!" said Jack and Ned in chorus. "Oh, that's a pity!"

"It won't be half so enjoyable without you, Miss Inglis," said Ned Hallam.

"I don't think I shall go now," observed Jack. He felt a little annoyed that Ned should have made the remark about the meet not being so enjoyable; it looked as though his companion was trying to advance himself unfairly, and felt impelled to go one better.

Emily Inglis looked curiously at them both; then she became grave.

"I am going away for a few days," she observed quietly. "I did not expect to go so soon, but—I hope you will have an agreeable afternoon to-morrow. Good evening, Mr. Meyers. Good evening, Mr. Hallam."

And she vanished round the corner.

"Perhaps it's as well, after all, that she is going away for a while," remarked Jack philosophically. "We shall have no disturbing influence now, and our race will be over by the time she gets back. It wasn't altogether fair of you to make that remark, old chap, see how quiet she became. I fancy she guessed something."

"I like that!" expostulated Ned. "Her demeanour did not change until you said something about not going, you know."

Digitized by Google

There was just a little coolness between the friends when they parted, but it soon wore off. Each went in training so far as circumstances would permit for the great race which was to decide their fate at the end of another week—the race was fixed for the following Saturday afternoon—and both were equally determined to strain every nerve in the competition. The contest promised to be exciting, for there was not much to choose between them in strength and skill.

They decided to keep the matter a secret; they required no starter or referee; they had sufficient confidence in one another to believe that each would act fairly, and it was hardly likely that there would be any great distance between them. Moreover, when the winner arrived at the inn which was to be the goal, he would request somebody to take note of his arrival.

The race was to be ridden in ordinary cycling costume, so as not to excite curiosity. The loser undertook to remove to some other town within a specified period.

On the fateful afternoon the competitors rode to the starting point, about half-a-mile out of the town. From this point there was a fairly good run over a quiet road for eight miles; the exact distance in a straight line would not have been more than five miles, this route having been chosen because they were far less likely to meet other cyclists.

The signal for starting was arranged thus. A blade of grass was placed on a branch of a tree where the wind would catch it and take it off; the competitors, with their machines in line, would watch the blade of grass, and when they saw it topple over they would start.

Their faces expressive of grim determination, Jack and Ned kept their eyes fixed on the signal; there was a murmur of excitement from both men as the blade of grass was swept away by a gust of wind, then they were off.

Not a word was spoken, both men saved their breath and did their utmost. There was no question of holding in until the end, and then making a sudden spurt in order to win by surprising the competitor rather than by real strength or skill. They were to go as hard as they could and get there in the shortest time.

The pace was a telling one, and by the time half-a-dozen miles had been covered they were nearly knocked up; both men felt that they had overdone it at the start.

A decrease of speed, it was tacitly agreed, should come only with a decrease of strength. When not more than half-a-mile from the end, they were still going at a great pace; Ned leading by half-a-dozen yards. Jack was straining every muscle to overtake his rival and was gradually getting closer.

Only a quarter of a mile to go, and they were abreast.

The one thought was in both minds—which would win? Then an accident occurred, and to this day Jack and Ned cannot tell exactly what happened.

A couple of dogs, one chasing the other, suddenly ran out into the road just ahead of them; both men, in their sudden anxiety, attempted to curve, there was a crash—and the race was over.

It was half-an-hour later when Jack and Ned, trundling their damaged machines, arrived at the inn, but instead of asking someone to note their arrival, they were annoyed because too much notice was taken of it.

However, they put the best face on it, made arrangements to have the bicycles sent to the repairing shop in town on the Monday morning, and proceeded to make themselves as comfrotable as they could.

"I suppose we shall have to ride it again," remarked Ned, moodily, rubbing a bump on the back of his head.

"Look's like it," observed Jack as he stretched a grazed shin.

It was dusk when they reached town by train. They had made themselves presentable and thought they had better go to the club in case their absence should excite suspicion. But here they were doomed to receive another shock.

"I say, you follows," said Alec Jeeks, apostrophising the rivals, "have you heard the latest? Emily Inglis is engaged to a fellow in Manchester! Fact! Had it from my sister—great chum of Emmie's—says they have known each other some time and been corresponding, and now they are engaged. She went to Manchester last Saturday to stay with his mother, you know. Settled it up there. Going to be married in six weeks."

And away went Alec to tell somebody else.

"Ned," said Jack solemnly, "we've made fools of ourselves!"

"Tell me something fresh!" exclaimed Ned sarcastically.

"That's why she looked grave at what we said the other day. But I never suspected it. Suppose that her manner towards us was just the same as towards anybody else—that girl is bound to be nice to everybody, she can't help it! It was our own imagination that made it appear different. Lucky beggar! I shall never marry!"

"Neither shall I!" said Jack just as decidedly.

It will be well to record a brief conversation which took place between Jack and Ned some four months later.

"Jack, you remember what you said about its being all bosh that we must marry the one destined for us? Well, I've got the sweetest, the best——"

"Yes, I know. So have I. I'm going to try to get her to fix the day soon." G. A. Day.

"He's looking for a wife," they said to her pointedly.

"He would be an object of greater interest to me," she replied with some asperity, "if he were looking for a single woman."

"She felt the strong arm of the law," he said, speaking of a woman who had got into trouble.

"How delightful?" commented the demure young thing.

"What is delightful?" he demanded in surprise.

"To feel a strong arm," she answered softly.

They are still sitting on that shaded seat on Yarmouth Parade.

It is not
20 TT's R,
nor yet
XX Teas Sir,
Just simply
TWENTY TEAZER.

Digitized by Google

WEIGHED IN THE BALANCE

A MAN with his own way to make in the world ought to have two wives. The law should permit that. This was the burden of Jarvis Jessup's thought as he sat alone in the gloom of his unlighted library.

There should be a rich wife to begin with, of course, for a man must have money. But a rightly-constituted man needs more than money. He needs social opportunity, so that his money may produce its full effect. To gain that, the right kind of wife is a most precious helpmeet. Sometimes the rich wife is not at all precious in that way. Jarvis Jessup knew that.

But, unhappily, two wives at once are out of the question. Well, then, it ought to be lawful to expunge the rich wife when she has become detrimental. As things are now, she must be kept on the books long after she has ceased to be profitable.

At this point in his meditations, Mr. Jessup was startled by feeling some unaccountable and indescribable sound near him. He did not hear it—he felt it. It was like an inaudible cackle of diabolical laughter. A ghost might have laughed so, for another ghost to hear. It disturbed Jarvis for the moment, and made him uncomfortable.

But probably it was some queer echo in one of the library alcoves. He was not very familiar with the properties of his library. He often sat here of an evening, and reflected on his greatness, finding the library more satisfactory than any other sort of lumber-room to sit in; and that was all the use he had for it. But he had never "felt" that sound of strange laughter before.

Jarvis Jessup was a self-made man. The difference between him and the sort of men already made was considerable; but he was eminently satisfied with his own job, holding it greatly superior to the other kind. True there was still a good deal to be done; but when he had quite finished himself, men and other beings would see something well worth seeing. The steps of progress thus far were what he loved to comtemplate.

He had put vast wealth in the place of miserable poverty. That was a process pleasant to think upon. No matter how he had accomplished it. When a man has so many millions as this man now possessed, questions are impertinent.

His wife made his future more difficult; for, unhappily, she was a woman, he thought, to be ashamed of. Coarse and ignorant as she was, she could not prevent his progress, of course, but she hindered it. An aspiring man should not be hampered by such conditions. He wished he might be rid of this incumbrance, at whatever sacrifice.

As he came back to this, the starting-point of his reflections, Jarvis felt again the same strange echo of diabolical laughter. He got up and peered nervously into the dark corners of the room. He could see nothing and hear nothing; so he sat down again and listened to his thoughts.

They dwelt upon his daughter now. She was his reliance where his wife failed him so miserably. He was not ashamed of his daughter. She was beautiful and attractive. She was even brilliant. The money expended for her many accomplishments had been well invested; for now she reflected upon her father much of the light that is shed from high places. What more could he desire?

But he had trouble with her, too. It is a grievous thing when a father finds his own child arrayed against him. And the unhappy experience had come upon this father in the very turn and crisis of his shining career. If he were thwarted now, his most precious opportunity would be lost. Therefore he would not be thwarted.

At the expense of much effort he had secured the "option" of a son-in-law just to his mind. Many had been offered to him, but they were not what he wanted. It had so happened that his daughter did not want them either; but that was merely a trifling coincidence, of no real significance whatever. Here, at last, in his very grasp, was the very article he coveted. The man was available in every way. He owned as many millions as Jarvis Jessup himself, and he held keys to open the most exalted doors. So allied, this anxious father might rest from all his labours.

Then how sharper than a serpent's tooth the perversity of his only child. For in this case, also, the daughter did not approve. The preposterous excuse for her wickedness was a pronounced preference for some man of her own choosing; but that was only a trifling difficulty. Jarvis could manage his daughter easily

Digitized by Google

enough. If only he could dispose thus easily of the wife that had become unprofitable.

Again his wife. Perhaps he thought so much of her to-night because this was their marriage anniversary. Twenty-five years ago this night he had taken her fortune with the incumbrance of herself. Twenty-five years was quite long enough for an ambitious man to wear such fetters as bound him to this undesirable woman.

He was startled by a faint light, shone about him from somewhere in the darkness. Then he saw a small flame moving through the gloom. At first it seemed to move of itself, but soon he saw that a hand guided it. A white-robed figure was revealed behind the flame. Do spirits of light come when the powers of darkness call them?

The next moment Jarvis Jessup smiled in mortified amusement at his own fears. The white-robed figure was his daughter, come to the library in search of a book. Being the only one who ever sought books there, she expected darkness in the room, and was prepared for it. She carried a pretty little silver lamp of antique pattern and by means of it she had scared her father most dismally.

The feeble torch did not reveal to her that the place was already occupied, and she moved with unrestrained carelessness from alcove to alcove; the perfumed oil of the lamp giving forth a faint fragrance as of spice-offerings to a goddess. No goddess was this, however. She was simply a bright, lovable, loving girl; grown a little awry in the arid soil and the unwholesome weather of home. As she carried her little lamp from place to place now she sang softly to herself fragments of a gay love-song.

The love-song was harsh discord in the ears of her father. If it had been a song of gold, now, or of high society. Anger at the foolish song made him forget the more foolish words that had frightened him so. He would give the girl something to think about besides love-nonsense.

"Grace, I have something to say to you. Come here."

The unexpected sound of his voice startled her a little, but evidently she was not much impressed by his presence or his words. As she came and stood before him there was, in her face and manner, a veiled insolence that suggested contempt for him and his pretensions. He was her father and she must wear for him a mask of respect. But he was also a man of ignoble baseness, so under the mask she must needs smile in derision. Filial love? Hardly, without at least a twig of paternal love for that heavenly vine to twine itself about.

"Grace,"—the father spoke sternly, but without looking into the beautiful, clear eyes, shining above him—"Mr. Atherton will call on you to-morrow. He has something to ask which you must answer. And I may as well tell you beforehand that your answer must be 'yes.' Do you understand? Your answer must be 'yes.'"

Grace calmly looked him over for an uncomfortable half-minute.

"Mr. Atherton has his answer already," she said quietly. "And I must say he behaved very well, considering how old he is, and how hopelessly vulgar."

"He has been here? Well? You knew my wishes; did you answer him according to them?"

"He wished to marry me, not you," said Grace. "So I gave him my answer, not yours. The answer he got was 'no.'"

"So!"

"Marry your beggar if you dare!"

The word was simply an exasperating sneer. The man was angry, but he would not dignify this petty revolt by treating it seriously.

"Mr. Atherton will call on you again to-morrow," he went on. "And he will get a different answer. You shall write him an apology to-night, and ask him to come and receive your final answer. And when he comes you will make the answer fit your duty."

"What if I refuse all this—as I certainly shall?"

"If! There's no 'if' about it. Do you suppose I'm going to lose the chance of my life-time for a baby whim of yours? Do you suppose I'm going to miss the advantages George Atherton can give me because you fancy yourself in love with a beggar? A fellow with a paltry hundred thousand, and absolutely without social position? If you refuse! Refuse if you dare! Marry your beggar if you dare! Do you know what I will do? I'll—But you won't refuse!"

"I certainly do refuse."

Grace spoke very earnestly. She set down the lamp on the table beside them, and stood directly before her father with her hands tightly clasped. That was the only sign of excitement—the tight clenching of her fingers.

"Now listen to me, father. We had best understand each other once for all."

She stopped abruptly in great alarm. Something dreadful had befallen her father. Some great terror had overwhelmed him. He sat cowering back in his chair, shrinking away from some frightful thing his staring eyes beheld. His features were convulsed, and his very hair seemed to stir above his scared brain.

Grace could see nothing to account for all this. Certainly her words had not produced the startling change.

Digitized by Google

She knew they would enrage him, but surely they would not terrify him. She leant over him and laid her hand anxiously upon his arm. She would have spoken soothingly to him, having a woman's instinct to relieve suffering; but he put her away with a trembling hand and his stiff lips shaped themselves to the one word:

"Go!"

So, in great bewilderment, she hastened away in search of her mother. She left her little lamp behind. In the light it shed, Jarvis Jessup looked again to see the frightful thing that had so affected him.

And, behold, it was only a shadow! Grace had set her lamp beside a bronze figure on the table. The shadow of this figure had leapt, like a grotesque, live thing across the table towards Jarvis; and in its odd and gruesome distortion it was the shadow of a demon. He recognized it as the shadow of the horrible presence that had been mocking him. And the wavering flame caused the impish shadow to leap and dance upon the table in fiendish glee. No wonder the haunted man was frightened.

But he was not frightened now. He was ashamed of his momentary weakness, and therefore in a worse temper than ever. In this frame of mind his wife found him. Summoned by her daughter, she had hurried to him in much anxiety. For in spite of twenty-five years in his company, this foolish woman still had love for her husband. How that could be, let the man who understands a woman's heart explain.

"What's the matter, Jessup?" she cried, coming to him in awkward haste. "Whew! What have you been burning matches for? You've filled the room full of brimstone! Say, what ails you?"

"Nothing ails me. Why are you here? I did not send for you."

He spoke with contemptuous impatience, as if some servant had been rather too presumptuous. But Mrs. Jessup was not visibly affected by his words. She was not a whit more in awe of his greatness than her daughter was.

"I did not send for you," Jarvis repeated. "But seeing you are here, I'll give you something to do. Find Grace, and tell her I insist on her doing what I ordered. She must do it this hour. Tell her I shall find ways to punish her if she disobeys! Go! and do as I bid."

"Don't you be simple, Jessup! Grace told me what you said. You don't suppose she's going to do such a thing as that, do you? Ask that old hunk to come back and marry her? She'd be a fool! Of course she won't do it, and you can't make her do it. Let old Atherton go. There's money enough without his. And you just tell Grace she can have Frank Julian. Frank's well enough off, and a better or nicer young fellow doesn't exist. You just say 'yes' to that; won't you, Jessup?"

She laid her hand in coaxing caress on his head, and waited for him to speak. He thrust her hand away with a gesture that was an insult.

"You surely don't suppose I am going to argue the matter with you—with you?" he said.

"Say 'yes,' Jessup!"

"Woman! you annoy me enough by being alive, without encouraging my child to be disobedient. I won't have that. Now go!"

She was not afraid of him, but he had power to hurt her. He had hurt her now. With a pain in her heart, she moved slowly away. Three steps made her invisible in the gloom, and her husband dismissed her from his mind.

"Admirable!"

The demon shadow leapt in mad glee. It seemed to have voice as well as life now, for surely it had spoken that word of approbation. And the voice was the silent echo made audible. With terrifying distinctness Jarvis Jessup heard the word. Anybody could hear it. His fears had been prophets, then.

Yes, and there was the confirmation of the prophecy. The shadow-demon was hidden now; for between Jarvis and the table, a shape had come, which almost caused the man to swoon with fear. And yet the thing was not so very dreadful to look upon. It was simply the form of a man; and, so far as appearance went, the man might have been a highly respectable prospective defaulter.

"Good evening, old friend!" said the Shape.

"You—you have—the advantage—of me," Jarvis stammered through his chattering teeth.

"Certainly. That is why I am here. I have called with my account. This is the end of the quarter, and my time for settlement."

"I—I have no outstanding accounts," Jarvis protested with an abject pretence of bluster.

"You will hardly be able to repudiate this one; and you will please give it prompt attention. I have already waited some time here, being unwilling to interrupt conversations with ladies. However, I enjoyed hearing you talk. You proved yourself such a customer as I love to deal with. Now to business."

The visitor seated himself on the edge of the table, and spread out a paper which he had carried in his hand.

"Here is the account," he said. "You wanted an article I could furnish. You offered the price I demanded, and I delivered the property. The date of delivery is here—just twenty-five years ago to-night. The transaction recorded is, the delivery to Jarvis Jessup of Matilda Bowen, with the fortune to her appertaining. Consideration—One Soul. You remember it? I was sure you would! You needed a rich wife, and had said you would give your soul for Matilda Bowen and her fortune. But I need not trouble you recalling the details. I am here to receive the amount due to me for my share in the transaction."

"No, no! Give me longer time! I didn't mean it for a bargain! I gave you no writing!"

The pitiful wretch in the chair shrieked the words, and cowered away from his dread creditor. The Shape, unmoved by his outcry, sat and smiled upon him implacably.

But the debtor's appeal for mercy had response. And of all beings in the universe, the one who came to Jarvis Jessup in his dire strait was Matilda Bowen, the wife he had just sent from him with reviling. Hearing voices before she reached the door, she had paused in surprise, and then had stayed in consternation. She realized who the creditor was; but if she was not afraid of Jarvis Jessup, she most certainly was not afraid of this other!

"Don't mind him, Jarvis," she said, coming to her husband, and laying her hand on his head again. "I'll manage him! All you've got to do is to say 'yes' to Grace and Frank Julian. Will you do that?"

Jarvis nodded with craven eagerness, clutching pitifully at her dress the while.

"Is that a promise—sure?" she demanded of him.

"Yes! Yes! Help me!"

"All right. Now," turning to the creditor, "you've got me to deal with!"

Digitized by Google

CHIVERS'

DELICIOUS! WHOLESOME! REFRESHING!

FLAVOURED WITH RIPE FRUIT JUICES.

DR. GORDON STABLES, R.N.: "No home is complete without these pure and excellent Jellies, which add to our health and luxury."

MEDICAL PRESS: "Chivers' Jellies are to be commended for the delicacy of their flavour, and for their absolute purity."

GRANVILLE H. SHARPE, F.C.S.: "Of the highest standard of purity and excellence."

FREE SAMPLE on receipt of post-card. S. CHIVERS and SONS, Histon, Cambridge.

JELLIES.

Neuralgia Positively Cured!

Free Test Offered.

The annexed cut presents in the prominent white lines the nerves most liable to attacks of Neuralgia. Sufferers will know only too well the pain tracks, and will be glad to know of a Simple and Sure Remedy. The proprietors will send Free two sample Zox Powders to any reader of *Short Stories* sending stamped envelope to ZOX CO., 11 HATTON GARDEN, LONDON, E.C.

DRUNKENNESS

CURED. This can be done with or without patient's knowledge. Send me a stamp and I will tell you how. (Send no money.) Address, in confidence, Mrs. C. H. (Room 8), 195 Oxford Street, London, W.

NOSE medically approved, 11/6.

MACHINES. LEES RAY, S.S. Dept., South Castle St. Liverpool, is a specialist on Ugly and Red Noses. Send stamp for particulars of his patent scientific Nose Improvers. Red Nose Cure, 3/9. Outstanding Ear Machines

FREE. FREE. **NO MONEY REQUIRED. WE TRUST YOU.**

Our £2 10s. **Real Silver Watch** (with chain), or **A Real Gold Ring** Set with REAL DIAMONDS and other stones.

SEND NO MONEY.

We give you your choice of either of these handsome presents for selling NINE articles of Jewellery at 1/6 each. (Regular price 2/6).

We do not want your money. Just send us a stamped addressed envelope and say that you will either sell the jewellery or return it to us if you fail to sell it. On receiving your letter we will at once post you the jewellery.

When sold, send us the 12/6 you have received for same, and we will at once send you ABSOLUTELY FREE our £2 10s. Real Silver Watch with Chain, or the Gold Ring, whichever you desire.

A WRITTEN GUARANTEE for TEN years sent with each watch.

You can sell our Jewellery in a few minutes at 1/6 each article. We have thousands of testimonials as to the quality and value both of our Jewellery and Presents.

Send no money. Write to-day.

BRITISH PREMIUM SYNDICATE (Dept. 5). 283 CENTRAL CHAMBERS, GLASGOW.

Don't Cough-use

They at once check the Cough and remove the cause.

The Unrivalled

One Lozenge alone relieves. Sold everywhere, Tins 13½d. each.

Keating's Lozenges

BIG PRIZE SCHEME

For MARCH, 1901.

25,602 PRIZES, value £10,000

LIST OF PRIZES:

1	Cash Prize £50	£50 0
1	Cash Prize, £40	40 0
10	Handsome Pianos, in walnut, £40 each	400 0
5	Cash Prizes, £25 each	125 0
10	Gents' Bicycles, Freewheels, £17 17s.	178 10
10	Ladies' Bicycles, Free-wheels, £17 17s.	178 10
10	Cash Prizes, £10 each	100 0
20	Jones's Sewing Machines, £8 each	160 0
20	Cash Prizes, £5 each	100 0
50	Rolled Gold Lever Watches, £2 10s. each	125 0
100	Cash Prizes, £2 each	200 0
50	Dinner Services (56 pieces), £2 each	100 0
50	Folding Bed Chairs, £2 each	100 0
50	Ladies' Travelling Trunks, £2 each	100 0
200	Cash Prizes, £1 each	200 0
200	Ladies' Leather Hatboxes, £1 each	200 0
100	Basket Arm Chairs, upholstered, £1	100 0
400	pairs Blankets, 15s. per pair	300 0
200	½-doz Electro-plated Forks, large, 15s. per ½ doz.	150 0
200	½-doz. Electro-plated Forks, small, 15s. per ½-doz.	£150 0
500	Ladies' Umbrellas, 15/- ea.	375 0
500	Gents' Umbrellas, 15s. each	375 0
400	Best Electro-plated Teapots, 15s. each	300 0
400	Handsome Meat Carvers, with Steel in Case, 15s. set	300 0
1000	Cash Prizes, 10s. each	500 0
1000	pairs Bed Sheets, 10s. each	500 0
1000	White Linen Table Cloths, 10s. each	500 0
1000	Ladies' Umbrellas, 7/6 each	375 0
1000	Ladies' Leather Purses, 7/6 each	375 0
200	½-doz. Table Knives, 7/6 per ½-doz.	75 0
200	½-doz. Dessert do., 7/6 per ½-doz.	75 0
2000	Ladies' Dress Lengths, Navy Blue Serge, 7/6 each	750 0
2000	Cash Prizes of 5s. each	500 0
4715	Ladies' Leather Handbags, 4s. each	943 0
4000	½-doz. Fine Linen Cambric Handkerchiefs, 2/6 per ½-doz.	500 0
4000	Handsome Work-boxes, 2/6 each	500 0
25,602		**£10,000 0**

CONDITIONS OF COMPETITION.

Every tablet of **Watson's Matchless Cleanser** is enclosed in a Wrapper, with signature up the centre of same. Save the WHOLE Wrapper (tops of Wrappers will be disqualified), and send, postage or carriage paid, to **Joseph Watson & Sons Limited, Whitehall Soap Works, Leeds,** not later than MARCH 31ST, 1901. Each package will be counted as one lot; separate entries must be sent under separate covers. If any parcel arrives, postage or carriage not being fully paid, such parcel will be refused. Be careful to see that the full postage is paid. Each parcel sent in must contain the full name and address of sender, and number of Wrappers sent in must be marked on the same paper. On outside of parcel write legibly "**Prize Competition.**" The prizes will be awarded in the above order to the senders of the highest numbers of Wrappers. A list, giving result of the Competition, will be sent with each prize when it is sent out. Every wrapper must have first contained soap. No employee of Joseph Watson & Sons Limited will be eligible. All prizes will be despatched about April 25th.

WATSON'S MATCHLESS CLEANSER

The Best Soap for all purposes, still holds the lead. Quality perfect. Is the Housewife's Friend. It saves her health, her strength, her wealth; washes her clothes with ease and leaves them sweet and pure, and will not injure the most delicate fabric. **It has the largest sale of 1-lb. tablets in the world.** Sold by all Grocers, Oilmen, &c., throughout the United Kingdom. Buy it. Prove it and secure a Prize.

Shilling packets

Kaputine "the" safe Remedy for **Headache**

WARNING. *Instead of using the common White Headache Powders, which generally consist entirely of a crude drug, which has been condemned as dangerous by the medical papers, insist on having a bona-fide anti-quack remedy, recommended by such eminent medical authorities as Dr. RAMAGE, L.R.C.P., Dr. THURSTIN, L.R.C.P., late Dr. BOYD-WILLIAMS (Liverpool), the Editor of the Medical Journal, "Health," etc., etc. The name of this safe remedy is KAPUTINE.*

ALL LEADING CHEMISTS SELL IT, OR CAN GET IT FOR YOU IN A FEW HOURS.

Sold by BOOT'S, TAYLOR'S, DAY'S, WHITE'S and other Stores. Most Co-operative Stores sell it.

PACKETS, 1/-. SAMPLES ONE PENNY,

or KAPUTINE LIMITED, HUDDERSFIELD,

will send it FREE for 12 stamps.

WORTH A CROWN A DOSE.

Digitized by Google

"Jarvis! Jarvis! Wake up!"

"Impossible, woman! I cannot deal with you!" said he with manifest trepidation.

"Well, you'll have to deal with me. The property wasn't yours to sell, but never mind that. Now take a pencil and set down the items I give you. Are you ready?"

Sullenly the creditor took pencil and paper. The woman stood transformed before them. She remembered what she had suffered from the fear-palsied wretch who was now clinging to her garments, and the memory made her heroic in his defence. That is the way of some women.

"A bargain is a bargain," she said to the astonished creditor. "You stood by your bargain; he shall stand by his!"

Jarvis screeched in new terror when he heard these ominous words. She continued as if he had remained silent.

"Jarvis Jessup wanted my money. To get it he made me believe that he loved me and I loved him. Have you got that down?"

The creditor nodded.

"Well, as soon as he got my money, he made me miserable by his neglect. He did not even show decent gratitude. Put that down."

"Gratitude," the creditor repeated mechanically.

"Worse than that," the poor wife continued; and now it was pitiful to hear her words. "He was ashamed of me. He has always been ashamed of me, because I am plain and awkward, and haven't fine manners. Put that down. He's ashamed of the wife he cheated into marrying him."

The creditor wrote swiftly, smiling the while.

"Since he got so rich with my money," the wife went on, "he wants to get into society. I can't help him there, so he hates me. Not half-an-hour ago he wished I was dead. Put that down."

"Dead. A splendid record it is!" said the creditor, enthusiastically.

"No conversation, if you please! Now for some items about our daughter. First item: He never gave her one word or look of fatherly affection in her life. Next item: he poured out money for her, but only as an investment. He thought she would be a credit to him, and help him along; that's all he cared for. Next item: She got into society, and that bettered his chances; so he pretended to be proud of her. Next item: Two men want to marry her. One is a good man, and she loves him. The other is not good, and she despises him. The man she despises could help Jarvis Jessup along, so the poor girl has been ordered to marry him. Next item: Just now Jarvis Jessup promised that she shall marry the man she wants. Why? Simply because that was the only way to save himself from you."

"All down!" said the creditor, gleefully.

This was a delightfully foolish woman to deal with, after all. She had made her husband's case about as bad as it could possibly be.

"All other items I suppose you've got already," the advocate resumed. "You know he hasn't had any conscience but the market reports; that he hasn't troubled himself whether the money he got belonged to him or to somebody else; that he never kept out of any speculation because it was going to ruin other men; that he made a beggar of every depositor in a bank, and was sharp enough to do it without being arrested. You've got all that, haven't you?"

"Every item!" the creditor responded, heartily. "And I have seldom had a finer record!"

"You are sure it's all right?"

"Perfectly correct."

"Good! Now we'll sum up." There was an ominous tone of triumph in the woman's voice at last. "Just take the trouble to find the sum of all these items; then subtract the total from the original amount and see how much Soul there is left!"

It was terrible to see the change that came upon the creditor.

"Understand," said the advocate, "your claim isn't disputed. You shall have all the Soul Jarvis Jessup has left after twenty-five years of such a life as that."

The only answer was an angry dash of the pencil, as the creditor wrote on the margin of his paper the words:

"No assets!"

Then the Shape vanished; and his rescued victim collapsed in his chair, insensible.

* * * * *

"Jarvis! Jarvis! Wake up!"

His wife's hand was laid on him again, and he came slowly and fearfully back to consciousness.

"Say, Jessup, are you awake? Mr. Atherton is in the parlour, waiting to see you. Says he wants your answer, whatever that means."

"Tell him," said Jarvis with a shudder, "that my daughter's answer is my answer!"

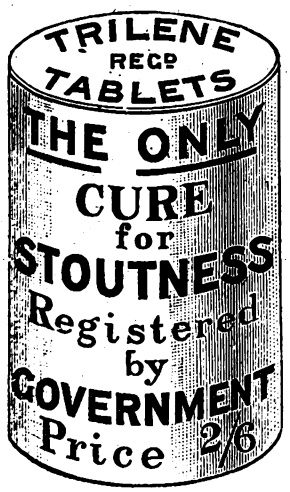
J. C. P.

Digitized by Google

ALL FAT PEOPLE

Can be **CURED** by taking

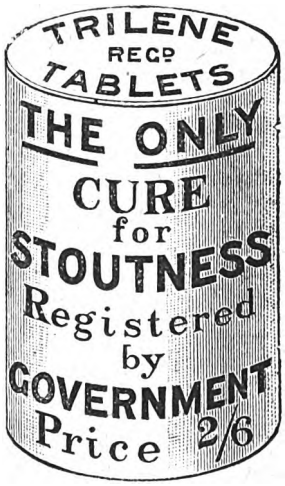
TRILENE TABLETS Regd.



For a few weeks. They will safely REDUCE WEIGHT and CURE CORPULENCY PERMANENTLY, whether Abdominal or General. They are small, agreeable, harmless, sent privately, and never fail to Improve both HEALTH and FIGURE without change of Diet.

An English Countess writes: "Your Trilene Tablets act admirably."

Send **2s. 6d.** to **THE TRILENE ASSOCIATION, 66 Finsbury Pavement, London, E.C.**



SAMPLES OF TESTIMONIALS.

"87 Alexandra Road, Norwich, October 19th, 1896.

Gentlemen,—In reference to Trilene Tablets, I may say that my wife found the greatest possible benefit from the use of them; their action was rapid, and exceeded our utmost expectations, as they were also most beneficial to the respiratory organs. My wife was many years growing so stout, but although the disease was, I consider chronic, the Tablets soon reduced the same completely. You have our united thanks, and if I can do anything to promote your interests I will freely use my utmost endeavours to do so.

"Yours faithfully, J. R. CANHAM."

MRS. DARNLEY SMITH, Landscove Vicarage, Ashburton, writes: "Trilene Tablets have reduced my weight very much. I am so much lighter in every way, and better in health."

COUNTESS SECKENDORFF, of Berlin, writes: "The Tablets greatly benefited me personally, and I am recommending them to friends."

MISS CHATTERTON, 7 Salisbury Villas, Banstead, Surrey, says: "I weighed 12st. 5lb., but am now 11st. and getting much better."

Nurse CROUCHER, at Mrs. Bennett's, 14 Buckleigh Road, Streatham, says: "I lost 9lb. from the box I took."

"77 Hindhill Street, Heywood, February 5th, 1898.

"Gentlemen,—I have not quite finished the box of Tablets and am 2lb. lighter. The change is great, and several friends are beginning the treatment, which not only reduces fat but strengthens rheumatic joints—such has been the case with me.

"Yours sincerely, M. A. HEYWOOD."

MRS. D. BURTON, of Silverleigh, Tunbridge, writes: "I am very pleased with difference in size, my friends all telling me how much thinner I am getting."

MISS NORTHLEDGE, The Laurels, Rischolme Road, Lincoln, says: "The Tablets reduced me 1st., so that I am cured."

West Cornforth, Ferryhill.

MR. WM. USHER says: "A sister of mine, who was 17st., was greatly reduced by your Tablets to 15st."

Extract from *The Lady*, September 3rd, 1896: "Many stout persons have suffered untold agonies in unavailing efforts to reduce their bulk, either by means of severe dieting, or by taking more or less deleterious drugs; but all these pains would have been saved if they had only invested in a box of the wonderful Trilene Tablets which are quite harmless, containing neither mercury, arsenic, nor any other mineral poison, and which are an unfailing cure for obesity."

MRS. T. BOSTON, Cambridge Villas, Clifford Street, South Wigston, says: "I congratulate you on your wonderful Tablets. My weight at first starting them was 11st. 7lb., and I now weigh 9st. 11lb."

MR. MCLEOD, 44, Calside, Paisley, writes: "I have been cured. If you want to know my weight now, it is 10st.; reduced 1st. 8lb., and I am quite content."

A. M. PRATT of Ongar House, Ongar, says: "My weight is so much reduced it is unnecessary to take more. The reduction of weight was from 12st. 6lb. to 10st. 4lb."

MRS. H. COX, 28 Watnall Road, Hucknall Torkard, writes: "The box of Tablets has reduced my weight 1½ stones."

MR. WALKER, 236 London Road, Hazelgrove, Stockport, says: "I have used one box and am 14lb. lighter. Send another soon as possible."

Col.-Sergt. WHITTLE, of East Lancashire Regt., Burnley, Lancs, says: "A man in our regiment in 1891 lost several stone from taking your Tablets."

MRS E. ALEXANDER, 102 Dixon Street, New Swindon, says: "They have reduced me quite 2 stone, and I am now quite cured."

Mrs. W. A. RADFORD, of High Street, New Brinsley, Eastwood, writes: "Before taking Tablets I was 46 inches round waist, now I am 32 inches. I hope soon to be 23. I could hardly move or get up, now I get about easily. Please use this as you wish."

Countess FURSTENBERG, of Germany, writes: "They act speedily and well."

The Princess LIECHTENSTEIN writes from Landsberg, Austria: "Pray send me your excellent Tablets."

MRS. WEAVER, of Greenpits Villa, Ross, Hereford, writes "I am reduced from 13st. 8lb. to 11st. You may use this if you like."

MRS. CROSSLEY, of Rose Hill, Torver, nr. Coniston, says: "There is a very decided diminution of fat. I am delighted, and cannot speak too highly in praise of Tablets. My heart is better, and I can breathe so much easier. You may refer to me as often as you like."

Lady C. CONRAD writes from Wiesbaden: "I am very pleased with your Tablets."

Mrs. TAYLOR-ROBINSON, of Tweed Green House, Whalley Range, Manchester, says: "I feel so much lighter and better since taking your Tablets, and am so much thinner that I hardly recognise myself."

Miss A. LONG, of 9 South Parade, Waterford, writes: "Your Tablets have reduced me 14lb."

Miss A. DAWSON, 62 Orchard Street, Weston-super-Mare, says: "Glad to say the Tablets have sufficiently reduced me. I shall always recommend them."

Miss F. L. BALL, 47 Chesterfield Road, St. Andrews, Bristol, writes: "I am quite cured through your Tablets. They improve the figure, and greatly relieve shortness of breath."

Miss PATIENT, of Woodberry, Theydon Bois: "Feel great benefit from Tablets. I have lost 2st., and am sufficiently reduced."

Mrs. DREW, of 1 Bellevue Gardens, The Nursery, Devizes, writes: "I took Tablets some years ago; they soon reduced me and I have not got stout since. Send me a box for my mother."

THE TRILENE ASSOCIATION, 66 FINSBURY PAVEMENT, LONDON.

Digitized by Google

Transposed Letter Competition.

First Prize . . . . £5.
Second Prize . . . . £2.
Third Prize . . . . £1.

LIST No. 3.

LPY; CTU; AEHT; EOPS; AGLO.

Here are five sets of letters, and prizes will be awarded to the competitors who send in the longest words containing the letters in each of their combinations.

For example, the following words contain the letters IST in their different combinations: fIST, ITSelf, SIT, STIpend, ouTSIde, adverTISe.

CONDITIONS.

1. Write your attempts on one side of the paper only, and keep until one other list has appeared.
2. All words must appear in Nuttall's Standard Dictionary.
3. The letters of the combinations must either be underlined or put in red ink or capitals in the words in which they occur.
4. In the event of a tie, the prize will be divided.
5. The Editor's decision is final, and competitors must enter on that understanding.

RESULT OF BRAIN GYMNASIUM.

Nos. 235 to 240.

THE prize of £2 has been awarded this week to Miss A. J. Stefanoni, of 7 Grittleton Road, Elgin Avenue, W., whose attempt was the first correct one dealt with.

A copy of "The Vibart Affair," by G. Manville Fenn, has been sent to each of the following:

H. Quinton, Tennyson Road, Portswood Park, Southampton.
E. Hutchings, Hope Cottages, Mill Hill.
Charles Stephens, Sandringham Road, Fratton.
Charles Smith, Red House, Westleton.
George Humphreys, Colville Street, Nottingham.
W. Fay, Ormond Road, Dublin.
E. Goodall, Beaconsfield Street, Liverpool.
Mrs. E. G. Luck, Hazlebury Road, Fulham, S.W.
F. J. Smith, Alpha House, Saxmundham.
Miss E. J. Yarwood, Beech Road, Cale Green, Stockport.

SOLUTION OF BRAIN GYMNASIUM.

Nos. 241 to 246.

No. 241. Will, I am, E. wart, glad, stone (William Ewart Gladstone).

No. 242.

L O S S
O B I T
S I T E
S T E A M E R
M O T E
E T O N
R E N T

No. 243.

C rocu S
O rmol U
M imi C
P hysi C
E as E
T eas E
E rran D

No. 244. BADEN-POWELL.

No. 245. MAR-k; car-RYI-ng; Far-NHA-m; STE-p; REP-tiles; s-ENT; m-ATL-ock; l-EIS-ure; p-URE.

"Marry in haste, repent at leisure."

No. 246. BRAIN GYMNASIUM.

SHORT STORIES ADVERTISEMENT RATES.

Single column, per inch, per insertion	£0 10 0
Double ,, ,, ...	1 0 0
Full page inside, facing page of matter, either white paper or 2nd or 3rd page of cover, or back page, per insertion	10 0 0
Half-page ,, ,, ...	5 0 0
Quarter-page ,, ,, ...	2 10 0
Eighth-page ,, ,, ...	1 5 0
Front page, whole ,, ,, ...	12 10 0
,, half ,, ,, ...	6 5 0

All spaces above one-eighth of a page are charged at per page rate. Series discount: 5 per cent. for 13, 10 per cent. for 26, 15 per cent. for 52 insertions.

Black blocks are charged 25 per cent. extra. All advertisements are subject to approval. All copy must be sent in by Noon on Tuesday, Nov. 13th, if intended for the issue on sale Nov. 27th, and dated December 1st. The Proprietors reserve the right to hold over or suspend the insertion of any advertisement without prejudice to other insertions on order. All communications should be addressed to the Advertisement Manager, "Pearson's Weekly" Offices, Henrietta Street, London, W.C.

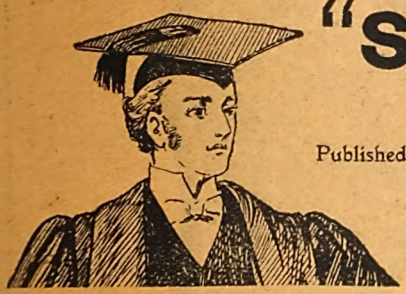
Printed and published by C. ARTHUR PEARSON Limited, Pearson's Buildings, Henrietta Street, London, W.C.

Digitized by Google

"THE MOST REMARKABLE WORK OF THE PRESENT CENTURY."

(*Vide* the Press.)

PROFESSOR BOYD LAYNARD'S GREAT WORK:



"SECRETS of BEAUTY, HEALTH, and LONG LIFE."

Published by HAMMOND, HAMMOND, and CO., 19, 21, and 23 Ludgate Hill, London.

The publishers have much pleasure in announcing the issue of the popular edition of Professor BOYD LAYNARD'S great work, "SECRETS OF BEAUTY, HEALTH, AND LONG LIFE."

This remarkable handbook to the three subjects embraced in the title has been a long period in preparation by the author—being, in fact, the labour of many years of diligent research and earnest investigation. The work is arranged in TWO BOOKS, FIFTEEN PARTS, and 127 CHAPTERS, the whole of which (in the popular edition now offered to the public) is bound in ONE VOLUME.

The book, although published at Two Shillings, will, if ordered direct from the publishers, be forwarded, carriage paid, to all readers of this paper at the low discount price of

ONE SHILLING AND SIXPENCE.

This is to secure for it a place in every home, by bringing it within the reach of all.

Amongst the numerous subjects dealt with in Professor Boyd Laynard's Work, the following are but a few (a complete syllabus, showing the contents of the whole of the 127 chapters, enumerating upwards of 500 subjects and divisions of subjects, can be had free on application to the publishers) :—

Analysis of beauty—Beauty a possible attainment—The way we make our own faces—Secrets of face transformation—Changeableness of beauty and its causes—Metaphysical secrets of keeping young and preserving a youthful appearance—The author's investigations into the causes why some individuals look younger than others at a certain age—Wonders of the skin—Relation of the skin to beauty—Effects of mental emotions upon the skin—Bad complexions and their causes—Diet that spoils and diet that improves the complexion—General care of the complexion—Construction, growth, and wonders of the hair—Why hair falls out, and its remedy—Premature greyness: its causes and prevention—General care of the hair—Superficial hairs—Wrinkles, and how to treat them—Freckles, tan, and blackheads—Oily skin, dry skin, and loose skin—How the nose may be improved—Protruding ears and their treatment—Offensive breath—Anatomy of the teeth—Why teeth decay—General care of the teeth—Tallness, and how to attain it—Round shoulders, and how to cure them—How to acquire a full chest—Perfect form and figure: their proper proportions—Thinness, and its treatment—Excessive stoutness—Care of the hands—Care of the feet—Physiognomy; or, the art of reading character from the face—Mental influence upon health—Power of the mind over the body—Influence of the mind in curing diseases—How the mind can induce disease—How violent passions injure health—Laughter as a medicine—Ailments cured by laughter—Wonders of digestion—Relative value to our bodies of the principal articles of food—Fruits and vegetables as medicine: their various influences upon the physical system—Health-preserving diet, and its consistency—Diet favourable to mental exertion and intellectual culture—Influence of various foods upon our passions and propensities—Some perilous articles of food—Light, and its influence upon health—Exercise and its relations to health—Baths and bathing; their influence upon health—The way we breathe, and how it affects our health—The marriage state, and its influence upon health—Statistics showing the comparative vitality of married and single persons—100 professions, trades and occupations: their respective influences upon health and long life—Sleep, and its relation to health—Conditions for healthy sleep—Insomnia—The eyes, and how to preserve them—The ears and hearing: how to prevent deafness—The voice: its culture and preservation—Memory, and how to improve it—Stammering, and how to cure it—Prevention of disease—Colds: their nature, prevention and treatment—Indigestion—Constipation—Neuralgia, Rheumatism—Nervousness—Headaches—That rebellious organ, the liver—Blushing: its physiology and treatment—Rules of life for attaining longevity—Compendium of the mental, moral, physical, and external influences that lessen the years of our earthly existence—The mental, moral, physical, and external influences that are conducive to long life—How to live to a hundred—Premature old age and its causes—Short biographies of 30 modern centenarians, whose ages range from 115 to 185 years—Attainment of long life under physical disabilities—General principles that can be laid down for the anticipation of longevity—The eight signs of long life.

WHAT THE PAPERS ARE SAYING.

The ***Christian Globe*** says: "Secrets of Beauty, Health, and Long Life," is no misnomer respecting the title of this remarkable work. The author has unfolded to the world many secrets regarding these subjects, the importance of which it is impossible to over estimate. The work, however, has not been written for the purpose of startling the reader with extraordinary theories, but as a practical hand-book for all those desiring beauty, health and long life. Nevertheless it is, perhaps, the most remarkable work of the present century, as a study of the syllabus of its 127 chapters will fully verify."

The ***Hull News*** says: "Professor Laynard writes well on a subject he has evidently studied deeply. As a guide to good looks, health, and longevity this book differs entirely from ordinary works on the same subjects. It is more thorough and at the same time more practical. It is safe to say that anyone who ordered his or her life on the rules laid down in this book would certainly profit both physically and materially."

The ***London Journal*** says: "Throughout the whole 127 chapters it is practical and sensible. It contains an immense amount of valuable advice, and, moreover, it is written in such a bright style that it is as interesting as a novel.

Society says: "A really practical work on this subject, free from objectionable and harmful features, has long been wanted. Professor Laynard's new book, 'Secrets of Beauty, Health, and Long Life,' seems to supply the need. It is quite unlike any book on the subject we have ever seen. It is crowded with useful information from the first page to the last. It is the kind of book one can pick up at any time and read with pleasure."

The ***Woman at Home*** says: "The work should be of great interest and practical value, and Professor Laynard scrupulously avoids recommending cosmetics and similar 'aids to beauty,' which invariably do more harm than good. The writer is a man who evidently knows what he is talking about."

***ORDER FORM* 6721.**

To HAMMOND, HAMMOND & Co.,

19, 21 & 23 LUDGATE HILL LONDON, E.C.

Please forward me Professor Boyd Laynard's complete work, "SECRETS OF BEAUTY, HEALTH AND LONG LIFE" (carriage paid), for which I enclose the sum of

ONE SHILLING AND SIXPENCE

*Name*_____

*Address*_____

Digitized by Google

Don't cook Quaker Oats to death, but cook it enough to break up all the interior cells and so liberate all the nutriment. To secure its full food value and flavor, it should be prepared exactly according to directions on packet. Our Quaker Oats Cooker makes it easier.

READ OUR OFFER.

2-Pint Cooker Free. } For **25** white squares like this from front of **2**-lb. packet.

2-Pint Cooker Free. } For **50** white squares like this from front of **1**-lb. packet.

3-Pint Cooker Free. } For **40** white squares like this from front of **2**-lb. packet.

3-Pint Cooker Free. } For **75** white squares like this from front of **1**-lb. packet.

Required number of white squares must be sent in at one time.

On receipt by us POSTAGE PAID of required number of WHITE SQUARES or price mentioned below, before Sept. 1, 1901, a Quaker Oats Cooker will be sent at once, carriage paid to any address in Great Britain or Ireland.

IF YOU WANT THE COOKER AT ONCE and have not got the required number of WHITE SQUARES, send us **2**s. for **2**-pint size, or **2**s. **6**d. for **3**-pint size. **The amount you pay will be refunded immediately** correct number of WHITE SQUARES is sent POSTAGE PAID, if received by us before Sept. 1, 1901. Write your address plainly.

Address: DEPT. W.3 QUAKER OATS, LTD., LONDON, E.C.

Quaker Oats sold in 1-lb. and 2-lb. packets only.

Beware of Substitution.

Quaker name and Quaker figure on every Packet.

Digitized by Google

FOOTBALL WINNERS GET £33 6s. 8d. EACH.

SHORT STORIES

A WEEKLY MAGAZINE FOR HOME AND TRAIN

No. 620. FOR WEEK ENDING NOVEMBER 17TH, 1900. [ONE PENNY.

"Absolutely Pure therefore Best."

CADBURY'S

COCOA

Free from Kola, Malt, Hops, or any foreign admixture. It is Cocoa and Cocoa only.

What CADBURY'S Cocoa is:

The Great Scientist, Baron von Liebig, says:

"COCOA is a perfect food, as wholesome as delicious, a beneficent restorer of exhausted power; but its quality must be good, and it must be carefully prepared. It is highly nourishing and easily digested, and is fitted to repair wasted strength and preserve health. It agrees with those whose occupations oblige them to undergo severe mental strains; with public speakers, and with all those who give to work a portion of the time needed for sleep."

CADBURY'S COCOA is Absolutely Pure, and a Perfect Food.

Advertisements should be sent to "Short Stories" Advertisement Department, Henrietta Street, London, W.C.

Digitized by Google

BIG PRIZE SCHEME

For MARCH, 1901.

25,602 PRIZES, value £10,000

LIST OF PRIZES:

1 Cash Prize	£50	£50 0
1 Cash Prize,	£40	40 0
10 Handsome Pianos, in walnut,	£40 each	400 0
5 Cash Prizes,	£25 each	125 0
10 Gents' Bicycles, Freewheels,	£17 17s.	178 10
10 Ladies' Bicycles, Free-wheels,	£17 17s.	178 10
10 Cash Prizes,	£10 each	100 0
20 Jones's Sewing Machines,	£8 each	160 0
20 Cash Prizes,	£5 each	100 0
50 Rolled Gold Lever Watches,	£2 10s. each	125 0
100 Cash Prizes,	£2 each	200 0
50 Dinner Services (56 pieces),	£2 each	100 0
50 Folding Bed Chairs,	£2 each	100 0
50 Ladies' Travelling Trunks,	£2 each	100 0
200 Cash Prizes,	£1 each	200 0
200 Ladies' Leather Hatboxes,	£1 each	200 0
100 Basket Arm Chairs, upholstered,	£1	100 0
400 pairs Blankets,	15s. per pair	300 0
200 ½-doz Electro-plated Forks, large,	15s. per ½-doz.	150 0
200 ½-doz. Electro-plated Forks, small,	15s. per ½-doz.	£150 0
500 Ladies' Umbrellas,	15/- ea.	375 0
500 Gents' Umbrellas,	15s. each	375 0
400 Best Electro-plated Teapots,	15s. each	300 0
400 Handsome Meat Carvers, with Steel Blade in Case,	15s. set	300 0
1000 Cash Prizes,	10s. each	500 0
1000 pairs Bed Sheets,	10s. each	500 0
1000 White Linen Table Cloths,	10s. each	500 0
1000 Ladies' Umbrellas,	7/6 each	375 0
1000 Ladies' Leather Purses,	7/6 each	375 0
200 ½-doz. Table Knives,	7/6 per ½-doz.	75 0
200 ½-doz. Dessert do.,	7/6 per ½-doz.	75 0
2000 Ladies' Dress Lengths, Navy Blue Serge,	7/6 each	750 0
2000 Cash Prizes of	5s. each	500 0
4715 Ladies' Leather Handbags,	4s. each	943 0
4000 ½-doz. Fine Linen Cambric Handkerchiefs,	2/6 per ½-doz.	500 0
4000 Handsome Work-boxes,	2/6 each	500 0
25,602		**£10,000 0**

CONDITIONS OF COMPETITION.

Every tablet of **Watson's Matchless Cleanser** is enclosed in a Wrapper, with signature up the centre of same. Save the WHOLE Wrapper (tops of Wrappers will be disqualified), and send, postage or carriage paid, to **Joseph Watson & Sons Limited, Whitehall Soap Works, Leeds,** not later than MARCH 31ST, 1901. Each package will be counted as one lot; separate entries must be sent under separate covers. If any parcel arrives, postage or carriage not being fully paid, such parcel will be refused. Be careful to see that the full postage is paid. Each parcel sent in must contain the full name and address of sender, and number of Wrappers sent in must be marked on the same paper. On outside of parcel write legibly "**Prize Competition.**" The prizes will be awarded in the above order to the senders of the highest numbers of Wrappers. A list, giving result of the Competition, will be sent with each prize when it is sent out. Every wrapper must have first contained soap. No employee of Joseph Watson & Sons Limited will be eligible. All prizes will be despatched about **April 25th.**

WATSON'S MATCHLESS CLEANSER

The Best Soap for all purposes, still holds the lead. Quality perfect. Is the Housewife's Friend. It saves her health, her strength, her wealth; washes her clothes with ease and leaves them sweet and pure, and will not injure the most delicate fabric. It has the largest sale of 1-lb. tablets in the world. Sold by all Grocers, Oilmen, &c., throughout the United Kingdom. Buy it. Prove it and secure a Prize.

KAPUTINE

The Best & Safest Remedy for

HEADACHE.

NURSE HILL, of the London Association of Nurses, writes:

"I have seen Kaputine administered to many patients, and can truly say it is a remedy which should have a place in every household."

All Leading Chemists sell KAPUTINE, 1/-. Samples One Penny.

If your Chemist has not KAPUTINE send his name and address to KAPUTINE, HUDDERSFIELD, and we will send you a SHILLING PACKET FREE.

WORTH A CROWN A DOSE.

TO THE QUEEN
PURVEYORS
HUEY MON

CROSSE & BLACKWELL'S

GREEN PEA, GRAVY, JULIENNE, MULLIGATAWNY, TOMATO, HOUSEHOLD, CRESSY, &c.

SOUP TABLETS

OF ALL GROCERS ETC. THROUGHOUT THE WORLD

NOSE

Wintry weather makes Red Noses. I cure them. Send 1/- for my book on "Their Cause and Prevention," or 3/9 for Medically approved Cure. Particulars of my Patent Nose Improver and Ear Machine sent for stamp.—**C. LEES RAY, Specialist, South Castle Street, Liverpool.**

A SUM of from 12s. to 25s. per week can be earned in spare hours or evenings by either sex everywhere.—Send addressed envelope for particulars to Box 24, Eclipse Works, 89 Aldersgate Street, E.C.

HAIR DESTROYED.

Send me an envelope (stamped and addressed) and I will tell you how to remove all superfluous hair **free of charge.** (Send no money.) Address, in confidence, Miss E. V. (Room 3), 195 Oxford Street, London, W.

NEW AUTOMATIC KNITTER.

FOR HOME WORK.

"The machine that knitted the hosiery and comforts for the troops in Africa."—See what *The Times* said.

Knits Socks (a pair in 35 min.), Stockings, Fancy Goods, &c. Easily learned. Lessons Free.

Cash, hire, and Work Terms from "Sorres" dept.: 67 Southwark St., S.E.; 55 Oxford St., W.; 192 Upper St., London, N.; 105 Nicolson St., Edinburgh; 58 Union St., Glasgow; 132 Stephen's Green, Dublin; 62 Great Hampton St., Birmingham; 31 Stokes Croft, Bristol.

ESTABLISHED 1851.

BIRKBECK BANK

Southampton Buildings, Chancery Lane, London.

2% on CURRENT ACCOUNTS, on the minimum monthly balances when not drawn below £100.

The BIRKBECK ALMANACK, with full particulars, post free.

FRANCIS RAVENSCROFT, *Manager.*

Advertisements should be sent to "Short Stories" Advertisement Department, Henrietta Street, London, W.C.

Digitized by Google

SHORT STORIES

No. 620.] For the Week Ending November 17th, 1900. [One Penny.

OLD - WHITE - FROCK.

Elliot Standring was always regarded as a well-groomed man, but he never took such trouble over his toilet as on that autumn evening when he was to try his luck with Helen Purdon. He had been invited by her uncle to dine with that gentleman and the object of his affection; he had arranged it with Mr. Carter, who was favourable to his suit and upon whom he had ventured to rely for assistance.

Standring was not over sanguine, concerning the result of his attempt. He knew that others had tried and failed; it was supposed that their failure was due to want of affection for them on the part of Miss Purdon, although there was an idea abroad that there might be some other reason, but nothing definite was known.

Standring was bound to admit that Miss Purdon had not given him much encouragement—perhaps no encouragement at all, for he might have been mistaken in his conclusions; but he was head over ears in love with her, and was determined to make an attempt to win her.

He summed up his qualifications as he surveyed himself in the mirror. Tolerably good looking, young and healthy, a fair income derived from investments made by his deceased father and left entirely to him when his father died just twelve months ago. That was all; not very much, but enough to satisfy a reasonable woman, as Helen Purdon was, who herself had ample means. Good character? There was no dispute on that point.

The others had had better chances than he, to judge by appearances, but that fact did not deter him, and moreover it is not safe to judge by appearances. So he ought to be hopeful; but he was not.

It was quite a cosy little dinner party, with Standring as the only guest. There was nothing extraordinary about this, as Mr. Carter occasionally invited a gentleman friend, and Miss Purdon at times invited a lady friend, and those times were not always the same, so that the dinner party might consist of two gentlemen and one lady, or, two ladies and one gentleman.

Miss Purdon and her uncle resided together; it would be more correct to say that Mr. Carter resided with his niece, as the house belonged to her. When she had been left alone in the world, her father's money had come to her, and her mother's brother had come to reside with her at her request. He had tried to induce her to have a companion also, but Miss Purdon declined, saying that she could manage the household herself. So Mr. Carter, who was not endowed with a large amount of wealth, gladly accepted the arrangement, which had now lasted for more than three years.

All rights reserved.]

Standring, in spite of the fact that he was a society man, was a prey to nervous agitation during dinner; he was becoming still less hopeful of the result of the interview which, by the aid of Mr. Carter he was to obtain with Miss Purdon after dessert. During the dessert, he recovered his spirits to some extent and the conversation became general.

Standring thought he would endeavour to sound the depths before he had the interview; he had just a slight misgiving that Captain Germaine, although reported to have failed in storming the citadel of Helen's heart, had come nearer to success than was supposed, and he was resolved to fathom this little mystery if possible, so that he might know what to expect in the way of odds when he made his own attack.

"I hear that Captain Germaine has volunteered for service in the Soudan," he remarked in a casual tone, taking observation of Helen from the corner of his eye.

There was a dry cough from Mr. Carter, who appeared to be gazing very intently at something on his serviette.

Standring felt a little chill go through him, for he perceived that he had made a false step, and before Helen had time to speak, he had skilfully turned the conversation by asking Mr. Carter if he had heard anything lately of young Jones, who created such a sensation by his violin playing at the Freemantles' reception.

Dessert over, Mr. Carter made an excuse for retiring, thus giving Standring his chance of a few minutes alone with Helen. The young fellow seized the opportunity without delay, and almost before the girl knew what was happening she was listening to an impassioned declaration of love.

"Mr. Standring," she said quietly, yet unable to suppress a trace of agitation which had begun to show itself in her face, "you have taken me somewhat by surprise. I think it is due to you—it is certainly due to myself—that I should speak frankly, even at the risk of being thought unwomanly."

Standring brought his eloquent appeal to an abrupt termination and allowed her to speak. Had he failed? He awaited her next words with feverish anxiety,

"Sit down, and listen to what I have to say," continued Helen, her voice having a firm ring in it this time. "I have one aim in life, to the attainment of which everything else must be subservient. I will tell you briefly and plainly what that aim is.

"About four years ago, my father, who had an extensive knowledge of Egypt and the Soudan, the customs and

Digitized by Google

dialects of its inhabitants, left England on his own responsibility in a patriotic endeavour to glean information for the British Government that might be useful in connection with the saving of the Khartoum Garrison, and in the preservation of the Soudan generally from the clutches of the Mahdi. He has never been heard of since he left Egypt proper for the interior. I fancy that you do not know this."

"I have heard that Professor Purdon was killed by Arabs," murmured Standring sympathetically.

"That is the current belief," she went on steadily, "but there is nothing to confirm it beyond the continued silence of my father. But he may be alive and a prisoner. He may be anywhere in the interior of Africa with Gordon, whom many people believe to be still in the land of the living. My aim is to obtain confirmation of his death, or to find him if he still lives! It will be a great undertaking, but I will devote my life to it if necessary. I am studying the dialects and customs, and I am awaiting the course of events and watching for the opportunity to go out there with an expedition, or otherwise, to find him or his body. It is impossible for me, a woman, to go now, in the unsettled state of the country. You have spoken to me of love; I will not marry until my object is secured, and I will marry the man who either finds my father or helps me most to do so!"

It was quite a cosy little dinner party, with Standring as the only guest.

"But the man who was lucky enough to render you this service, might not be the man you love," objected Standring abashed.

"If a man does so much for me, I shall love him with all my heart!"

Standring advanced no further plea, he could see that it would be useless. If he wished to win Helen Purdon, the way to do so was through the Soudan.

"Make no rash promises, Mr. Standring," interposed Helen, as he was about to speak. "Let us dismiss this subject and talk of other things. Take time for reflection and ask yourself whether I am worth the task involved."

* * * * *

What a number of changes are sometimes crowded into the short space of twelve months! This was the thought that occurred to the mind of Elliot Standring while on out-post duty in the Soudan, as nearly as possible one year after the eventful evening of the dinner with Miss Purdon and her uncle.

He had meditated carefully on the task which Helen had set for the man who loved her, and soon afterwards he had gone to work deliberately to perform that task. He had set out for Egypt and had begun his search for men to help him and to study the best course of procedure.

It had taken a long time, longer than he had imagined, to complete the initial steps; and then, when he felt he was really making progress, his plans were upset.

He had sold out of the best concerns in which his money was invested, in order to obtain fresh funds for carrying out his undertaking; leaving the rest until the last moment, as prices were not good.

Having spent his ready money, he had written home to his stockbroker to sell out the rest at the best prices that could be obtained. But before his letter had reached home he received one telling him that the remaining investments were practically worthless; the companies, mostly mining companies, had failed or were in such a condition that they intended to go into voluntary liquidation, cut down capital and call upon the shareholders to pay twenty or twenty-five per cent. more on their shares in order to "put the concern on its legs again."

Standring found that when he had met his liabilities, there would be no further money to go on with, and, in addition, his income was gone.

After that he had an attack of fever, and when he had recovered, he gave up the hope of ever winning Helen Purdon. A month later he was wearing the uniform of a private in an infantry regiment and was on his way to face the Dervishes. He might have suggested to Helen that she should furnish the money to go on, but his expedition had melted away during his illness, and it did not seem fair to ask her to intrust him with the necessary money. It was possible that she had less confidence in his ability than he had.

Digitized by Google

He had joined under the name of Elliot, and Private Elliot quickly won the good-will of his comrades and the notice of his officers, and seemed to have good prospects of promotion. But this did not appear to have any cheering effect on Elliot; his demeanour was that of a happy-go-lucky, devil-may-care soldier, ready to volunteer for the most dangerous work. The fact was that Elliot would gladly have welcomed the bullet which would put an end to an existence, the future of which contained nothing hopeful.

"Well, seen him?"

This was the question addressed to Elliot by a comrade when he came off duty.

"No! You fellows have been frightened by a shadow!"

There was an indignant outcry from several of the men who had heard this reply. Shadow, indeed! Why he had been seen by scores of men! That tall, thin figure of a Dervish, in the long white robe, with eyes shining with the light of religious fanaticism—a shadow! The men's lips curled in contempt.

"There ain't no doubt about it, Mr. Tommy Elliot," said a man lying close to where Standring was standing, "it's a real man and no mistake. He comes upon you suddenly, with no weapons in his hands, and warns you to get out of the country and tell all the British to do the same. I dunno whether it's genuine or a fake; two or three times, when our fellows have been a bit scared, the enemy have swooped down upon us, which shows that they were close behind him, but as a rule he just warns you and off he goes."

"How do you know he warns you?" asked Elliot. "He doesn't speak English, I suppose?"

"You needn't talk in that sneering way," retorted another Tommy rather angrily. "It ain't often he says anything you can hear properly; it's usually a mumble, but you can tell by his actions what he means, and poor Jimmy Gates, who was cut down in the last scrimmage and knew some of the lingo, said that was what Old White-Frock meant."

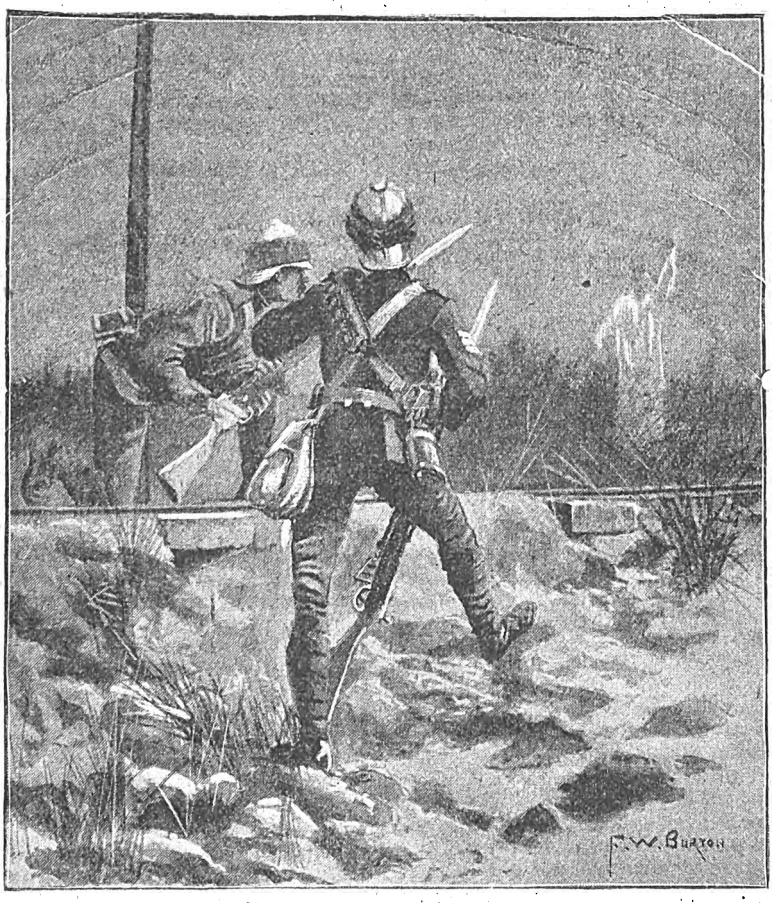
"I say, boys, Germaine is missing!" cried a corporal who had just arrived on the scene.

"Looks as if the blacks had got him. He must have strayed beyond the lines."

"P'raps Old White-Frock has run off with him!" interjected another soldier.

"I'm sorry for him if they have got him, although I don't pretend to love him, and if he had gone home invalided I should have said 'good riddance!'"

There was a chorus of approval, which confirmed the reports that Elliot had heard of the man whom he regarded somewhat in the light of a rival. He had overheard odd words from officers while acting as orderly, from which it appeared that Germaine scarcely merited the dignity of being called an officer and a gentleman; the captain was an impecunious man, who was not too particular on various points where money was concerned, while his disposition was not such as to win him the affection either of officers or men. Nevertheless, Elliot himself was too much of a gentleman to rejoice at the downfall of another; on the contrary, he was horrified at the thought that Captain Germaine might be tortured to death, and he longed for the chance to help him.



"There he is!" interrupted Elliot.

But there was little hope that he, a private, would have any opportunity of rendering assistance. He pictured to himself the possible grief of Helen Purdon when she heard of Germaine's fate, and his frame of mind for the rest of that day did not tend to make him a greater favourite with his comrades.

On the following day he was one of a score of men selected for special duty. The visits of Old White-Frock were becoming unpleasant, and it was resolved to capture the old man if possible. The easiest way to have got rid of him would have been to shoot him, but it was not in accordance with British chivalry to shoot down an unarmed man. So these men were detained for duty at adjacent points along a tract of country where the old man might be expected.

Digitized by Google

Elliot and Harry Baker were nearest to the railway line which was being gradually carried along the country in the execution of the steadfast object of reconquering the district right away to Khartoum.

It was near night-fall when they met at the railway track at the end of their sentry-go and exchanged a word before wheeling round to pace back to the other extremity.

"He hasn't turned up yet," remarked Elliot with a smile.

"You'll see him one of these——"

"There he is!" interrupted Elliot, and Baker, facing about, saw Old White-Frock in the accustomed attitude.

How he had contrived to get so near to them without being seen was a fact which they could not understand, and did not waste any time in trying to explain to their own satisfaction. Baker went down on one knee and was levelling his rifle, when Elliot stopped him with a gesture and the exclamation "don't!"

Reminded of orders by the word and action, Baker dashed to his feet again and both soldiers made a dash for the old man. He glared at them for an instant, then turned and fled.

The two men pursued him, but Old White-Frock was surprisingly fleet of foot for one of his years and kept the lead; half-a-dozen of the other special duty men, who saw the chase, joined in it, but they were unable to come up with Elliot and Baker, having a cross stretch to traverse. They kept up the pursuit until they reached the boundary laid down in their orders, and then they stopped; but Elliot and Baker, now wild with excitement, forgot everything in the way of orders and went on.

The old man, lightly clad, gained ground and increased the distance between his pursuers and himself. He reached one of those configurations of the ground which afforded shelter to the Dervishes for ambuscades, and disappeared. As they neared this mound, the two men were brought to a standstill by the sound of revolver and rifle shots, and cries of rage and pain. A minute later they saw a British uniform come from behind the mound, stagger a few yards and then fall.

"I believe it's Germaine!" gasped Baker.

"We must help him—he is wounded and we can't let an officer be killed without making a fight to save him!" cried Elliot.

The two soldiers ran forward and reached the captain's side. Baker took the revolver and then the two men hurriedly dragged the half-conscious officer, whom they now recognised, to the mound so that the Dervishes could not pick them off in the open. There the two privates waited with clenched teeth for the expected attack. Five minutes passed without further sign of the enemy than a few groans from behind the mound. Elliot decided to crawl round and make observations; he returned on foot with the intelligence that the enemy were gone, leaving two dead and Old White-Frock either dead or seriously wounded.

"I am dying, my lads," moaned Captain Germaine, "I want some one to send word to Miss Helen Purdon—that I found—traces of her father. He is alive. You—in my pocket-book."

The last words came with a gasp and the captain never spoke again.

The information thus tragically conveyed thrilled Elliot through and through. He felt that now Helen's father was so near being restored to her he was justified in searching the officer's pocket-book for further information that might lead to the rescue of Professor Purdon.

He thrust aside his scruples and made a search among the few papers contained in that book. He found a torn slip with a few words written in English; they were a warning to the British commander and they were signed "J. Purdon."

He was interrupted in his reading by Baker saying that they ought to do something for poor Old White-Frock, who was groaning at the back.

Elliot told him to look after the old man for a minute and explained that he knew Miss Helen Purdon and was as anxious to see if anything could be done to rescue her father. He had another paper in his hand on which the captain had scribbled a few notes.

"How is it that a man who does wrong so often makes notes or does something else equally silly that betrays him?" Elliot asked himself. "It is clear from this that Germaine, having picked up by some chance the note written by Purdon, deliberately left camp—practically deserted, in fact, for the time—in order to trace the Professor, rescue him, and so secure Helen and her money!"

Elliot tore up the incriminating paper. He had no doubt of the captain's intentions after reading the paper, and the fact that Germaine had never said anything about Purdon's written warning was proof of those intentions.

"The old fellow is dead," said Baker, coming back at this moment. "And I'm jiggered if his body isn't white, after all, and look what he was wearing round his neck!"

It was a locket, a very small one, and inside was a portrait of a woman who might well have been mistaken for Helen Purdon.

It was more than a month later when Helen received that locket from Elliot Standring, giving her certain details about her father's fate and the place where he was buried. And it was four months later still when Standring, having been invalided home, was installed in the residence of Miss Purdon and placed under the charge of Mr. Carter and a trained nurse, who received occasional assistance from Helen herself.

"My poor father must have been taken prisoner, and captivity turned his brain," said Helen sadly. "He retained just sufficient sense to know, or to think that it would be best for the British to retire, and so he warned them every now and then, or tried to. Probably the Arabs found it convenient to let him do so—or superstitious fear of mad people prevented them from stopping him. I told Captain Germaine of the task to be undertaken by the man who loved me, and I never saw him again. His being taken prisoner led to the discovery of my father, so I owe him a debt of gratitude in an indirect way. Don't you think that it was the Arabs who shot my poor father and not Captain Germaine?"

"Very probable," replied Elliot, although he knew that it was not so. "But in any case Captain Germaine was endeavouring to escape and if his bullet struck your father, he did not know that it was Professor Purdon. Of that I am convinced."

The last words were uttered sincerely, and Helen was satisfied.

"Did you—did you love him?" asked Elliot. His voice betrayed his agitation, and his eyes showed how much the answer to that question meant to him.

"No," returned Helen, after a moment's reflection.

"And do you think that you might be able to love me in time."

"Yes," was the immediate reply.

And Elliot's cup of happiness was filled.

GEORGE KNIGHT.

Digitized by Google

WITH TODGERS BY TANDEM.

THE weather really had been trying, and not being particularly busy, Todgers did not have so much difficulty as he might have had in persuading me to run down to his place for a day or two, and spend a brief season in the charmingly rural spot in which he has fixed himself.

Todgers is a deaf old fool—I beg pardon! I mean a highly respectable gentleman of middle age who is a bit uncertain in his hearing and a trifle erratic in his dealings, so I was not at all surprised, when, just as I had got dressed and ready to set off, he hurried up to my place, as a sort of afterthought, with a parrot in a cage, a tandem, and an entirely new programme of events.

The tandem Todgers had bought; the parrot was a present from an admiring colleague, and under the stress of necessity, or at all events anxiety, to get them home together Todgers, thought he might ride the one and between us carry the other.

"It's only forty miles or so, and you're fond of cycling," Todgers urged. "It will be a lovely spin too; just nice and fresh, and with a moon for the last part in all probability. It will save you a fare, too," he added wistfully.

It did seem rather enticing bar the parrot. I knew the parrot must come my way because I have never steered a tandem in my life, and it was obvious that the parrot must go with the rear rider.

"It looks a bit threatening," I objected, meaning the weather. For the sun had set in a sullen red glare, and the close heavy atmosphere suggested a thunderstorm.

"Oh, that's nothing," protested Todgers when I could make him grasp the nature of my objection.

"Wait till you get clear of London you'll find the country lanes as fresh and cool as a dewdrop."

Well to cut the story short I eventually agreed, and fixing up my trousers with the customary steel springs, and substituting a soft felt for the more conventional hat I had intended going down in, I reduced my luggage to pocket proportions and went swinging down the road on the back seat of Todgers' tandem.

Steadying the parrot's cage on the end of the handlebar, we went out on the Ongar Road turning off to the right before the town was reached into a series of cross-country roads that would bring us out below Chelmsford.

It was a pitch dark night and ominously still and heavy, but I knew the home country by heart, and Todgers knew it thoroughly beyond the Eastern Counties Road, so that was no great matter.

In default of conversation rendered impossible by reason of my companion's deafness, Todgers sang and smoked, and all was peace and happiness, and joy, when a sudden gust of wind came tearing down the road and took my hat with it as it passed me.

"Half-a-mo', old man," said I cheerfully, "my hat's gone overboard."

Todgers was in the middle of the *Beggar's Opera*, but I thought he heard me and came off on the pedal, we were going fairly leisurely when the opportunity offered.

The tandem went on with Todgers still carolling on it.

Even then the position didn't strike me, and I stood in the middle of the road, hatless, with the parrot's cage in my hand and smiled good humouredly at the thought of Todgers' surprise when he found I was missing—if he does discover it, and the smile suddenly faded out as I reflected on this not at all impossible contingency. Todgers is a steady old slogger of the get-the-machine-along-somehow order, and when I came to think of it there was no reason why he shouldn't keep going until Galleywood Hill forced him out of the saddle. If the machine went a bit stiff on the upgrades he would merely throw an expostulation at my supposed laziness, and knowing his own infirmity would take my answer for granted. All this crossed my mind in a flash, and long before the tandem had faded from sight I was tearing madly down the road yelling "Todgers, Hi! Todgers!! Tod—gers!!!"

I think I should have done it had not wretched luck put the silly, incompetent, careless cuckoo on an inviting slope just as I was drawing up to him, and away went tandem and Todgers and all, to be seen no more by me until day was far advanced.

"Well, I'll save my hat, anyway," I reflected, and retraced my steps, scanning the road and the adjacent hedges as I walked. It was sheer waste of energy and I might have known that it was absurd to look, in a pitchy darkness, for a hat that may be anywhere on a quarter of a mile of country lanes, with the unknown quantity of agricultural land adjoining, with matches which the wind extinguished as soon as they were lit. It was a good hat, seven and sixpence good, and I didn't care about losing it. At the end of half-an-hour's irritation and disappoint-

Digitized by Google

ment I didn't care if I didn't see it again, and picking up the cage I swung off hatless in the direction of Chelmsford to the accompaniment of rolling peals of thunder and strong gusts of wind that betokened something unpleasant to follow.

Half-a-mile further on heavy splashes of rain began to hit my bare head, and I thought some hard things about Todgers and his wretched old tandem as I turned up my trouser-legs and put on the pace a bit. I could only locate my position vaguely, but at the best I knew it was a good three miles from any sort of shelter, and that of the crudest and most uninviting description.

The bird and cage, too, were a serious handicap for a three mile sprint on a muddy road, and I found fresh cause of offence in Todgers for having saddled me with them. It was unreasonable of me, perhaps, but at such times things do get a bit distorted in one's mind, and no amount of logic just then would have induced me to acknowledge that Todgers couldn't just as well have taken that bit of his own property along with the rest of the outfit.

I put on a pipe and marched savagely along in what was now a heavy downpour, and refused to see the humorous side of the situation even when the parrot, which had been singularly meditative up to then, suddenly woke up under the influence of the drenching, and squawked:

"Oh, lor, it's raining!"

A couple of miles of heavy trudging brought me to a finger-post which by the fitful aid of a match informed me that Chelmsford lay off on the left.

That sounded hopeful provided that it didn't lay too far off, and that there were no bewildering cross turnings in which I knew, by painful experience, a man could very completely and satisfactorily lose himself for hours at a stretch, even in broad daylight.

I began to think that this fate had overtaken me, when, after walking for what seemed to me a long drawn out century or so, I came upon a little wayside pub. A man was standing at the door smoking, and to him I went in the hope of getting some useful topographical information.

"Chelmsford, sir, why you're in it, or you will be in five minutes," said he.

It was then, my watch informed me, close on ten, and I wasn't as satisfied as I might have been considering that the rain had blown over, and a fitful watery moon, the moon of which Todgers had so blithesomely spoken, robed in dreary mist, was shining through the storm driven clouds.

For one thing I was too damp and muddy to be quite comfortable; for another I distrusted my chances of a train that night to anywhere within measurable distance of Todgers' place.

It is true that I might have got one to town and gone home, but I didn't think of that. One never does think of the obvious somehow.

It was as bad as I had anticipated. I couldn't get anything at all without going back along the line to Shenfield. I could do that in three-quarters-of-an-hour if I cared to; but that was as far as the railway people could assist me until morning.

Under those conditions, needless to say I didn't care to avail myself of the Great Eastern Railway Co's services, and I went round, parrot and all, and banged up the keeper of a cycle emporium.

A lady came to the door after a quarter of an hour's more or less patient persistence on my part with knocker and bell and to her I explained my unhappy case.

She said she was very sorry for me, but they had lost one machine that way last week, and in the absence of the proprietor she didn't care about risking another. She was back in her own domain again before the full nature of this rebuff dawned on me.

When it did, I felt a trifle more savage and a good bit wilted; but it doesn't do to be too easily discouraged, so I braced myself up and set off in search of a more obliging and confiding cycle-monger.

By the time I had found one it was close on eleven; but I did find one, and while he was preparing the mount I managed to procure something useful and sustaining in the way of refreshment. When I got back I found the man waiting with the machine all ready. I was to be very careful of it, and return it by the first train in the morning because they wanted to hire it out, and business was brisk and machines scarce in the town.

I thought from the man's tone that he was intrusting me with something of quite the latest and most up-to-date pattern in bicycles.

"It isn't a free-wheel, is it?" I inquired casually, wishing to be informed.

"Not altogether," said the man significantly. "But your five bob won't go far to cover the cost, and I've got the number in case——"

Really this was rather mortifying. I suppose it was my hatless and draggled condition that inspired this embarrassing distrust; but it flattened me so completely that I hadn't the spirit to make even a cursory examination of the hired mount. I was glad to just get in the saddle and ride away, cage and all, into the outer blackness where my appearance might pass without comment, or at least I should not be compelled to stay and listen.

It didn't take me long to discover that I was mounted on a veritable old crock, and I picked up some more information regarding it as I went along. Up Baddow Hill a suggestive and well-defined squeak disclosed itself. It went off with painful monotony—two squeaks to the yard. And every time it squeaked the parrot—a singularly apt and intelligent bird for its age, shouted: "Coming, Jane, coming."

I don't know which got on my nerves the more, the squeak or the remark. I laughed when I first heard it and foolishly encouraged the lopsided, heavy-witted fowl by telling her, or him, that it was a "pretty poll." Half-an-hour later, toiling up Danbury Hill at a three-mile-an-hour gait in a gloomy and discontented frame of mind, I told it to shut up with suppressed ferocity.

On the hill I made some more discoveries about my hired mount, including the fact that the left crank was loose, the back tyre was flat as a flounder, and that I hadn't a pump or a spanner or a drop of oil with me. The machine was just a bare frame, bar the saddle and lamp. It hadn't even a bell on it.

Dropping the hill from Danbury at sixteen miles an hour, it was a ripper to go on the down grade. I discovered that it was a brakeless as well, and then to my exceeding horror the handles swerved and came away bodily, and the bicycle with the parrot and cage and myself on top of all rode slap into a mountainous mass of blue cloth and a bull's-eye and sat down in an undigested heap in the muddy roadway.

The policeman—it was a policeman, of course! Those fellows are always about when you don't want them—was furious. He began by telling me that I was riding without a light. I knew that as well as he did, seeing that the wretched bit of tinware went black and useless

Digitized by Google

on Danbury Hill, and I had neither matches nor oil with which to start it going again.

Then he discovered that I hadn't a bell and made an anthem out of that. Moreover I was riding a brakeless machine at a furious rate to the danger of the public, and refused to stop when warned by the police.

"Oh lor'," squawked that fool of a parrot, "it's raining."

This drew the policeman's attention to my luggage.

"Ah! You must come with me, my man," said he pompously. "There's been a lot of this sort of thing about here lately, and I fancy I know just where that parrot would feel at home if he was put there."

"Don't be a fool, policeman," said I irritably, for really I was getting a bit tired of the persistent ill-luck which was dodging me. "The bird belongs to a friend of mine. We left London this evening on a tandem," etc.

I summed up the whole affair as concisely and clearly as I knew how, but the man wasn't satisfied. He said it sounded a bit thin and repeated his invitation to accompany him so pressingly and insistently that to save trouble I accepted it and went.

It wasn't a dignified or an enjoyable walk. The cage and the bicycle were both pretty badly bent up so that the parrot had to lean back and twist his neck at an angle in order to stand upright, and I had to shove the machine along on the front wheel after the manner of a wheelbarrow.

I offered to toss the policeman for the choice of jobs; but he was surly and wouldn't respond. He even refused to carry the parrot at first until I said I should sit down in the road with the whole giddy outfit until he fetched an ambulance or something if he didn't do his share.

I was sorry I couldn't shove the bicycle off on him; but as the parrot picked a hole in his regulation breeches and nipped him by the leg twice, each time compelling him to drop the cage and dance about the road in a frenzy of pain and ill-temper, I did pretty well by the arrangement, and found some solace as a set off to my manifold miseries. I quoted poetry to him:

> How joyous the lot of a policeman must be,
> When he dances at night in his innocent glee.

But he was not responsive even to poetry. We walked along together in silence after that for perhaps half-a-mile, and then an idea occurred to me.

"Do you know a Mr. Todgers?" said I.

"A dear old chap what lives down Burnham way?" said the policeman. "Yes, I know him."

"So do I," I retorted. "That's his parrot you are carrying, and it is mainly because of his deafness that you are carrying it."

"Well, I'm sorry if I have made a mistake, sir," said he. "But you were riding without a light."

"Owing to circumstances over which I had no control," I said.

"And you bowled me over," he continued.

"At half-a-crown per bowl," said I

"And spoilt my clothes," said he.

"At half-a-crown per spoil," said I.

The policeman smiled broadly.

"But I had better go with you, perhaps," I continued. The policeman's face dropped again. "Because I have no lamp and I am afraid the bike is past riding."

"They're mending the road a bit on ahead, sir, and the chap there will give you a drop of oil," said the policeman. He was keen to do business, and I hadn't the heart to disappoint him.

In the cheery glare of the watchman's fire I managed to unship the crank and straighten it enough to make the machine rideable, and with a fill of paraffin for my lamp I rode off with renewed hope and a depleted pocket to cover the last stage of my journey.

Considered from a financial standpoint I hadn't effected very much saving in taking the trip by road; but I had to confess that I had got a great deal more for my money than I should have had had I expended it on a railway ticket.

I struck Todgers' place at 1.30 in the morning, and found Mrs. Todgers up and anxious.

"Oh! you've come," said she a trifle coldly. "I began to think something must have happened. Where's Henry?"

"A great deal has happened, Mrs. Todgers," said I. "In fact I have never known so much detail to be crowded into a brief forty-mile spin before, but you don't mean to say that your husband hasn't turned up. Why I left him nine hours ago—or rather he left me—the other side of Chelmsford, taking the only means of locomotion available with him."

"Those wretched bicycles!" ejaculated the lady in alarm.

"I do hope nothing has happened to him. He sent me a wire this afternoon to say he was bringing you down, and I have seen nothing or heard nothing of him since."

I didn't want to go; in fact, I felt then as though I didn't care if I never saw a bicycle again; but Mrs. Todgers was so manifestly uneasy that I really had no alternative. I was able to mount myself decently from Todgers' outfit in bicycles, and to rid myself of that wretched bird-cage, that was one and about the only consolation I could obtain, and advising the lady of the house to go to bed, I set off in search of my host.

There was a choice of roads and I took what I considered to be the most likely one. Ten minutes after I had gone Todgers arrived.

There was a choice of roads and he took what he considered the most likely and followed me, when he found out how matters stood from his wife, with a kindly-intentioned, but injudicious desire to save me any further exertion on his account.

I got as far as the Yarmouth Road without gaining any tidings of the missing tandem, and being completely knocked up, then rode into Chelmsford and finished the night at the "Clarendon."

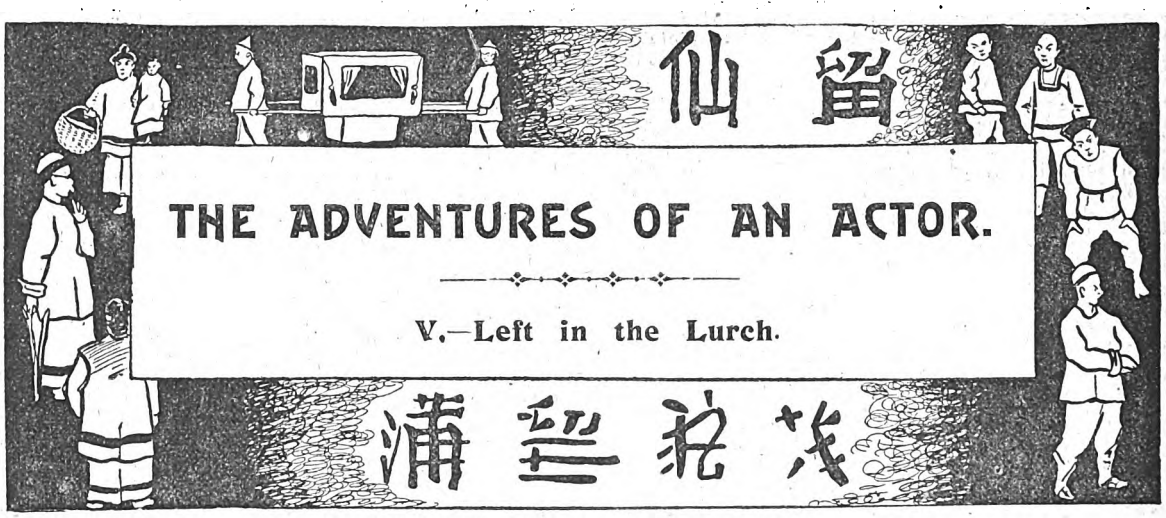
I got back to Todgers' place in the morning almost about the time that Todgers reached my place in the suburbs, and we met half-way again by telegraph arrangement, when our respective whereabouts could be made known to each other, and performed the journey together this time in safety and with some degree of enjoyment.

"Mrs. Todgers," said I at dinner that evening. "Harry is an excellent fellow in every respect, but if you go out on that tandem with him I should advise you to tie a string to his arm and to keep a tight grip on the end of it."

Mrs. Todgers laughed and assured me that if ever she did go on that or any other tandem with her husband she would certainly bear my advice in mind, but her tone suggested that Todgers' companion in life was not at all likely to be his companion on a tandem, and after my experience I could only commend her wisdom.

R. ANDOM.

Digitized by Google



THE ADVENTURES OF AN ACTOR.

V.—Left in the Lurch.

THOUGH Sebastian Baggalle had a fine presence, and at first glance almost a noble face, his hooked nose gave him a sinister appearance, and upon closer acquaintance one discovered something of the mind that lay behind his deep-set, restless and cunning eyes. When he liked he had a certain charm and insinuation of manner that was almost irresistible.

The association that existed between him and his adopted son, an uninteresting and conventional youth who had the appearance of a counter-jumper, was often a subject of discussion and wonder. The only bond that appeared to exist between them was, common cause in roguery.

After a disastrous tour through Ireland, Baggalle had brought the poor remains of his company to the town of Huddleton, in the faint hope of it being a turning point in his fortunes. Hope was a thing of the past to his despairing company, but Baggalle it never left so long as he was associated with change.

Money he had none, and I doubt if the sum of five shillings could have been raised from the lot of us. He had booked the Town Hall to open on the last two nights of the week. It was now Monday, and we had the first four days of the week to work up the business, and live on credit.

Baggalle, nothing daunted, set out early in the morning to get bills printed, and the few miscellaneous lithos and posters we still possessed, stuck up on the hoardings. The first point of his attack was the principal hotel in the town. We three walked into the saloon bar.

There he tried his blandishments upon the barmaid, but she was out of temper that morning, and proof against his insinuating manner. He ordered two glasses of beer, on the pretence of it being too early in the morning for him to drink, and shared them with us when no one was looking.

We did not stay long for not a grain of information concerning the town could we gain from the surly barmaid, she even refused to sell tickets for us at a percentage.

By that strange absent-mindedness so often to be found associated with genius, Baggalle forgot to pay for our refreshment, and had to be called back to do so.

"That woman's a fool," said Baggalle reflecting upon her business capacity, as we walked across the market square.

"If you had only paid her before she would have been all right, she was not the kind that forget with the help of a ticket," replied Alfred.

"You are quite right, my boy, quite right, you are the saving of your old father, you have more insight though not the same address as I have."

Next we turned our attention to a printer.

Baggalle asked to see specimens.

"Certainly," said he, "what kind?"

"Some daybills, programmes; about fifty double crowns, and a few streamers."

"And the matter, sir?"

"Here is a copy of the programme and daybill matter. For the double crowns, let me see. Be good enough to take down the following: Town Hall, Huddleton. Special attractions for Friday and Saturday nights, October 5th and 6th. Mr. Sebast an Baggalle's Company of first-class Artistes. My name large type. Most expensive engagement of Alfred Baggalle—very large type—the great comedian—large type, next line. Under the patronage of the Lord Mayor and Aldermen, Lord Heworth, and the nobility and gentry of the neighbourhood. Then follow the daybill please."

Alfred nudged his father.

"It's all right, my boy, it's all right; old friends of mine, all promised to come," replied Baggalle to the nudge, "and what will that amount to, Mr. Printer?"

"£1 18s. 6d., say £1 18s.," said the printer, reckoning the amount up.

"Humph! yes, will you be good enough to present your little bill on Friday night, at the box-office."

"I am very sorry, sir, we don't do business that way, our terms are strictly cash," said the printer firmly.

"Just as you please, it is all one to me," replied Baggalle, putting his hand in his pocket and drawing therefrom several packets of tickets; "there are ten three shilling tickets, and four two shilling tickets, you will have no difficulty in selling them I am sure. Any you fail to part with I will buy back from you."

The printer was staggered at Baggalle's effrontery, and it was some moments before he spoke.

"Mr. Baggalle, you are trying to make a fool of me I think."

"I assure you, sir, I never attempt a task already accomplished," replied Baggalle, seeing the game was up. "And allow me to tell you, sir, I did not come here to be insulted, so I withdraw my order. Good morning!"

Digitized by Google

With which we all sailed out of the shop, leaving the printer speechless with surprise.

When we got out into the street, Alfred burst out laughing and slapping Baggalle on the back, exclaimed :

"You are a card, father, you ought to be a member of parliament," which pleased the old man mightily.

We soon found another printer, who being in a small way of business, was readily impressed with Baggalle, and did not at all mind waiting until Friday night for his bill.

Then we entered a large grocer's sh p, where Baggalle made himself very entertaining, keeping the manager and shop-assistants in a ripple of laughter with his jokes, and genial manner, while he gave a large order.

The parcel was packed and under Alfred's arm before he paid for it with the tickets. The manager made some demur about it not being usual, but Baggalle carried his point with a high hand, promising to buy back any he did not dispose of.

After a call upon the bill-poster, and another to secure the services of a pianist, we made our way to the Town Hall where I demanded a division of the groceries for the benefit of the Company. Baggalle and Alfred protested, but at the threat of a strike, they gave in with a bad grace.

O'Connor, our beer-soaked Irish heavy man, met us at the hall entrance. He looked ill at ease, and fidgeted in a nervous manner.

I knew what was the matter with him; he had borrowed a penny (a bad habit of his) probably off the hall-keeper, and was searching for some one to extract another from.

He drew me aside at the first opportunity, and began with the usual formula.

"Can ye lind me a penny, I've gone and left all me money at home in me ould coat" (he only had one) "and I feel a bit queer in me inside; and I find I only have a penny in my pocket."

I had often been caught before by this incurable, but repetition had made me wary. I declared to my sorrow I had not a stiver. But on his asking me if I had anything portable to pawn, I told him to clear out. He borrowed that penny shortly afterwards, and went to a public-house.

Miss Dellow, who played our old woman, then buttonholed me, and demanded to know all we had done and what we hoped and feared.

Miss Dellow was a person of past triumphs in the dramatic world. We took her word for it, as the per od to which she constantly referred was too remote for us to know anything about. Habit is strong.

Without waiting for me to reply to her questions, she at once began to tell me what she had been used to, and what she had not, and how Mr. X. Y. Z. had, after her performance of Ophelia, twenty years ago, told her he had never seen such acting before, and predicted a future for her.

I was in no mood for reminiscences that morning, so reminding Miss Dellow that we all had futures of some kind, unless we died young, left her abruptly.

Baggalle and Alfred had gone out to work up the business, and to try the effect of tickets on a local butcher or so. Deputing our baggage man, now risen to the dignity of an actor, to shadow them and demand on behalf of the company an equal share of the spoils, I called for our leading lady, and together we went for a ramble out into the beautiful country round about Huddleton. There we picked great bunches of flowers, ate blackberries, and forgot our troubles for a few hours, in rest and peace.

Friday night found us all in the highest spirits, for the house on opening contained about £12 and afterwards rose to £15. We proceeded to give our audience *East Lynne* played by six people.

Baggalle did not play, the taking of money in the front of the house was too important a duty to sacrifice to art.

Doubles such as Miss Cornelia and Barbara, Richard Hare and Bullock, were plentiful, and we flattered ourselves were successful in all instances except the extraordinary English of the baggage man who gave a unique rendering of Lord Mountsevern and Justice Hare.

Little Willie was played by a local child, and although she could not be heard over the footlights, she was received with great enthusiasm, and I am sure was responsible for half the house. We thought we were doing well; the audience did not, they could see there was something wrong, and in the second act began to murmur.

Where were the nobility and gentry, and the Mayor, was asked in whispers on all sides. By the end of the second act, they fully realised they had been hoaxed, and showed their resentment in increased noise.

Deputies from the Mayor and Aldermen were waiting on Baggalle in the front of the house, demanding an explanation of the bill matter. Baggalle made them some temporary excuse, and bade them wait, for we had sent round for him.

The aud ence were causing us extreme uneasiness. No one paid any attention to the play, which could not be heard. Shouts of "Where's the Mayor?" "Where's Mr. Mulligan and Mr. Cole?" "Where's Lord Heworth?" reached us from the audience.

We were at our wit's end to know what to do, but bravely went on with our lines until Baggalle arrived on the scene. He walked straight on the stage and addressed the audience.

The fire of indignation in his eyes was well simulated considering the way he had fooled the poor folk in front of him who greeted him with hoots, yells, and hisses. He raised his hand and thundered:

"Silence!"

The dramatic action took effect and thus he addressed them:

"Ladies and gentlemen, I must say your conduct is at least extraordinary, I have always heard the people of Huddleton described as a most just and fair audience. I have endeavoured to give you a good entertainment," here cries of "Where's Mr. Mulligan and Mr. Cole?" "Where's Lord Heworth?" "Where's Doherty? You are a fraud," and others less polite, interrupted him.

He continued after they had subsided.

"If any of you here are dissatisfied with this entertainment, they shall have their money returned to them at the conclusion of this act, on condition they remain quiet until then."

This announcement was well received, and Baggalle left the stage amid applause and cheers.

The audience remained quiet during the rest of the third act, and the curtain came down with hearty applause. And as we could not see much movement, except at the end of the Hall, we hoped they had decided to remain.

We rang up the curtain again after a ten minutes' interval to find the audience not apparently diminished in numbers. Our joy thereat was short lived, for anon there came from them once more murmurs and hootings growing louder every moment.

We sent round O'Connor to see what was the matter. He came back with the news that Baggalle was nowhere

Digitized by Google

to be found. Where was Alfred? was our first thought.

We made a search, and discovered him sneaking towards the back door, with a big parcel of clothes under his arm. Then the horrible truth flashed upon us. Baggalle had flown with the entire receipts, and by now had had time to have left the town.

Just then all but O'Connor were wanted on the stage. He took the matter into his own hands, and pounced upon Alfred with a wild yell. They had a battle royal in the passage, but ordinary muscle proving of better quality than the beer-soaked variety, Alfred escaped, leaving O'Connor and his parcel lying together on the ground.

Upon recovery O'Connor immediately seized upon that parcel as his own. It represented to him liquid consolation for his injuries. We could not spare anyone to chase Alfred, for the audience were getting more and turbulent, a bold front and a continuance of the play was needed to keep them from further excesses.

O'Connor, whose one thought as a rule was beer, now proved the most resourceful of anyone of us. He ordered the baggage man to fish out a revolver from the property basket, and fill it with blank cartridges. Sticking the weapon in his pocket he said:

"I know the temper of the bastes in this district, I've been round here before."

The hall was sometimes used as a night-school. A quantity of books to aid these nocturnal studies, were piled up in a couple of deep window ledges at the bottom of the hall. The gods in exposition of their renowned temper seized upon these, and sought revenge, for being doubly fooled, by hurling them at us.

"Haul down the curtain," everyone cried, but the hall-keeper who had experienced the effect of a Huddletonian audience's displeasure before, affirmed they would ransack the place, back and front, and probably maul us if we did.

"Let 'em have their game," said he.

It is no joke to be with devils at play, thought we. As most of the flying books fell short, we did not budge, but later one well-directed shot caught our hired pianist on the head, and he scuttled out of the hall like a rabbit with shot in his tail.

Roars of laughter followed his disappearance, and with a loud shout they followed the leadership of a self-constituted captain, and jumping the barrier, made a dash for us full of grim Huddletonian humour. O'Connor was equal to the occasion.

"Take every one up to the top dressing-room," he commanded, and springing on to the stage he covered our retreat by levelling his revolver at the foremost of the mob, shouting, "back ye divils, I'll put a bullet through the first that comes forward, before he's time to move a step."

For the moment they hesitated at this piece of checkmate humour. But their leader, nothing daunted, exclaimed:

"Never fear, boys. If he fires the pistol it won't harm us for there's sorra a cartridge in it. Come on, boys."

They surged forward again; O'Connor fired, they halted abruptly, and looked serious.

"I've missed ye this time, but the next time I'll hit," he threatened.

Whether, after this demonstration of force, O'Connor, with his Irish eloquence could not have explained matters, and pacified them we were never to know, for the hall-keeper, contrary to his own advice, here lowered the curtain.

Emitting curses, loud and deep, O'Connor made with all haste for the top dressing-room with the mob at his heels. Placing the ladies in the room, we three fellows made a hurried barricade on the landing at the top of the stairs.

Everything that was portable we brought to cast on the heads of our assailants, reserving as a final coup a couple of heavy trunks to roll down the stairs. It was not long before they discovered us.

"Here they are," the leader cried, "go for 'em, boys."

Once more O'Connor's revolver came into requisition and held the foremost at bay while he addressed them.

He explained at length how we had been cheated as much as they; in conclusion asking them to go quietly home. Their answer to his eloquence was a shower of stones and books, and an attempted rush up the stairs.

We replied with heavier articles; O'Connor fired his revolver and they fell back. Then the battle began in real earnest, they made no attempt to storm our position, a spirited exchange of missiles was the order of the attack.

We had the advantage in position, but they had it in ammunition. Sticks and stones came flying about our heads. We let them have all back that remained with us, in addition anything we could lay hands on.

The ladies, nerved to the occasion, supplied us with bottles, glasses, brushes, boots, and even cakes of soap to cast on their heads.

The damage on their side we could only estimate from oft recurrent curses. On our side besides minor injuries, O'Connor had his left arm temporarily paralysed, and the baggage man his cheek cut open with a stone.

The time came when our ammunition ran short, and even the trunks had been rolled down to drive back the more daring of our assailants.

The mob were quick to see their advantage, and swarmed up the stairs. On the top stair we stood, and engaged them hand to hand, belabouring and thrusting them with iron scenery braces which did telling work.

This could not last for long we knew, a few minutes more and we should have been at their mercy, when the cry of "Police" burst from their midst, and the last I remember was a breaking up of the mass as I fell stunned from a blow on the head.

When I opened my eyes I found myself lying on a couch in a surgery with someone bathing my head. Roars of laughter proceeded from a corner of the room.

Turning my eyes in that direction I saw O'Connor with his arm in a sling giving a graphic account of the fray to the doctor, who was sewing up the baggage man's cheek. Our wounds proved our saving.

The doctor turned out a brick. He became so interested in us that with the help of the Mayor, and other influential people of the town, we got up a show a week later; this time with their genuine patronage.

Our fame spread and the whole town turned out to see us. Not only did we pay Baggalle's debts, but left the place with our pockets well lined.

The back seats greeted our reappearance with ringing cheers.

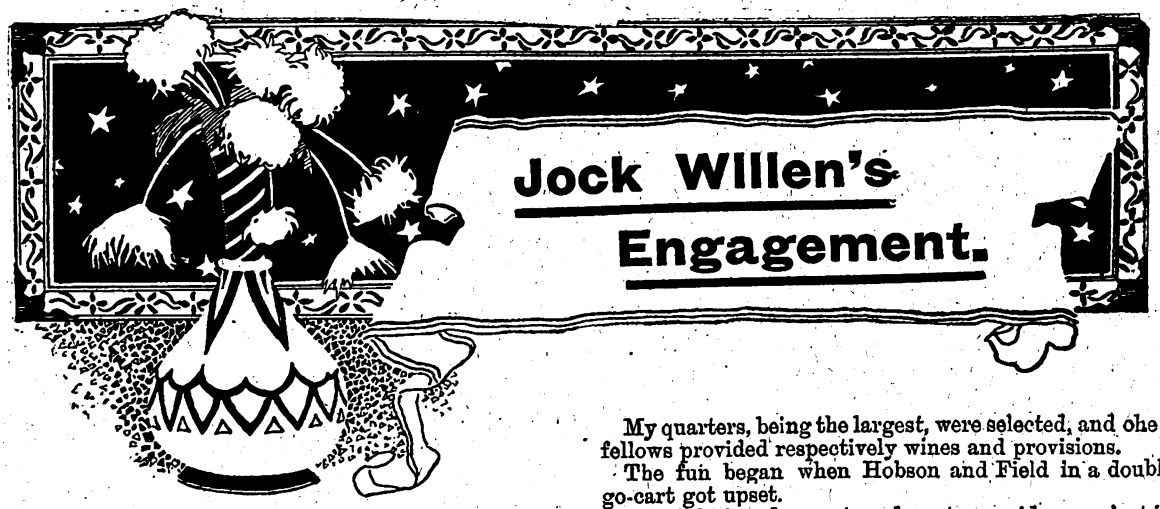
They were all agreed that we had given them better fun even than could be got out of an election.

I have lately heard that Baggalle and Alfred now own a booth in the north of Scotland, and there flourish like the green bay-tree.

DOUGLAS VIGORS.

[Next Week: "JOHN HANSON'S REVENGE."]

Digitized by Google



Jock Willen's Engagement.

For a right-down, rollicking, good dinner party give me a "Coaster!"

They may do themselves well in other parts of the world, but on the Gold Coast we simply don't draw the line anywhere. A first-class native cook can give any Frenchman points, and when we've got the wine—well, we don't put it away to improve the quality.

I've enjoyed a good many jolly dinners in my time, but I never met with anything yet to beat a regular Accra "send off"; though it may have been partly owing to the fits of the blues one gets there, and the reaction afterwards.

But we had a good many "send offs." If a chap was at all popular, when he went home on leave he was certain to get one, and if he had a birthday, or if he only said he had, it was much the same.

Bank Holidays were godsends, and if we could slip one in, sort of unawares, well, we always did. On national festivals we lost our heads, both figuratively and literally sometimes.

But the best I ever remember was the one we gave Jock Willen when he got engaged.

Jock was the most popular man on the Coast; from Sierra Leone to Calabar there was not a better fellow, and when he gave it out that he was engaged, all the chaps in the place wanted to give him the dinner.

Perhaps one cause of eagerness was the dearth of excuses that had recently prevailed. No one had done anything, there was no holiday coming, and we hadn't even had a funeral. After the last named I must tell you, we always had a dinner to keep our spirits up, as melancholia not unusually breeds fever.

A few months before we had had a regular harvest over the Ashanti business, as each Accra officer had to be "sent off" individually, but since then there had been a dearth.

We had only celebrated Halwell's old aunt's death when he got a legacy, the Governor's departure up country, and Beston's dog's puppies. (One of the latter was missing, and we found out afterwards it had been served up as a *hors d'œuvres*.)

No one could think of a reason for the next big "do" until Jock said he was engaged, and then everybody wanted to be host. At least everybody wanted to have it in his quarters, but they didn't exactly mean providing everything. In the end we divided the honours.

My quarters, being the largest, were selected, and the fellows provided respectively wines and provisions.

The fun began when Hobson and Field in a double go-cart got upset.

It caught in a deep rut, and went over sideways, just in front of my digs, and as several of us were watching from the balcony, they received a perfect fire of chaff.

We sat down twelve, and the noise increased gradually all through dinner. I had a surprise for them at the last, in the form of a real home-made Christmas pudding, that had come all the way from England. I had had two, and on Christmas Day, Medway, my partner in quarters, and I finished up one, after burning it in good old style.

Evidently our cook had seen the display, for when at last the pudding was triumphantly brought in, it was blazing away in fine fashion. I must confess I was a little surprised, but all the fellows looked pleased, and it was quickly divided round.

The first three men who took a mouthful, sprang up with a howl and everyone looked at me. To show there was no ill feeling, I took a mouthful myself—and howled likewise.

The cook had lighted the pudding by first soaking it in kerosene.

When the hubbub had subsided we got to the speeches; and if speeches ever made a man happy, Jock ought to have been the most absurdly happy man in the world. We wished him everything anybody could think of, to the point or otherwise, and broke various glasses in emphasizing our feeling, and we all promised to go and stay with him indefinitely when he was married.

Jock replied in his usual tip-top style, and was finally dragged out on to the verandah, as the only means of stopping him, and comic songs became the order of the hour.

But before we all separated, those of us who were capable of gravity congratulated him again very seriously, for we were all honestly pleased—we liked him so much.

Jock was serious enough himself as he thanked us.

"I'm an awfully lucky beggar," he said, "when you've seen her you'll understand, and I hope you all will some day or other."

* * * * *

"You'll go and see Miss Fortescue as soon as possible, won't you?"

I was just getting into the surf-boat and Jock was wringing my hand.

I was going home on leave and he was following in a

Digitized by Google

month, but I was the bearer of an important little package for his *fiancée*, who happened to live, as I did, in Liverpool.

"I'll go the day after I arrive," I promised him. "and if you don't look sharp and come back I expect I shall cut you out."

He laughed happily.

"Have a try, old chap," he said. "I'll give you half my next year's screw if you do."

"Taken," said I, as the boat pushed off.

He stood watching a bit longingly and waved his hat. I see him now in his light flannel suit, with the sun on his fair hair and a smile on his lips in spite of the longing in his eyes. The handsomest, jolliest, and best fellow I ever knew.

When I got to England I lost no time in carrying out my promise, and was on the doorstep of Miss Fortescue's home by eleven the next morning.

She greeted me delightedly, and asked eagerly for every detail of news concerning Jock. She made no pretence of indifference, and was not in the least ashamed of her eagerness. She asked me a hundred questions, and I answered them gladly, if only for the pleasure of watching her expressive face. She was one of the prettiest girls I ever saw, and, what was better still, she was as natural and unaffected as a child. I quite agreed with Jock that he was a lucky beggar and almost told her so.

"It is my birthday to-morrow," she said, "and we are, having a little 'send off, as you call them on the Coast, in view of my coming wedding. Will you come? It will be quite informal and rather lively."

I accepted readily and proceeded to tell her of the "send off" we had given Jock. She listened eagerly, and wished we could all be there the following day. She thought it was so good of us to like him so much, but confessed it was not at all surprising.

Her dinner was as great a success as his had been, and, in its way, quite as jolly. She was evidently as popular as he was, and everyone vied with everyone else in wishing her joy. Things certainly looked promising for the young couple so far as wishes went, though a fulfilment of them must necessarily have been Utopian.

I had reason to remember that dinner with more pleasure even than the rest, for not long afterwards I became engaged to Miss Fortescue's sister, whom I met for the first time.

The three of us were chatting apart when she told me not to tell the name of the boat Jock was coming in.

"I'm going to meet him alone," she said, "just as I started him. We wouldn't have anyone there but just our two selves, and we arranged then, that when he came back, I should be the first he should speak to, and no one was to look on. That is twelve months ago," she continued; "it looked like a century then, but now it seems more like a week. I feel ready to go out of my mind with sheer happiness."

"Don't do that," I said laughingly, "it would be so jolly rough on Jock. He'd think he ought to go out of his mind too, to keep you company."

The morning the ship was sighted at Anglesea, I met her on the landing-stage, looking radiant beyond words.

"It can't be in for some hours," she said, "but I'm going to wait because time goes quicker here than at home. They don't any of them know for certain, though of course they have their suspicions."

"When may I appear on the scenes?" I asked chaffingly.

"You can meet the tender," she replied, "but you mustn't come out on it," and I told her I would obey orders.

What happened then I must tell as it was told to me, by a man who went out to meet his brother.

"I noticed her directly," he said, "who could help it? Also, it was rather unusual for a pretty young girl like that to be going on the tender alone. I speculated idly as to whether she was meeting husband or lover. I thought it must be one of the two from the light in her eyes. When we approached the ship she leant eagerly over the rail, trying to make out the faces of those who were aboard her. I noticed she did not seem to recognise anyone, and when we drew up alongside, she had turned rather pale, but was still scanning the ship eagerly. Still no look of recognition crossed her face, and I began to feel quite sorry, for I thought her friend, whoever he was, must have missed the boat. In fact, I kept near her on purpose, out of curiosity, and was still beside her when a lady, with a kind sad face, came up and asked her if she was Miss Fortescue. She said 'yes' in rather a bewildered way, still looking round. I don't know what the lady said then, but I heard the words 'fever' and 'last night' and then I saw Miss Fortescue drop like a stone."

That was all, but to this day when I see, in my mind's eye, Jock standing waving his hat on the beach at Accra, and the sunshine in the girl's eyes on the landing-stage, I feel a cold shudder.

The rest seems too cruel to be true, but one quickly learns things are none the less true because of that.

G. E. PAGE.

A TEN-POUND LADY CORNERED AT LAST!

Since last week two more Sealed Envelopes have been claimed, the lucky captors being:

Mrs. Johnson, 1 Milton Avenue, East Ham,

who captured Ten-Pound Lady G,

Mr. F. W. Bull, 10 Kasghar Road, Plumstead,

who captured No. 54 at a football match at Woolwich.

£340 HAS NOW BEEN PAID AWAY,

and there are still fifty Sealed Envelopes awaiting claimants.

There are also ten Ten-Pound Ladies about the country anxious to get rid of their Sealed Envelopes. No gentleman need apply, as these Envelopes are for ladies only.

The celebrated song

"HAVE YOU GOT THAT £10 NOTE?"

is now on sale, and can be obtained from all newsagents for 1s. 4d., or direct from the SONG DEPARTMENT, Pearson's Buildings, Henrietta Street, London, W.C., for 1s. 6d. Postal Order (not stamps) post free.

DO YOU KNOW A GOOD STORY?

A prize of £10 is offered to the person from whom we receive the best anecdote relating to the Ten-Pound Scheme. All attempts should be sent in envelopes addressed: TEN-POUND STORY EDITOR, Pearson's Buildings, Henrietta Street, London, W.C., by Monday next, Nov. 19th.

Full particulars of the Scheme will be sent on application to Room 36, Pearson's Buildings, Henrietta Street, London, W.C.

Digitized by Google

THE CHINESE PIRATES OF SAIGON.

WHEN you have crossed the wide sea below Cochin China coming from the direction of Singapore, the first point of land you see is Point St. Jacques, a tall black cliff standing up from the sea, the furthest point of Cochin China below Saigon.

There are caves in the rocks where tigers live, and other caves where human tigers, called pirates, live.

People think, if they think on the matter at all, that pirates are by-gone creatures, that they do not exist now. They are less bold and powerful than they were fifty years ago, beyond a doubt: they do not dare to stop the big P and O's and North German Lloyd steamers that carry the mails, but it is still dangerous sailing these seas in smaller steamers.

Down the broad river mouths of Southern China where the low, flat marshes run back into the land, and where narrow creeks give easy cover, pirate junks lie hidden for days and weeks; no one disturbs these marshes, save an occasional French officer from Saigon or Tonkin, who has come out snipe shooting. Snipe are there in hundreds and wildfowl of many kinds, and there is also a chance of a tiger.

One broiling day in September a small trading schooner was crawling along a few miles from Point St. Jacques.

The owner had his wife and two children on board. They had been all the way to Colombo to get fresh stores to trade in amongst the Malay and Chinese in all the little villages and settlements about Cochin China. They did not attempt to trade in Singapore—the great shop of Little and Co. swamped smaller efforts there—or in Saigon either; no, they bought damaged goods cheap at Colombo and then they pottered round St. Jacques and the coast of Cochin and Siam, putting in at all the little villages and towns about.

Candles, cheese, tinned goods of all kinds and a lot of cheap whisky made up the cargo; cheese did not go bad in the intense heat, but only acquired an extra strong flavour, enough to make an Englishman feel unwell, but evidently much appreciated by the Chinese.

If it did happen to upset their inside arrangements, the whisky could be useful as an antidote. So Mr. Simpkins, the owner of the *Mary Ann*, felt himself provided at all points.

The family camped on deck in these latitudes, it was pleasanter for many reasons. Mr. Simpkins was smoking a pipe and sitting on a barrel, while Mrs. Simpkins was cooking the family supper, for it was getting on for seven o'clock. Joe and Matilda Simpkins were lying on the deck and kicking their heels in the air.

Joe was a sandy, nondescript kind of boy, about thirteen, with a turned up nose and freckles His sister was rather a pretty little thing, the sandy hair in her case had a quite golden tinge.

"What are we going to have for supper, 'Tilda?" said Joe.

"Fish curry," said Matilda sadly, "it's always fish in some way."

"Anything after?" asked Joe.

"Not as I knows on," said Matilda, "what a chance some folks have of enjoying themselves! There's Jane Brown, of Colombo, died the other day of eating ice cream on the top of hot puddin'."

"My," said Joe, enviously, "wot a lovely death!"

They were both gloomily silent for a short time—a silence broken by Mrs. Simpkins' voice calling them to the discussion of the despised curry.

The family sat round on the deck. with the curry on a large dish in the centre, from which it was ladled out by Mrs. Simpkins. All was peaceful and silent as the steamer glided through the oily water, a soft land breeze blew towards them, bearing the scent of spice-laden trees not far off, the Point of Saint Jacques towered above the small islands near.

"I always feel more happy-like when we've passed that there point," said Mr. Simpkins.

"Why, there ain't no pirates there now," said his wife, scornfully; "since Orang Kyah was smashed up, they haven't been seen about."

"That may be," said Mr. Simpkins oracularly, "but that don't prove that they ain't there. all the same. Also, Orang Kyah wasn't killed, he got away into the jungle, and there he is, you may take my word for it, awaiting his chance."

"Wot 'ud you do, father?" said Joe, "if he attacked the *Mary Ann*?"

"We'd do our best to defend her, o' course," said his father. "Tim and Mike would have to leave the injuns awhile, and I have a rifle apiece for us all, that may do some mischief."

"Lor!" said Joe, and relapsed into meditation, rather hoping the monotony of the voyage might be broken by a stirring incident.

Mrs. Simpkins and Matilda ate their supper undisturbed by these evil forebodings; there was no use in troubling one's mind over what might never happen.

"I hope they'll do some trading in the way of pine-apples and fresh vegetables in that there village not far round that corner, pirates or no pirates," said Mrs. Simpkins, practically; "the children are getting quite peaky and pale, for the want of fresh food."

"Well, we'll take a run near shore and see about it." said her husband, "we ought to get round the Point by eight o'clock."

The two engineers and general crew were to be seen popping their heads up through the hatchway, in a deprecating manner, meant to intimate to Mrs. Simpkins that it was time they also had a share of the fish curry, so with dispatch, taught by experience, she bundled off her family, swept up their plates, gave the latter a very perfunctory wash in a bucket, and then called up Tim and Mike to the festal board.

Digitized by Google

Mr. Simpkins sauntered to the bow of the steamer and took a survey of St. Jacques through a spy-glass. They were getting very near the big black rocks now. Suddenly two black specks shot out from a distant creek, on the wrong side of the Point to the settlement where they meant to trade. These specks soon developed themselves into two canoes holding about eight men each, and heading straight for the trading steamer. Mr. Simpkins groaned, and put the glass in his pocket,

"'Tis them pirates, sure enough," he said, in deep disgust.

"All steam on," he shouted down the hatchway to the engine-room.

"She won't stand much more, sir, without bursting," one of the men called out.

"I can't help it, she must take her chance of that," Simpkins answered, resuming his look-out on the rowing boats which were approaching unpleasantly fast. But the engines at first answered to the extra call bravely, and the steamer shot through the water much faster than any boat could hope to do.

This lasted for fully five minutes, in which time they had made good headway round the point. Suddenly what the engineer prophesied happened—the poor worn-out machinery gave way, a piston broke, there was a great whirr and everything stopped. On the steamer there was a pause of blank dismay.

"We're done for now and no mistake," said the stoker; "comes of going to sea in an old hulk like this 'ere."

He and his companion came up on deck and stood looking at the boats which were coming up fast.

"Come down, my men, and get your guns and cutlasses," said Mr. Simpkins, "and let's put the best face on it we can; after all, they may only be boarding us to trade."

"We ain't got no chance if it comes to fightin'," said the stoker sulkily. He was a miserable looking creature who looked as if he principally subsisted on coal dust. "Why, there must be at least thirty men in them canoes, and Chinese Boxers at that."

"I don't mean to prevent their boarding us," said Mr. Simpkins, "it's best to take for granted they don't mean us harm, as we can't get out of their way. These weapons are only to make a show that we aren't quite defenceless. You stay down here, my dear," he said to his wife.

"Certainly not," she replied determinedly, "my place is up by you, Henry Simpkins, and there I mean to stand. Matilda will stay below, but I go up."

"Very well," said Simpkins resignedly, "it don't make much difference anyway; come up, then," and on deck they all went—accompanied by Joe, who first carefully placed his rifle in a secure hiding-place of his own, behind a barrel of cheese.

The canoes were now within hailing distance and Simpkins stood up, waving a white flag. The occupants of the canoes took no notice whatever of this, but came straight on to the steamer, which was stopped to receive them. The Chinamen hooked the canoes on to the side and all of them scrambled on deck, looking alarming enough with their great creeses and curved knives. The leader, who was armed with a musket, was a very fine specimen of a Southern Chinaman, very tall and well-built.

Mr. Simpkins advanced, smiling, and said a few words in Chinese intimating he was a trader and anxious to do business with them.

The leader laughed contemptuously and repeated Simpkins' remarks to his followers, who evidently looked on them as an excellent joke. However, they made no attempt to attack either the family or crew, who were all on deck with the exception of Matilda; this young person had hidden herself down below, as soon as she saw the natives actually coming on board. She went down to a great flour-bin in the pantry, about a quarter full of flour, and having with difficulty climbed over the edge by the help of a barrel near, she sank down in the soft, white mass, covering herself all over with it.

She and Joe had often used the flour-bin as a capital place for hide-and-seek, when empty, and they had bored several round holes for ventilation and points of look out, when the lid was shut, so there was no danger of her suffocation.

It was lucky for her she was well covered by the flour, for the natives turned over and prodded about everything in the store-room and pantry, before proceeding to the hold. The lid of the bin was lifted several times by first one pirate, then another, but in looking in, they only saw a dim white heap, which was so evidently flour that they troubled themselves no further about it.

In about half-an-hour the pirates all assembled again on deck, most of them affectionately carrying a bottle of whisky, and made a report on the contents of the steamer to their chief, who had remained above.

The rifles concealed under the sail had been very soon discovered, and many unpleasant glances cast towards the unfortunate owners, whose hopes of getting off scot-free, except for the loss of the cargo, were getting lower and lower. The chief seemed pleased with the account brought him of the stores on board, he grinned pleasantly; then, making a sign to his men, they proceeded to seize Mr. and Mr. Simpkins and tie them up to the masts, of which there were two. Simpkins tried to remonstrate, but the pirate chief had him gagged at once with a spare Union Jack, while a Stars and Stripes performed the same kind duty to his wife.

The two men were first tied up and then rolled overboard, an employment which seemed to cause the pirates much amusement.

Poor Joe was also tied up and shoved into an empty barrel, and the top fastened securely on—then rolled away into a corner, no doubt to afford entertainment later.

Luckily for him the barrel was an old one and cracked by the heat, so, though very stifling, it was possible to keep alive.

These little arrangements finished, the pirates prepared to enjoy themselves. Still more whisky was brought up and several tins of provisions, and they all lay about, luxuriously, eating and drinking, while darkness crept over the sky.

Whisky was no new thing to them, they had been accustomed to it for years, though it was seldom indeed that such a glorious supply as this came to hand.

Moreover, there was no hurry about the feast, they could lie there in happiness and peace, watching the golden stars twinkle and the yellow moon slide round the point of St. Jacques, while the steamer rose and fell languidly on the glorious Southern Seas, and all nature prepared to sleep till the splendid dawning of another day.

A feeling of holy peace and contentment crept over the pirates—truly this world was a beautiful one—the moon above resembled the cheeses below, and through the mists of whisky, the stars winked sympathetically, and even the buzz of the mosquitoes was subdued to a

Digitized by Google

gentle hum. Then they slept, all of them, full of good-will and sympathy, and rest.

But in the silent night-watches, the Angel of Death swept over the Point of St. Jacques, and folded his wings on the deck of the little schooner.

From man to man the dread whisper passed: "The plague, the plague!"—among those, that is, who awoke to sufficient sense to whisper. How it had come, no one knew, and no one ever does know.

Doctors have elaborate theories about it, and when it appears in some new place they set it down to some merchandise or infected goods imported from places where it rages; but who knows if they are right or not? It comes, that is all we know; it has its will, it slays its hundreds or its thousands, and when the thirst of the malignant devil is quenched, it flies away.

Perhaps it had come to the *Mary Ann* in the cases of damaged goods taken in at Colombo, perhaps it came in miasma from the swamps of Sumatra; who knew and who cared? It was there, that was all the victim cared to know; there in its full malignancy and in such deadly form that some of the stricken were dead in one short quarter-of-an-hour.

One by one they were attainted; the first ones who were seized believed it poison, but the blue swellings of the plague soon left no doubt of the identity of their visitant. In some, their necks were twisted and swollen, in others the huge bumps came beneath their arms, in others on the groin, and in all the end was the same.

When the sun rose, out of thirty men, twenty were dead. The survivors, many already stricken, pushed the dead men overboard, not caring much if they were only as yet in the stupor that in the plague often precedes death.

One of the men so pushed overboard was a Chinaman; the touch of the cold water restored his senses to a sufficient degree to enable him to recognise his desperate situation.

He stiffened himself mechanically and so floated on the surface of the sea. The noonday sun shed its fierce rays on him, the tropical showers that came in the middle of the day near the Equator drenched him in their cooling downpour, and the treatment of Nature did what no medicine could have done, to repair her own handiwork. Towards evening sense began to return to him and he commenced to swim.

He had drifted far beyond the Point of St. Jacques to the entrance to a land-locked bay. On the shore a mile away, a tall row of cocoa-palms lifted their graceful heads to the yellow-flushed sky—the murmur of the waves breaking on the sandy beach was borne far out to sea.

Fun Cheng had lived most of his life in a village on the coast of Formosa, the sea was to him as much his natural element as dry land is to us.

He swam on, gaining strength with hope, and in his deadened brain disease struggled with renewed life. Soon he distinguished the Malay huts, half on land, half in the water, some built on piles with only a few twisted bamboos between the inhabitants and an impromptu bath.

Fun Cheng swam on to a deserted creek, beyond the village; here he landed, and staggering up a short slope, lay down on the glittering sand. Some of the natives had seen him swim ashore, and came round cautiously to see what manner of man was this, who had apparently risen from the empty sea.

A Chinese shopman, who had set up his business in this out-of-the-way place, and who, by the way, made a remarkably good thing out of it, came too, and entered into conversation with his countryman from a safe distance. Fun Cheng truthfully told him the facts of the case, for there is honour among thieves and Chinamen, and his questioner, foreseeing gain from the stricken trader, indicated to him a distant hut, deserted, but weather-tight, in which, he told him he might take up his abode, if he could crawl so far. Fun Cheng thankfully agreed, and begged that food and drink might be sent to him there. Ah Chung trotted away to make arrangements. Then later, when all was quiet in the village and no eavesdroppers lurking round, the hope of gain led him to risk his precious person in the near vicinity of a plague-stricken man. He got from Fun Cheng the fullest particulars of the position of the trader, of the amount of the cargo, the number of men on board. Fun Cheng, though ill, had acuteness left to make a bargain, before imparting such valuable news.

"Before the morning dawns," said he, "all will be dead on the baneful vessel. Good wood and timber, and iron and money, will remain for the fortunate man who takes the ship into his keeping."

"'Tis an undertaking of danger," said Ah Chung, "the black death still lurks on board."

"True," said Fun Cheng, "but to a Chinaman, who has paid well for the tombs of his ancestors and has not left his father to groan in purgatory, what matters it? It is only these foreign barbarians who are utterly without intelligence, who waste good merchandise, for fear of the lurking plague. Wait but a few days and I will go myself to Cochin China to search for the trader."

Ah Chuug meditated: in a few days, the prize might be claimed by others.

"My friend," he said, "when to-morrow's sun breaks forth, I start myself. To you, as agreed between us, belongs one fifth of the profits that may arrive."

"'Tis little enough," said Fun Cheng sulkily, but Ah Chung cared little for that. He was master of the situation.

Next day at twelve o'clock he approached the *Mary Ann*, still anchored in the same place. Ah Chung was in a wide-sailed junk, accompanied by two stolid, immoveable Chinamen, his servants, and sharers in many a shady deed.

As they approached the schooner they hailed her, but no answer came; she lay like a painted image on the glassy sea. Ah Chung smiled, well satisfied.

"They sleep soundly in death," he said to himself. He hooked the junk on to the schooner and climbed on board. The Black Angel had used his scythe to some purpose—all were dead.

Mrs. Simpkins and her husband had evidently been released from confinement to give help to their captors, and in their turn released their children, but only to be themselves seized by the dread pestilence and to die side by side with their conquerors.

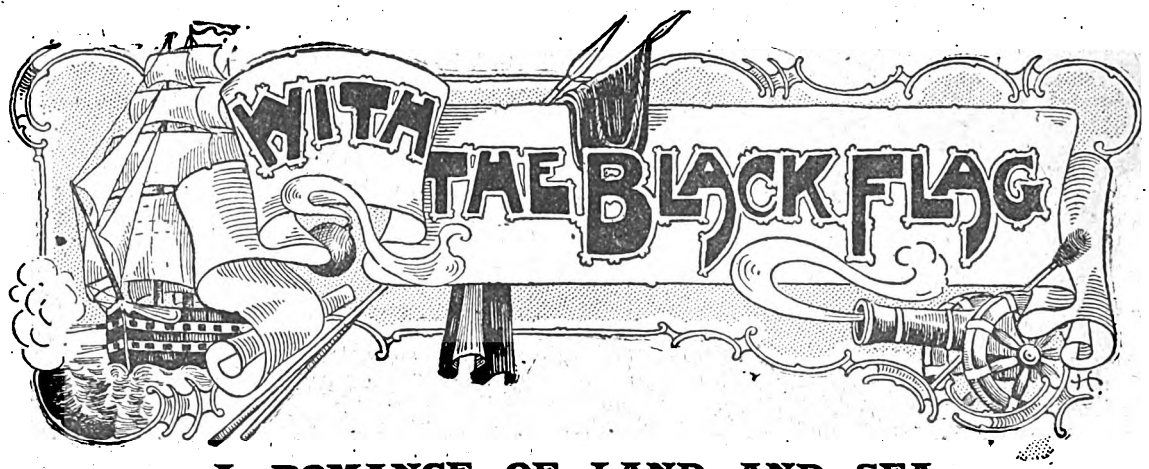
The schooner swayed slightly on the swell of the waves, and the sultry air seemed to cling closely to the stricken ship.

With stolid serenity Ah Chung and his men took possession. Why trouble about the self evident facts of death in life, of the suddeness of the judgment, of the terror of the plague? They pursued their ghastly duties of clearing the steamer and rifling the dead with unmoved hearts—and indeed with no little smug satisfaction.

In the East, sudden death is no strange visitor.

SADI GRANT.

Digitized by Google



A ROMANCE OF LAND AND SEA.

By William Westall.

Author of "With the Red Eagle," "The Phantom City," "Nigel Fortescue," etc., etc.

PRINCIPAL CHARACTERS.

Major Wyvenhoe, commander of an expedition which went out from England to help the Venezuelans in their struggle for liberty.
Captain Cautley, who is in charge of the ship which took the expedition out.
John Ready, the servant of Wyvenhoe.
General Arismendez, ex-Governor of Pampatar and Vice-President of the Venezuelan Republic.
Don Iago Santleo, a friend of Wyvenhoe.
General Urdenetta, Governor of Pampatar, a bitter enemy of Wyvenhoe.
Bolivar, Supreme Chief of the Venezuelan Republic.
Tamanac, an Indian Cazique, and great friend of Santleo.
Master Wyvenhoe, the leading man at Manoa.

CHAPTER XXI.

Rosalind's Answer.

I awoke next morning, happy and refreshed, and able to assure my host in reply to his courteous inquiry as to how I had slept, that I had not enjoyed so long and sound a sleep since I landed in Venezuela.

Nothing had disturbed me, neither the howlings of wild beasts, the barking of dogs nor the buzzing and biting of mosquitoes.

"That is because there are none," said he. "They don't breed here, it is too breezy for them. Our dogs are kept up at nights, our cocks do not crow before dawn, and we have neither wild beasts nor venomous snakes."

"What a favoured spot! I understand now why those Englishmen settled on this mountain. After their wanderings it must have seemed to them as it seems to me, a veritable paradise."

The judge smiled complacently, and I perceived that by praising Manoa I found my way to his heart.

"And as it seems so it is; at any rate, as much as any place here below can be," he said emphatically. "Where can you find a sweeter air, a finer climate or a more delectable prospect. Sickness is almost unknown. Manoeros live many years, and when their time comes they die of old age."

"You have no doctors, then?"

"Two or three of our people are skilled in bone setting, wound dressing and a knowledge of simples, the which, and water from the cold spring, are the only physic we use."

"Any lawyers?"

"None, thank Heaven, and very little law."

"What a fortunate folk! Hardly any sickness, lives easy and long, no mosquitoes, no lawyers, therefore no dissensions, and I am sure, very few troubles of any sort perhaps none. There is no place like Manoa."

The judge's face darkened, and I feared that I had said something which had better been left unsaid.

"You are right, there is no place like Manoa, and as it pleases you so well I hope you will make it your home for a long while," he observed after a moment's hesitation, in a way which showed that, though I might inadvertently have reminded him of something he would rather have forgotten, he had not taken offence.

We had breakfast under a tree in the garden. The ladies graced the repast with their presence and everything was delightfully simple. The spoons were of bone, the cups of horn, crockery was conspicuous by its absence; but the coffee and milk were delicious, and for the first time since I left England I tasted fresh butter.

I protested with truth that I had never enjoyed a breakfast so much, and was rewarded for my praises with bright looks and enchanting smiles.

Our talk was of the old country and Europe, as to which my entertainers could not hear enough. Rosalind questioned me about my family, and when she learnt that I had neither father nor mother, sister nor brother, said I must be very lonely, and looked as though she were sorry for me.

"Maybe our kinsman has a wife," quoth Beatrice, who was as impulsive as a child and blurted out whatever came into her head.

"Not yet," I said, thinking how narrowly I had escaped having one, and mentally comparing Araminta with Rosalind I need hardly say to the latter's disadvantage.

"That is a pleasure to come," remarked the judge.

"A pleasure to come," I repeated, glancing at Rosalind, whose eyes by the merest chance, and for a fleeting moment, met mine.

"On your return to England, for which I am sure some fair maid is anxiously waiting," put in Beatrice.

"Nothing of the sort. There is no maid in England for whom I care a pin or who cares a pin for me," I returned, perhaps more warmly than the occasion warranted.

"Maybe there is one somewhere else who cares for you. The world is wide, kinsman," rejoined the girl with a merry laugh.

"Don't heed her, she is in a mischievous humour and talks nonsense," said the father. "Would it please you to

Digitized by Google

take a ride this morning and see something of the mountain?"

"It would please me vastly, especially if the ladies would favour us with their company."

"Oh, yes, let us go," exclaimed Beatrice.

"It is impossible for us all to leave the house, but thou and Rosalind may go," said Mistress Wyvenhoe.

"If you and Diana will go next time, else were it not fair," replied Rosalind.

"Very well, let it be so. Now run away and get ready."

"And I will see to the saddling of the horses," added the judge.

We had an agreeable ride. The horses were good and, though the equipments would not have passed muster in Rotten Row, they served. The young ladies rode well, as well they might, seeing that they had begun riding bareback almost before they could walk.

Beatrice was in high spirits, full of talk and laughter, now and then challenging us to race and going off at a gallop, Rosalind quiet and occasionally pensive.

I tried to draw her out, and found that I could always do so by talking of England and Wyvenhoe Court, themes of which she never tired and to which, however we might begin, we always returned. Yet she loved Manoa dearly, and passionately admired its superb scenery.

"You have nothing like that in England," she exclaimed pointing to Mount Lofty, as a mass of crimson cloud, floating slowl westward, revealed the glorious peak, crowned with his diadem of snow.

"Nothing; we have no mountains twenty thousand feet high, and Lofty must be that at least. Who gave him that name?"

"Our English forefathers. Nobody has ever got to the top, though many have tried."

"You don't know, then, whether it is an extinct volcano?"

"An extinct volcano! Why should it be an extinct volcano?"

"Because in the Andes, I am told, there are many volcanoes, extinct and otherwise, and is not that smoke rising from the summit?"

"Surely not; only a trailing cloud, or the steam of melting snow. Whence could smoke come?"

This suggested the tremor of the night before, though as it had not occurred to me that there could be any connection between them, I don't know why it should have done, and I asked Rosalind whether she had felt anything.

"Yes, and so did we all," was her answer. "It is caused by the swelling of the river, and of late hath happened oftener than usual. Why, I know not. But pray speak not of it to my father. It would only add to his disquiet, and just now he hath cares enough."

"I am sorry for that, and shall of course do as you wish. Is he apprehensive of danger from these vibrations?"

"Nay, why should he be? He does not like them to be talked about, that is all, and were there naught else we should not have a care."

"Cares at Manoa! I thought you were all as happy as the day is long."

"So we ought to be and so, not long ago, we were. But now——" and then with an air of embarrassment she stopped short.

"Do not tell me anything you think you had better not," I said gently, "only as you are good enough to call me kinsman, regard me as a friend whom you may implicitly trust, and who will be only too glad to serve you and also your father, in whatever way he can and you may desire."

"Thank you, kinsman, I will," she answered frankly, and as we were just then joined by the judge, who had stopped to give some directions to an Indian labourer, our colloquy ceased. Beatrice was a long way ahead.

Had Rosalind been an ordinary girl her candour and unreserve after so short an acquaintance would have shown

A young man accosted us, and was introduced to me as Master Antony Goring.

both a want of modesty and sense. But she was not an ordinary girl.

Of a frank and open nature, free from self-consciousness and ignorant of the conventions of polite society, she had no more knowledge of the world or taint of worldliness than an infant.

Moreover, the poor child (foolishly enough), looked on her English "kinsman" as in some sense a superior being, and I on my part, attracted by the comeliness of her looks and the sweetness of her disposition, had spared no effort to make myself agreeable to her.

Rosalind's pathetic reference to her father's troubles touched me deeply, perhaps all the more so because of its vagueness, and her reluctance to define them. Had I suspected that I might be, in some sort, the cause, my concern would have been still greater.

I thought we were going to ride all round Manoa, but the judge said that would be a day's journey, so we went no further than the track, the only way, in addition to the ladder, by which it was possible to go up or down the mountain, and the only point where the sides were not absolutely sheer.

A wide rift it was, deep and steep, which a sailor, a chimney-sweep, or a cragsman might scale, yet in its natural condition quite impracticable for amateurs, or any quadrupeds less sure-footed than goats. But by cutting paths in some places and throwing bridges across the chasm

Digitized by Google

at right-angles to its course in others, a serviceable, albeit difficult, road had been contrived.

"That is the way the ladies go, I suppose?" said I.

"Ladies and four-legged things," replied the judge laughing. "We call it the ladies' ride."

"How did they manage when the path was blocked?"

"That was before my time. I suppose they had to abide where they were. The way by the ladders is much quicker."

"How about going down? Ascending is bad enough, but descending must be both dangerous and slow."

"Not when you are used to it. We don strong leather gauntlets and leggings and slide down. It is only a matter of a few minutes, whereas by the ladies' ride you cannot descend under an hour. You see how secure we are. We have only to pull up the ladder and block the path to make Manoa as inaccessible as the top of Mount Lofty."

"So you could stand a long siege?"

"A siege of Manoa would be a vain thing. So long as the mountain stands, and our people are true to themselves no missile can reach us, no foe hurt us, and as you have seen it produces everything we need, with a little labour. Nevertheless, we would rather keep foes at a distance, for if the mountain were turned into a prison we should no longer be free men."

As the judge said, I had noted the marvellous fertility of the mountain. It was an undulating table land, the greater part under cultivation, producing luxuriant crops, and abounding in rich pastures. The houses, too, were good of their kind, and the folk who lived in them looked prosperous and contented.

But they were of a different type from the Wyvenhoes, the Crosses, the Santleys, and others whom I had seen in the village and elsewhere; darker skinned and distinctly more Indian in feature and general appearance.

Santley inquired whether the judge had said anything about his troubles.

As I suspected at the time and afterwards learnt Manoeros were of two classes, I might almost say of two races. Certain of the descendants of the English settlers being more prosperous and fastidious than the others had chosen their wives with greater care, preferring those who were the most English-looking and occasionally intermarrying with Spanish Creoles.

This practice became a tradition and the families who observed it developed into an aristocracy of birth, wealth and ability. Nevertheless the results were not always uniform.

Now and then an aristocratic baby came into the world with a red skin and Indian features, and plebeian children were occasionally born who might have passed for the offspring of European parents.

On our way homeward the judge informed me that he meant to invite some friends to supper, with a view to my making their acquaintance, thereby reminding me that before we separated on the previous day my compadre had asked me to call at his father's house, a duty which after dinner and siesta I hastened to fulfil.

The house was in the same style as the judge's, though not so large, and the master of it a fine old gentleman with a wife as hale as himself. He had a grand manner and gave me a cordial welcome, saying how pleased he was that his son James and myself had become such good friends, and thanked me for the kindness I had shown him and the help I had given him.

To this I answered that the obligation was very much on the other side, and that without his son's help I should not have been alive, which seemed greatly to please him. As was to be expected, he asked many questions about England, and was very proud of his English lineage.

"I was born in 1740, when my father was forty years old," he said, "and his grandfather was the son of Paul Santley, one of the adventurers."

"Who came from Ware, in Hertfordshire," I added.

"How do you know that?" he asked.

"His name and birth-place are set down in the narrative of my ancestor, Gilbert Wyvenhoe, of which you may have heard. They were neighbours and friends."

"James told me about the narrative yesterday, and it is pleasant to think that we, too, are friends, for my son's friends are mine, and that our ancestors were also friends strengthens the tie," said Master Santley heartily, and we again shook hands.

When the visit was over, Don Iago, as I still liked to call him, bore me company. He seemed thoughtful, looking not nearly so bright as he ought to have done, seeing that he had only just arrived home after a long absence, and found his kinsfolk in good health.

"You seem dull to-day, is there aught amiss?" I asked him.

"Nothing amiss with my people. My father, though he was ailing when he sent Tamanac in search of me, is now quite well, also my mother, so are my sisters, and happily married, too."

"All the same, there is something on your mind, my friend, or you are not feeling well."

"Oh, I am well enough."

"You mean there is something on your mind?"

"I do. Things are not as they were when I went away. Has the judge said anything?"

"He has said a good deal; nothing, however, that suggests a cause for your pensiveness."

"He appears quite contented then. You did not gather that he had any particular cause for worry just now?"

"Not exactly, though when I come to think of it, he made two or three remarks that might be construed in that sense. On the other hand, he protests that Manoa is an earthly paradise and if all who live here are not happy the fault lies with themselves."

"He is right there, and I think nearly all are happy. But you must know that the judge is so devoted to Manoa

Digitized by Google

that he will let nobody find fault with it but himself, and when matters are not quite to his liking, takes it very much to heart. However, as he has not been more explicit I think I had better follow his example—for the present."

"Manoeros seem to revel in the mysterious. For a long time you were a mystery, now there are other mysteries," I said, smiling.

"You know why I had to be mysterious. I could not help it. But I have no liking for mysteries and secrets between friends; they are incompatible with true friendship, and if you really wish it I will tell you what is troubling us. Only I would liefer the judge told you. If, however, he does not, I shall."

"Do as you think best, my dear Santley. This is no business of mine and I want to know nothing that you don't want to tell me."

On which he changed the subject and we presently met a young man who accosted us and was introduced to me as Master Antony Goring. He looked like a full-blooded Indian and his countenance and manner did not impress me favourably.

"He comes of a good family, but his father lost caste by marrying an Indian woman, who was not a Huaco, and he resembles her both in looks and disposition," remarked Santley as we resumed our walk. "We neither like him nor his family, with whom we are barely on speaking terms. It had given mortal offence, and for other reasons been impolitic not to introduce you, but don't tell your kinsman, he cannot abide him."

At the judge's garden gate we parted, Santley preferring not to enter, but we met again in the evening, he and his father being among the friends whom the judge had bidden to supper. It was a large gathering and I was greatly in request, being asked so many questions about England that in the end I had to give a sort of lecture, which, instead of contenting my audience led to further questioning, and it was past midnight when the party broke up.

I esteem it a great privilege to be an Englishman and am proud of my country, but before I had been at Manoa many days I was heartily tired of it as a subject of conversation. But I did not tire of my host and his family; he was always genial and they were always kind, and all made so much of me that knowing I should not be able to return their hospitality I began to feel positively uncomfortable and almost wished they would be less kind.

We made excursions nearly every day, riding sometimes round the mountain, now and then descending to the plain, where we had good sport, hunting leopards and wild pigs. But unless Rosalind were one of the party (and she did not go a-hunting) I never felt happy.

From the first I had taken a strong fancy to her, and fancy ripened rapidly into love, such love as I had never felt before. I laughed when I compared my penchant for Araminta with my passion for Rosalind.

Whether Rosalind returned my love I could not tell, and short of asking her had no means of ascertaining. That she liked me was obvious; she made no secret of it but I feared it was more the liking of a sister for an elder brother—a very much elder brother—for she thought me rather old—than the feeling which I would fain have had her entertain for me.

Also (and this increased my doubts) her manner to me at times was marked by a certain reticence and timidity, which was all the more perplexing as at the beginning of our intercourse it had been the reverse.

Had her self-consciousness been awakened, and if so what did it portend? Was it a good sign or a bad?

And there were other considerations that made for perplexity. Rosalind could become my wife and accompany me to England only by separating herself from her kindred for ever. The distance was so vast, the journey so hard, for a woman well-nigh impossible, that returning to Manoa would be almost, if not altogether, out of the question.

Between it and the Atlantic stretched two thousand miles of forests, llanos, mountains and swamps; between it and the Pacific towered the Cordillera of the Andes, with their raging torrents, their devastating storms and the terrible paramoes, and on the other side we might encounter

"Is anything troubling you?"

dangers still more formidable—rebels, royalists and robbers—and never reach the coast, much less England.

Had I the right to ask Rosalind to confront so many perils and make so great a sacrifice, and would her parents consent to lose her almost as utterly as if she were to die?

There was an alternative. I might settle in Manoa; but that would mean an end to the Wyvenhoes of Wyvenhoe Court, and I had interests at home which I could not abandon without a dereliction of duty.

Moreover, as there was no way of getting supplies from England, I should have to become a pensioner on my father-in-l w's bounty, to which, even though he were willing, I could never consent.

The more I pondered these things the more I was perplexed, and after long thought I concluded that there was nothing for it but to cease worrying (if I could) and put my trust in Providence and the good fortune which hitherto had served me so well.

Some time, a month or more after our previous conversation on the subject, Santley inquired whether the judge had said anything about his troubles and their cause.

"Not a word; I am as much in the dark as ever," was my answer.

"Then I will," he said, and told me rather a long story of which this is the purport:

Digitized by Google

Manoa was ruled by a council of seven, which, albeit once on a time chosen by popular vote, had become virtually self elective, vacancies as they occurred being filled up by the members themselves. Like other similar bodies, the Manoan council was dominated by its strongest man, in this instance Judge Wyvenhoe, who had so firmly established his authority that for many years he had ruled and ruled well, with almost despotic sway. But latterly, for reasons which it is unnecessary here to set forth, an opposition had arisen, led by Philip Goring (father of Antony) which threatened the judge's ascendancy and boded ill for the peace of the community, both of them having partizans outside whose rivalry was as bitter as their leaders', and my kinsman was too masterful either to yield or temporize; he would be autocrat or nothing.

Meanwhile, whatever he proposed was opposed. A majority of the council had been against my coming, alleging that to allow strangers to visit Manoa was unwise and contrary to all precedent. But the judge would not listen to them, and himself went to fetch me, thereby giving great offence, and still further embittering his enemies.

This vexed me exceedingly, and so I told Santley, adding that rather than cause strife I would leave the mountain.

"No, no, my dear friend, you must do nothing of the sort," said he. "You are not answerable for the strife. The council opposed your coming merely to thwart the judge, and your going away would grieve him as much as it would gratify your enemy. So dismiss the idea from your mind and, above all, make no mention of it to your kinsman."

To this I consented, though with reluctance, being far from sure that by prolonging my stay I should not add to Master Wyvenhoe's cares, and had there been no Rosalind I should have sought a pretext for taking my leave.

But no long while after my talk with Santley something happened which put an end to my indecision and brought matters to a crisis.

As I have already hinted, siesta was an institution in Manoa. After the midday dinner everybody disappeared, presumably to indulge in a nap. I generally betook myself to the garden and laid me down in a hammock, under the shade of a magnolia tree, sometimes to sleep, oftener to smoke.

One fine day, when I was thus occupied, I heard a light footfall, and, turning my head, espied Rosalind slowly pacing along a side walk, bordered with great rose trees.

I slipped from my hammock and joined her.

"You look pensive," I said. "Is anything troubling you?"

"Nothing worth mentioning. I was only thinking."

"About what?"

"Are your gardens at Wyvenhoe Court anything like this?"

"That is only an evasion," I returned, laughing. "You were not thinking about Wyvenhoe Court."

"Never mind, tell me about the gardens."

Which I did at some length, for they were old and quaint and delightful, and merited a better description than I could give of them.

"I should like to see them, they must be very beautiful," said Rosalind wistfully.

An irresistible impulse seized me; doubts, dangers and difficulties went to the winds.

"Go with me to England and they shall be yours," I exclaimed.

Rosalind regarded me with a bewildered stare.

"Go with you to England! What?" she stammered.

"As my wife. I love you, Rosalind, I love you."

"You love me! Me, a foolish girl, who has never been away from Manoa. It is not possible, it would be too much——"

"It is more than possible, my Rosalind. You are all the world to me. But can you love me?——"

"Yea, kinsman. I love you with all my heart. I began to love you that day you came to our house and were so kind."

"My darling, you don't know how glad you have made me," I said putting my arms round her. "But do you know what going to England means? The way is long, the dangers are great, and it is so far away that you might never see Manoa again. Think well before you decide."

"I have decided. I love Manoa much, but I love you more. As Ruth said to Naomi, so say I to you: 'Whither thou goest I will go, and where thou lodgest I will lodge; thy people shall be my people and thy God my God.'"

"And may God bless you, darling," I murmured, drawing her closer to me and gazing enraptured into her sweet eyes, bright with happiness and love.

"Oh, kinsman, what was that?" she exclaimed, starting back in affright.

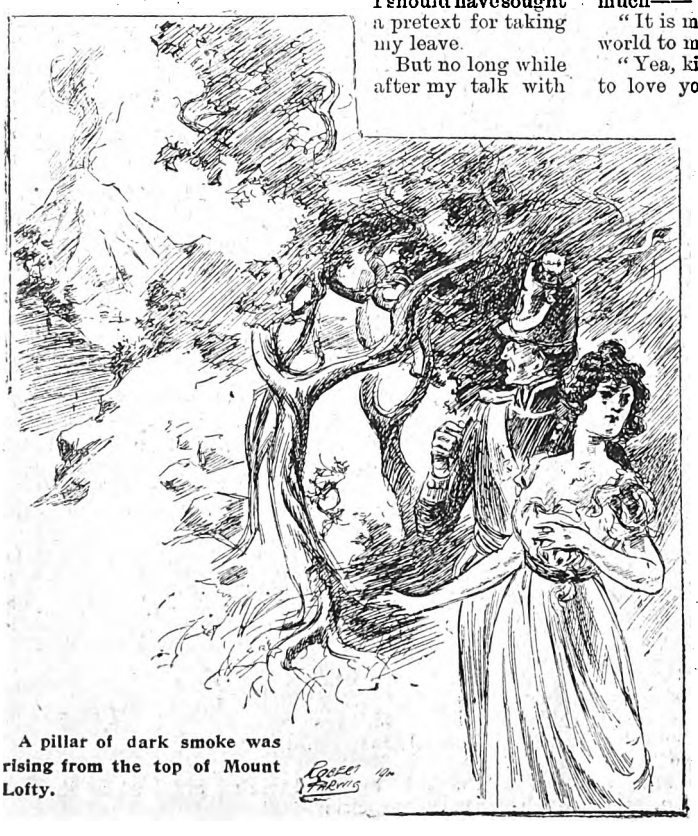
The ground was trembling under our feet.

"Nothing to be alarmed about, only the river," I said with feigned indifference.

"The river again, oh that river!" murmured Rosalind, clinging to me nervously. "Despite what my father says I sometimes think——"

Another trembling, longer and more marked than before arrested the words on her lips. I looked towards the Cordillera. A pillar of dark smoke was rising from the top of Mount Lofty into the cloudless sky and my heart grew heavy with a nameless dread.

(To be concluded.)



A pillar of dark smoke was rising from the top of Mount Lofty.

Digitized by Google

SHORT STORIES ABOUT GHOSTS.

We devote, every week, two pages of *Short Stories* to pithy, humorous anecdotes similar to those which appear in these columns. A prize of £1 1s. will be sent to the reader who submits the best storyette this week, and a copy of "Jock's Ward," by Mrs. Herbert Martin, to each of those whose attempts are used. The anecdotes may be either original or selected; in the latter case the source *must* be stated. The prize of One Guinea offered for the best Storyette in this competition has been won this week by Mr Thomas Riley, 178 Horton Grange Road, Bradford. Attempts this week must deal with Stories about CAMELS, and must reach the Storyette Editor, *Short Stories* Office, Henrietta Street, Strand, London, W.C., by Monday, November 19th. Post-cards only, please.

Quite Enough.

LANDLORD: "Good-morning, sir; hope you enjoyed a good night's rest, sir?"

Traveller: "Yes, thanks; pretty fair."

"Saw nothing of the ghost that is said to appear from time to time in the room you occupied?"

"Ah! yes, I did, though"

"And how did you get rid of the intruder?"

"I offered him a glass of your wine, when he vanished with a gesture of supreme disgust."

"Oh, ah! Well, I never!"

T. A. R.

Have You—

DIBBINS was staying at a strange hotel in Leeds, and retired to rest about eleven.

He had been in bed about half-an-hour, when he was startled by the opening of his bedroom door. Looking up he was horrified to see a figure clothed in white approaching his bedside.

He tried to speak, but could not; his tongue cleaved to the roof of his mouth, and he broke into a cold sweat from head to foot.

A moment more and the figure was at his side, and a voice said:

"Excuse me, sir, but have you got that Ten-Pound Note?"

J. W.

A Somnambulist's Danger.

A FRIEND told us the other day about a little experience he had with a young boy who was addicted to sleep-walking. Of this fact he was not aware, and he was much surprised, on being awakened at night, to see the youth standing at the window in the moonlight. Said the boy:

"I wonder if the water is very deep."

Evidently he thought that he was in a boat on the lake.

Our friend awoke at once to a recognition of the situation and to an awful sense of the emergency.

"It's very deep," he said. "I wouldn't try to swim if I were you."

"Why not?" asked the somnambulist. "It's just as calm as can be."

"But there are sharks in the water."

"I don't believe it," said the boy—the two had been out fishing all day long. "I mean to take a bath."

With that he would have dived out of the window had not his companion managed by this time to creep up and seize him by his night-clothes. C. H. M.

The "Haunted" Man.

THEY were talking of "spooks" at a hotel the other evening, and several stories had been told which made the flesh of the listeners creep.

During a lull in the conversation the quiet man, who sat near the door, spoke up:

"Gentlemen," he said, in sepulchral tones, "the weird narratives I have just listened to have awakened memories which I thought had passed beyond recall. I beg of you not to be sceptical, nor yet think me boasting, when I tell you that for many years I was the most haunted man in creation.

"Scarcely a night passed that I did not see apparitions of all kinds floating before my vision. Elves, demons, witches, and other evil shades were familiar companions of mine, whilst others of my constant ghostly visitors were the victims of foul crimes, whose shadowy fingers would point to the crimson tide oozing from their breasts, and whose eyes seemed to implore me to avenge them ere they vanished again into thin air!

"I was perpetually haunted; in fact, my existence seemed linked to the supernatural. Spiritland was an open book to me. I——"

"But where was this?" inquired his listeners excitedly in a breath.

"It was during the time," he replied, putting on his hat and seizing the door handle, "that I was the proprietor of Professor Bunkum's Unrivalled Ghost Illusion!"

A. V.

All's Fair in Love.

A FARMER, who had lately become a widower, was aroused at midnight by the loud barking of his dog. On going to it, the animal displayed extreme terror, whereupon the farmer took his gun and proceeded to an inspection.

All at once he saw a phantom, clothed in a white sheet, rise behind the hedge.

"Wretch!" exclaimed the phantom, "I am your deceased wife, come from the grave to warn you not to marry Maria Ames, to whom you are making love. The only woman to succeed me is Henrietta Burns. Marry her, or persecution and torment shall be your doom."

This strange address from the apparition, instead of dismaying the farmer, restored his courage. He accordingly rushed to the ghostly visitor, and stripping off the sheet, discovered the fair Henrietta Burns herself, looking extremely foolish.

It is said that the farmer, admiring the girl's trick, has had the banns published for their marriage.

F. W.

Digitized by Google

SOME OTHER LITTLE STORIES.

His Little Joke.

When the phonograph was a newer invention than it is at the present time, Edison put one of the machines in a clock and placed it in a guest-chamber. Being a great lover of a practical joke, he also placed a friend in the guest-chamber one night.

Just as his friend was disrobing, he heard a voice exclaim:

"Eleven o'clock; one hour more!"

It is needless to say that slumber did not descend upon the eyelids of the visitor during that hour. At midnight the voice exclaimed:

"Twelve o'clock; prepare to die!"

This was too much for the visitor, and he sprang from the bed and rushed to the library, where Edison and his friends were waiting patiently expecting his appearance.

The invention was soon explained, and quiet restored.

U. S.

Oh! Mr. Porter.

The other day a train drew up at Chester Station. One of two young ladies alighted, but remained chatting to her friend at the carriage window. As the signal stood at danger, the train did not start for several minutes.

"What are we waiting for?" asked one of the young ladies as a porter came up to them.

"We are waiting till you have finished your conversation, miss," replied the porter.

"Oh, thank you very much, porter; but we will not detain you any longer. Good-bye, Emily, darling."

Just then the signal dropped, and the train started, leaving the young lady on the platform looking in her purse for some small change for the purpose of tipping the obliging porter.

A. H.

Explaining the Business.

A well-dressed lad, the son of wealthy parents, thought it would be quite manly to earn a few coppers for himself by selling newspapers.

He stopped a tattered newsboy in the street and said to him:

"Do you think I should be able to earn money as you do, if I bought some papers and came to this corner to sell them?"

"Why do you want to sell papers?"

"I'm tired of being idle."

"Well," said the philosophic little newsboy, with a serious air, "d'yer think you can hold twenty papers in one hand, lick three or four boys bigger'n yerself with the other hand, while yer keeps two more off with yer feet, and yell 'Football 'dition!' all the time?"

"No-o, I don't," replied the well-dressed boy.

"Then yer no good in the newsboy biz," replied the tattered philosopher. "You'd better get yer people to prentice yer to something light."

A. S.

Why it was Tough.

The other day a gentleman entered a certain restaurant in Regent Street and ordered chicken.

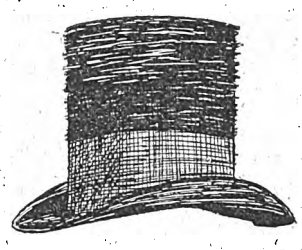
The chicken was evidently tough, for when the waiter came in he beheld the gentleman in a great state of wrath.

"Waiter," he said, "this chicken is very tough."

"Very sorry, sir. That chicken was always a peculiar bird. Why, when we came to kill it we couldn't catch it, so at last we had to shoot it. It flew on the house-tops, and——"

"Ah, by jove, that accounts for it. You must have shot the weather-cock by mistake."

E. C. S.



HERE IS A PICTURE OF KRUGER'S TOP HAT.

Do You Think it will Fit YOU?

Don't you think it would look nice on your drawing-room table, or under a glass case on your mantel-piece? Well, there is no reason whatever why you should not get it. As you probably know, the Editor of *Pearson's Weekly* has bought it, and is offering it as a prize in a simple competition. All you have to do is to send in what you consider the funniest joke you ever heard. It may be either cut from a paper or written up by yourself. In either case you must affix to it a coupon which will be found in the current number of *Pearson's Weekly*.

THE OPENING CHAPTERS

OF Mr. AUSTIN FRYERS'

WEIRD NEW STORY

"THE UNCREATED MAN,"

WILL APPEAR IN

"THE DAILY EXPRESS"

ON SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 17th.

The powerful work of Mr. Austin Fryers is already well known to the readers of "PEARSON'S WEEKLY;" but his latest Romance of a scientist who sets himself to war with nature exceeds all his previous stories in the thrilling nature of its incidents. The grim plot is relieved by a charming love-story. . .

REMEMBER. . . .

The Date—November 17th. The Author—Austin Fryers.

The Title—"The Uncreated Man." The Paper—"Daily Express."

Digitized by Google

THE STAMP PORTRAIT.

THE senior partner at Messrs. Castle and Hayward's, the well-known East India merchants, came out of his private room. accompanied by his cashier.

Both gentlemen looked unusually serious and as the clerks in the busy counting-house looked up and caught the expression on the face of their chief they fell to wondering as to what storm was brewing, or to put it into the terms usually employed "Who's in for a wigging now?"

Just a glance and each individual immediately became a model of industry, until every pen was arrested by the voice of Mr. Anson the cashier, who was standing, with his chief, in the centre of the office.

"Gentlemen," he said, "I regret to inform you that something of a very unpleasant nature has occurred in the office. Last evening I brought from the bank a bag containing notes and gold, which I placed in my desk in the presence of Mr. Castle. This morning I find some of the gold is missing and also two five-pound notes. I very much regret the circumstances which compel me to request each man to lock his desk, place the key on the top, and remain seated in his place until a search has been made. Before commencing the search I have to inform you that at present suspicion is not attached to any one of you individually, but for general satisfaction it has been decided to make this search."

Astonishment was writ large upon the face of the busy bees of Messrs. Castle and Hayward's hive as they complied with the cashier's request. When every desk had been locked and the key placed on the top, Mr. Anson commenced his round, while Mr. Castle surveyed the proceedings from his position in the centre. scanning the faces of his clerks as though he would read their inmost thoughts. There was a variety of expressions. Some looked indignant, as if they resented the imputation cast upon them generally. others seemed inclined to be amused by the affair; one or two wore a look of bored indifference, real or assumed, a few looked grave and serious—a sort of reflection of their chief's expression.

Meanwhile the cashier was going the round of the desks, but when he had completed his task it was found that that cover had been drawn blank, to use a hunting phrase. He rejoined his chief and a whispered consultation ensued. As a result of this the cashier had another announcement to make.

"The search of the desks has not led to any discovery. and it is with extreme regret that I have to ask each of you to submit to a personal search. This is a most unpleasant and painful business, but I think you will all agree. If any man has an objection if he will step out here we shall be glad to hear his reasons, though I must say that I hope none of you will take that course."

There was a momentary buzz of conversation and then as nobody expressed an objection, though many of them looked upon it as an indignity, the search began.

The course of procedure arranged was as follows; each man, when his name was called, left his seat at the desk and walked over to the place where his outdoor garments hung, and after exhibiting the contents of the pockets in the clothes he was wearing, he turned out those in the coats which hung on the pegs. Many of them changed their coats on arriving at the office and as most of them had overcoats with them, the business was a lengthy one. It also caused some embarrassment, and had it not been for the gravity of the affair, the display would have been very amusing.

Pipes, pouches, cigarettes, photos—which were evidently produced with some reluctance—and papers, such were the contents of the various pockets. Still nothing had been discovered, and out of the forty odd clerks, only six remained to be searched.

The next to be called on to submit to the ordeal was James Armstrong. He stepped out with a look of quiet confidence. Pocket after pocket he turned out until he came to his overcoat. One by one the pockets were overhauled until only the inside breast pocket remained.

Inserting his hand he drew forth the contents and then started back with a look of consternation. A certain crisp crackle had denoted the presence of the paper currency, and as he started a small parcel fell from his grasp and struck the floor with a metallic chink.

The search was ended—the culprit was found. The cashier looked surprised and even regretful, while the appearance of James Armstrong might very well be taken to betoken guilt.

The cashier walked over to where his chief still stood and a second consultation followed, after which he again addressed the wondering clerks.

"Gentlemen, you may now resume your labours, but before you do so I am instructed by Mr. Castle to inform you that it is his wish that no mention of this painful business be made outside." With this Mr. Castle and the cashier withdrew to the private room, accompanied by James Armstrong.

When the door was closed, there was more talk than work in the office. The discovery of the missing money in James Armstrong's pocket had come as a general surprise, for, though none would have dared to venture on a guess as to who was the most *likely* to be the culprit, most of them, if asked to name the most *unlikely*, would have named, after themselves of course, James Armstrong.

There were, indeed, one or two of the wilder spirits in the office to whom John Armstrong had given offence by refusing to join them in their recreations, and whom he had ventured to remonstrate with and reprove, who affected not to be surprised and indulged in cheap sneers.

"Another hypocrite unmasked," said one; "I am always suspicious of these professing saints."

This remark, however, was received with evident disapproval, for though there were others who had disagreed with Armstrong, they were too English to gloat over a fallen foe.

Meanwhile a painful scene was being enacted in the inner room.

"Mr. Armstrong," said the chief, "I shall be pleased to hear anything you may have to say, though there is not much that can be said in the face of this discovery."

"Mr. Castle, I can only say, though I cannot

Digitized by Google

blame you if you do not believe me, that I am utterly unable to account for the presence of the money in my pocket."

He would have said more but his emotions overcame him and he broke down.

"James," resumed his employer in a more kindly tone than he had hitherto used, "this discovery came both as a shock and a surprise to me. You have been with us a long time and have served us faithfully and well. I have watched you with considerable interest and had hoped to see you rise. If you were in financial difficulties, had you confided in me and I had found the reason of your difficulties not to be a faulty one I would have advanced you money. You must have been mad, however, to take this, for you must have known that the loss would be immediately discovered. Now, tell me, what led you to commit this folly?"

"I assure you, sir, that I am innocent and know nothing further about it than you already know," replied the clerk.

"Were you the first to arrive this morning?" asked the cashier.

"Thomas Hardcastle, Reginald Shaw and I arrived simultaneously, meeting at the door."

The other two clerks were summoned to the chief's room, and the excitement in the outer office became intense.

"I suppose he is trying to incriminate someone else, now," remarked the man who had indulged in the previous sneer.

Upon inquiry it was found that the three clerks had arrived together as Armstrong had stated. It was also ascertained that, before the arrival of the others, each of the three had, in turn, been left by himself in the counting-house for a short time, while the other two had been in other parts of the building.

Mr. Castle was sufficiently just to Armstrong to inform the other two before dismissing them to their duties, that no attempt had been made by their colleague to implicate them. When they had gone he again turned to Armstrong.

"James, I ask you to make a clean breast of the business and promise you that I shall not deal harshly with you. If you will only confess what made you thus rashly throw away your good character I will retain you in my employ, though you will have to be transferred to the wharf, as it would be unpleasant for all concerned for you to remain here. I make you this offer, because I am loth to think that one who has been so consistent and faithful as you have been during the years of your service here, can be utterly bad. I am inclined to attribute your action to a m d impulse."

Looking his employer steadily in the face James Armstrong replied, "I have nothing to confess, sir."

"Very well," answered Mr. Castle coldly. "In consideration of your previous good character and the fact that the money has been recovered, I shall not take any action against you, beyond, of course, dismissing you from our service."

Turning to the cashier he said, "Mr. Anson, you will pay Mr. Armstrong's salary up to the end of the month and arrange for the appointment of a man to fill the vacancy." With this the senior partner took his hat and coat and left the office, shortly followed by James Armstrong.

On leaving the office James Armstrong went direct to the clergyman whose church he attended and among whose workers he was enrolled. There he poured out the whole story and repeated his protestations of innocence.

The vicar listened sympathetically to the narrative. He had seen much of James Armstrong's inner life, and from his knowledge of him quite believed in his innocence. In assuring the grief-stricken clerk of his belief, however, he also pointed out the difficulty of proving it, and then he made a suggestion.

"I have a brother," said he, "who is engaged in business in Liverpool. He is a kind-hearted man and delights in doing good. With your permission I shall write to him, telling him of your unfortunate position and also of my own belief, and I think it very likely that he may be able to offer you a position in his office. While we are awaiting his reply, which I shall ask him to let me have promptly, you had better come and stay with me."

Armstrong was grateful for this offer. In his trouble, it would have been dreary indeed for him to stay in his lodgings, to say nothing of the agony which he would endure at the thought that the other lodgers would despise him, even if they did not refuse altogether to associate with him. He could not go back to his mother in Devonshire, and the proximity and companionship of the vicar would be a solace to him.

There did not seem to be much doubt in the mind of the Rev. Arthur Best that a place would be found for Armstrong in the Liverpool firm, so the young fellow felt more at ease with reference to earning a living; but the weight of the unjust accusation so overwhelmed him that he went about like one in a dream.

It was just after dinner on the following day, while the vicar and Armstrong were in earnest conversation, that a letter was brought in for the young man. It had been sent on from his lodging, he having informed his landlady that he was staying with Mr. Best.

The envelope bore the imprint of Castle and Hayward; the young fellow saw this at once and tore it open in great haste, his heart beating much more rapidly than usual and his brain in a whirl with the wild hope that the contents of the letter would inform him that a terrible mistake had been made. But a shadow passed over his face when he had opened the sheet of paper; he looked at the handwriting on the envelope, and then dropped both paper and envelope to the ground, and placed his hand before his face to hide the tears of vexation and grief which he could not repress.

"May I look at it?" asked the vicar kindly.

Receiving an affirmative reply in the form of a nod, he picked up the paper. It was a sheet of Castle and Hayward's letter paper, quite blank, with a miniature photographic portrait of Armstrong—about the size of a postage-stamp—pinned to it.

The Vicar then picked up the envelope and looked at the handwriting.

"Do you understand the meaning of this, Armstrong?" he asked. "Do you recognise the handwriting?"

"Yes, sir," replied the young fellow as soon as he could master his emotion. "Only two days ago I gave away the last three photographs I had to fellows in the office. One was to Shaw, with whom I always was on good terms. He has returned it to me in that way, it is his handwriting, and I must take it that he thinks me guilty and will not even keep my portrait."

The vicar scrutinised the postage stamp and made a mental note; he then unpinned the photograph from the paper and mechanically turned it over. He examined the back of the portrait for a few seconds very atten-

Digitized by Google

tively and, putting envelope, paper and portrait into his pocket without a word to Armstrong concerning the result of his examination, he went up to the young fellow and whispered a few words of comfort to him.

"If I had not been a cleryman," mused the Rev. Arthur Best about half-an-hour later, on his way to the City, "I think I should have liked to be a detective. After all, there is just a resemblance between the two occupations; it is true that the detective is chiefly employed in the detection of criminals, but he also tries to prevent the commission of crimes, and the clergyman does that also, only in another way."

The reverend gentleman went straight to the offices of Castle and Hayward, and asked to see the chief partner. His request was granted immediately, and he was shown into Mr. Castle's private room. He remained there for about twenty minutes, which was an unusually long time for an interview with such a busy man; and when he left Mr. Best's countenance looked a little more cheerful.

It was about half-an-hour before closing time when Mr. Castle entered the large room and called out in a preoccupied sort of manner:

"Oh—er—yes, you'll do, Mr. Shaw. Come into my room, please, and bring your pen. I want you to copy something private for me."

Mr. Shaw, surprised and pleased at being selected, sprang from his seat and obeyed the summons. It was a short and curious document which he had to copy; a disjointed sort of affair, as it seemed to him, and contained something about paying a certain Jackson a sum of money without fail. There were three or four sets of figures among the writing.

Mr. Castle seemed to have a good deal of private business on hand just then, for he stayed after hours that night, and the next morning Mr. Hardcastle and Mr. Boulton, quite unknown to each other, were called to the chief's room to copy documents which were in some respects similar to that copied by Shaw. In each case the copyist was requested to keep the contents of the document a profound secret.

In the afternoon the Rev. Arthur Best called again, and, after another lengthy interview, departed in a very cheerful frame of mind. Then Mr. Castle asked Mr. Anson to step in, after which Mr. Boulton was called.

"Mr. Boulton," said the chief suavely, "here is a little memorandum of yours which you have no doubt missed and will be glad to have back."

As he spoke he placed the little photograph of Armstrong on the table, face downwards, in front of the clerk.

"It was discovered, you will be interested to learn, in the folds of the two £5 notes that were put into Armstrong's pocket," continued the chief.

Boulton's face went deadly pale; he glanced swiftly at the chief and the cashier, and then made a bolt for the door.

But as he put his hand on the nob, he was seized by the cashier and the chief touched the electric bell for the porter.

The Rev. Arthur Best made a second call at the offices that afternoon, this second call having been arranged by Mr. Castle.

"Yes, I'm happy to say that we have discovered the culprit, and he has confessed," said Mr. Castle. "Tell Armstrong to come back here to-morrow morning, and we will do what we can to make amends."

Mr. Castle then related what had occurred between the two visits, but it will be better for us to repeat the explanation given by Mr. Best to Armstrong.

Boulton had been betting and was hard pressed for money; he had yielded to the temptation of an unexpected opportunity and had taken the money. Then he became scared at what he had done, and in his anxiety to get rid of the money he had dropped it into the pocket of one of the overcoats hanging near his own, regardless of the consequences to the owner of the coat. He had just done that when Mr. Castle and the cashier entered the room, as above related.

When the notes were unfolded by Mr. Anson, the little portrait dropped out. The cashier had taken it for granted that this was a confirmation of Armstrong's guilt. In thrusting the notes into the pocket, the portrait had got in the folds, as smaller papers sometimes do. He had pinned this portrait to a blank sheet of paper without noticing anything on the back of the photo, and, after having sealed it in an envelope, had given that envelope to Shaw to address. He had concluded that Armstrong would recognise a piece of evidence against himself without explanation.

The vicar had first noted that the postage stamp was a perforated one, and had decided from this circumstance that the letter had been sent by the firm and not by Shaw personally. Then he had observed on the back of the photo a brief pencil note about "Jackson" and "pay without fail."

He had shown these things to Mr. Castle, telling him that it must be one of the three which Armstrong had given away. Mr. Castle determined to test the handwritings and figures of the three clerks and compare them with the words and figures on the back of the photo. He had stayed late in order to examine the books and compare the figures in those also.

When Mr. Best called on the second day, Mr. Castle was able to tell him that he believed the culprit had been detected. He was asked to call again an hour later, when, it was hoped, the whole mystery would be cleared up.

Armstrong went back to Castle and Hayward's the next morning, and received quite an ovation. He received an increase of salary, and his prospects are considered very good indeed.

J. H. PEAT AND GEO. DAY.

DAUGHTER: "Oh, papa, I've just got the most lovely yachting costume you ever saw."

Papa (busily): "I'm glad you like it."

Daughter: "It's too sweet for anything. Now all we need is a yacht.

"AH, but you have a loving husband, Mrs. Simms. I remember before your marriage he said he would move heaven and earth for you."

"I remember; but now that we are married he won't even condescend to move the dresser so that I may sweep beneath it."

"TWENTY TEAZER."

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN?

EVERYBODY seems to be trying to find out. We will tell you all about it in good time. Meanwhile a cheque for a guinea will be sent to the person from whom we receive the best four-line verse, the last two words of which shall be "Twenty Teazer." The verses may be humorous or serious, just as competitors like. All attempts should reach the "Teazer Editor" by Monday, November 19

Digitized by Google

The Salamander Powder Swindle.

A COMET SCARE.

GOOLEY took up the morning paper, drew a chair to the table and prepared for breakfast. The cruet served for a paper rest, as he deftly scalped an egg and scanned the news as an aid to digestion.

He had no fixed pursuit, belonging to that class who live on their wits if they possess any, if not they steal from someone else. Gooley was a human shark who preyed on his fellow man. For the last few months his banking account had looked ill—no new thing. He had prescribed for it before and meant to do so again, but it would want a strong tonic this time.

Suddenly he became interested in the paper. It was a line in large type. He read again, "The Destruction of the World by Fire." Then followed a prediction by that eminent man, Professor Biglie, stating how a comet would come into contact with the earth on November 7th, 1900, and how the earth would be destroyed with every living thing.

It was not the fear of a roasting—he expected a hot quarter—that worked on Gooley, but a sudden idea, a grand scheme. In fact, a fortune was staring him in the face. So brilliant and comical was the idea that he gave a wild whoop, jumped on to his feet, clapped his hands and laughed. It was not a laugh pleasant to the ear, but such a one as an enemy would favour you with after scoring a point.

Folding the paper he placed it in his pocket and left the house. A few minutes' walk brought him to a building where numerous brass plates were arranged. Mounting the stairs he knocked at a door bearing the inscription:

"Henry Clarke, Financial Agent."

A voice from within said:

"Come in."

Gooley entered, and the occupant rose from his chair.

"How do, Fred? What in the name of fortune brings you out at this early hour?"

Gooley handed him the paper.

"Read that, Henry, my boy."

Henry read, and exclaimed:

"Well, you don't mean to say you believe that; besides, you are too thick skinned to frizzle much."

"Frizzle be hanged," cried Gooley. "Don't you see a gold mine there, the biggest thing we've struck?"

Clarke sat down, and pointed to a chair, saying:

"Fire away, I'm all attention."

"In the first place," said Gooley. "do you think the B.P. can be made to swallow that prediction?"

Clarke rapped the table before speaking, then said:

"A good percentage probably will, but it will have to be kept before them and strengthened from other sources."

Gooley smiled.

"That's my idea entirely."

After a long talk and much jotting down on paper, the skeleton of a big scheme was built up.

A few days later Gooley made another visit to Clarke's office. Spreading some papers on the table they were soon at work.

"If only the nervous ones take the bait," said Gooley, "there's a fortune for us."

"Yes," answered Clarke, then after a pause, "I suppose you got those cuttings out for the papers?"

"That's all seen to. Biglie's prediction is now appearing in all papers of note."

Clarke nodded, saying:

"Well give the B.P. about a week to digest it, then for our second move, How does it read?"

Gooley opened a notebook and read:

"Doomed Humanity. According to Professor Biglie and other eminent men it would seem that some terrible catastrophe is threatened on Nov. 27th, 1901. All seem agreed that the comet Ceila will come into collision with the earth at three in the afternoon on the date men-

Digitized by Google

tioned. Should this prove to be correct then humanity will for a certainty be destroyed. We are apt to smile at modern prophets, but strange and ominous are the writings of an old German seer. These have recently been discovered in a German monastery and bear the date July, 1783. There are many prophecies in quaint verse, most of these have been fulfilled. We have translated the following:

"A year, its value ten,
End of century. List: all men.
For when the Archer, Sol doth see.
Alas! Alas! humanity.
A fiery comet here appears.
It comes in haste, the earth it nears,
A scorching heat; a dying wail,
All perish by its fiery tail.

"This clearly points to November 1900. 1+9+0+0 =10, the value of the year. The Archer is the Zodiacal sign Sagittarius, and Sol, the Sun, enters this sign about the 1st day of November.

"An old proverb states that 'Prevention is better than cure.' We agree with this and think it would be well for some of our scientific men to turn their attention to this threatened calamity, and though it may not be needed, the watchword should be 'Ready; aye, ready.' With care and forethought, something might be done to mitigate the evil."

"Capital, capital," exclaimed Clarke, "that should fetch them."

"It's not a bad leader for the next move," said Gooley proudly.

Clarke consulted a calendar, looked up, and said:

"All the baiting must be done with by the end of next month."

"That will give us nearly two months to catch and land the spoil," remarked Gooley with a laugh as he rose to his feet.

A fortnight later they met again, and Gooley read a copy of the third and last notice to appear in the papers.

Clarke took a cigarette and prepared to act the critic.

"The Comet Ceila Defied. Messrs. Sharpe and Gullem have, for last three years, been endeavouring to devise a means whereby clothing can be made fireproof. After much search, experiment, and large expense, they have met with success. This coming on the eve of the threatened catastrophe from the fiery element points to the Hand of Fate, as having chosen Messrs. Sharpe and Gullem as the Saviours of Humanity. Their discovery consists of a powder, so prepared that when dissolved in water it will make any fabric saturated therewith fireproof. This preparation is put up in boxes. Small size, 5s.; large, 7s. 6d. Full instructions with each box. Address: Salamander Powder Company, Dupe Street, E.C."

Gooley finished reading, and looking across at Clarke, said:

"How's that, will it fetch them?"

"Yes; you are a genius, my boy. What a pity you are not a writer for patent medicines."

"Chuck it," said Gooley, "we've got to move now. Just hand your share over to pay for the ingredients for that powder."

"Ha, ha!" laughed Clarke. "One ton chalk, and quarter ton carbolic, just to give it a chemical odour."

Taking a pen he asked the amount required and handed a cheque to Gooley.

"Thanks. I suppose the water will be the only fireproof thing about it, but you can safely bet it will never be tested by Ceila," remarked that worthy.

A popular 11 o'clock lunch

especially in cold weather, is a "cup of hot Bovril." It not only warms and stimulates but also nourishes, sustains and invigorates the system, fortifying it against the attacks of disease and the inclemencies of the weather. To the outdoor man, battling with the elements, it is peculiarly acceptable; to the indoor worker it is a no less beneficial vitaliser and nourisher; to the homekeeper, tired with the care and responsibilities of house duties, it is a comforting and refreshing sustainer.

BOVRIL

Digitized by Google

All preparations were made, and orders came pouring in. The B.P. took the bait, and Salamander Powders were the rage. The perpetrators of the swindle were nearly suffocated with stamps and postal orders.

Never in history had a prediction been known to take such firm hold. Revival meetings were held in the theatres and music-halls. Laughter and pleasure were things of the past. Brewery shareholders began to look serious. The asylums were overcrowded with the insane, and business generally was paralysed.

The scenes in London can best be described from the writings of those who were in the Metropolis on the seventh of November when the prediction was expected to be verified.

"A dull morning, the sky clouded and a drizzly rain. Business at a standstill. Large crowds are gathered in the public squares listening to the evangelists and members of the various religious bodies. It is plain that something unusual is afloat. Serious countenances everywhere. The silence is oppressive. As three o'clock approached, men were seen to stagger and fall in the streets, their hearts unable to stand the strain."

Again: "The public baths in all parts of London were used for dipping clothing. Families combined and placed their Salamander Powders together, thus turning a bath into a huge dipping tank. A walk through the streets soon convinced me that all the wash tubs in the city had been called into service. All classes of clothing were undergoing the fire-proof treatment. In some cases such was the haste that women dipped children and clothing together."

From another: "Placards were posted all over the city drawing attention to the value of previous predictions, and intreating the people to use common sense, but to no purpose. The nation had decided that it must pass through this fiery ordeal and reason was thrown aside. The railway stations were crowded with those who wished to get near their distant friends to face the danger together. Many lives were lost through crushing and accidents on the line."

Another extract reads: "The ice stores of Messrs. Colder and Colder were broken into, the excited mob thinking the danger would not reach them there. Men forgot their manhood, women and children were trampled under foot, and men fought like beasts for a safe place. Gangs of men entered houses and took what valuables they could lay their hands on. If resisted, revolvers and knives were freely brought into action. Many householders forfeited their lives in the endeavour to save their property. Humanity had gone mad. Here men were on their knees calling for mercy. A few yards away they were looting, cursing, and allowing the worst passions to prevail. When the clocks struck three the fever point was reached. Yet the sky changed not, not even a breath of hot air to herald the approach of Ceila. Millions of eyes were strained to catch a glimpse of that which they prayed not to see. The quarter chime rang out. Someone was wrong. Men looked into one another's eyes, as if seeking the answer to an unspoken question."

A subdued muttering, then a wild shout and the silence was broken. Men, women, and children danced with joy. Listen, why the sudden change? Is the demon approaching after all? No, a fit of passion has now seized the mob. Shouts of vengeance are in the air. Men push their wives aside. Hands are clenched, and an angry light shines in their eyes. It has slowly dawned upon them that they have been fooled. Someone suggests that the clothing that has passed through the fireproof treatment shall be tested. Wood is soon procured and a large fire quickly roars in the square. Clothing is collected and thrown on.

"It burns! it burns!" shout the crowd.

A tall burly fellow waves his hand from a window for silence; this obtained, he speaks:

"Men, you have seen how this so called fire-proof powder has been tested. It is a swindle, it and the whole thing. A put up job to get money out of our pockets. Look at the lives lost, reasons destroyed, and property robbed. Are we as Englishmen going to stand this?"

"No! No!" shout the crowd.

The speaker continues:

"Let us go to this Dupe Street and find them who have fooled us. Dip them in their own fire-proof solution, and test them and it on this fire. Keep the fire going, you fellows."

A roar of applause follows this speech and the crowd hurry in the direction of Dupe Street. Policemen try to bar their way but as well try to stop a flooded river. Reaching Dupe Street they find the birds flown and the doors locked. Stones crash through the windows, the doors are burst open and the furniture smashed. They are mad at the escape of their prey. Nothing can stay them. The broken furniture is piled in the centre of the room and fire set to it. What matter if the innocent do suffer. The rooms of the Salamander Powder Company shall be known no more, those having offices in the same block must put up with the results. Thus one of the largest fires in London was started and witnessed by thousands of the frenzied and baffled dupes of Gooley and Clarke. The fire engines are driven back and only allowed to play on the adjacent property. As the fire gains hold the crowd roar with delight, and only when the building has become a blackened ruin do they disperse.

Where were the originators of this swindle? Thanks to Gooley, had he not seen the consequences of the failure of Biglie's prediction and the exposure of the Salamander Powders, he and his partner must have perished at the hands of their dupes. But as he remarked to Clarke:

"We shall have to slide out of this before the seventh. The best thing to do is to turn all the paper money and stamps into cash and book for America."

Clarke readily assented to this. So with all the money they could lay their hands on, which amounted to a decent fortune, they left Dupe Street. Berths were secured on the *Persalia*, and England's shores lost sight of on the sixth.

GEORGE BRATLEY.

In the Christmas Double Number of "SHORT STORIES" will appear the first of a series of articles entitled "BRITAIN'S WARS." They are written in a very readable style, and the whole will form a complete history of the most important wars in which Britain has been engaged.

Digitized by Google

"WORTH A GUINEA A BOX."

BEECHAM'S PILLS

FOR ALL

BILIOUS & NERVOUS DISORDERS,
Sick Headache, Constipation, Wind and Pains in Stomach, Impaired Digestion, Disordered Liver, and Female Ailments.

SALE OVER SIX MILLION BOXES YEARLY.

In Boxes, 1s. 1½d. and 2s. 9d. each, with full directions.

Prepared only by the Proprietor,

THOMAS BEECHAM, St. Helens, Lancashire.

Sold by all Druggists and Patent Medicine Dealers everywhere.

THE "GEO. R. SIMS"

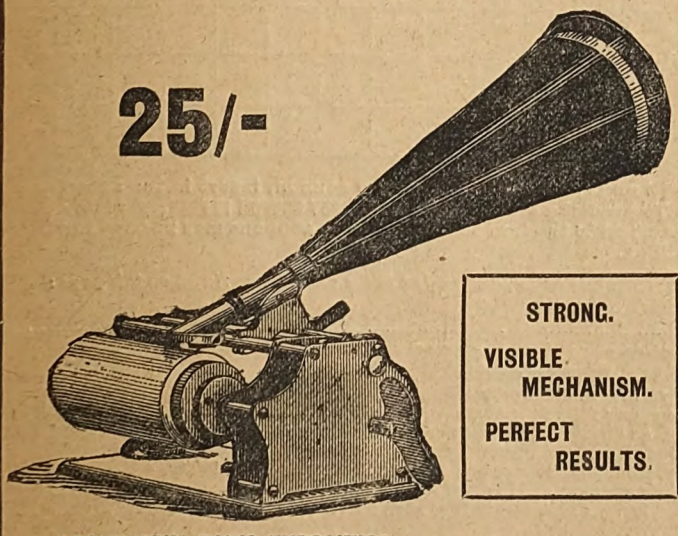
HAIR RENEWER "TATCHO"

LARGE TRIAL BOTTLES TO-DAY. **1s. 6d.**
Sent Post Free in plain package, twenty one stamps.

MRS. BROWN POTTER, whose b autiful hair is the envy of her sex, writes:
"I Use only 'TATCHO.'"

If your hair is falling or failing, you have your remedy. Don't hesitate. Use "TATCHO." The result will surprise you and will be intensely gratifying. It is sold in bottles by Chemists and Hairdressers allover the world, 2/9 and 5/-, or may be had direct in plain sealed package, post free, 2/11 and 5/3. Address:
The Geo. R. Sims Co., 81c Great Queen St., London, W.C.

A GRAPHOPHONE FOR 25/-



25/-

Reproduces Same Records as all Small Cylinder Talking Machines.

Makes Music in the Home, and is an Inexhaustible Source of Amusement and Pleasure.

STRONG.
VISIBLE MECHANISM.
PERFECT RESULTS.

The pleasure in owning a Graphophone is largely increased by being able to make and reproduce your own records. The Graphophone will record your own voice as well as reproduce specially prepared records.

Graphophones are sold from 25s. upwards.

The Toy Graphophone for Children, 8s.

GRAND PRIX, PARIS EXPOSITION.

Send for Catalogue C. to

COLUMBIA PHONOGRAPH COMPANY, Genl., 122 Oxford Street, London, W.

Digitized by Google

PEARSON'S WEEKLY

FOOTBALL SKILL COMPETITION

£100 PRIZE AWARDED EVERY WEEK.

Result of Competition No. 3.

As no one sent in the correct results of all the matches the £100 has been divided among the following three competitors, each one receiving £33 6s. 8d.: D. Hurd, 2 Allan Street, Leith, N.B.; J. Chubb, St. Mary's Villa, Matham Road, E. Molesey; W. Foden, 47 Kennington Road, S.E.

Notts Forest, Stoke, Manchester City, New Brighton Tower, Bristol City, and Millwall won their matches. The remainder were drawn games.

The football matches named below will be played on Saturday, November 17th. To the competitor from whom we receive the correct result of all these matches we will pay the sum of ONE HUNDRED POUNDS. If no competitor gives all the results correctly, the HUNDRED POUNDS will be awarded to the person or persons most nearly correct.

FOOTBALL COUPON No. 6. Matches to be played on Saturday, November 17th.

Matches to be Played on Saturday, Nov. 17th.	Free	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
1 Wolverhampton W. v. 2 Sheffield United																			
1 Derby County v. 2 Blackburn Rovers																			
1 Notts County v. 2 Bury																			
1 Sheffield Wednes. v. 2 Liverpool																			
1 Aston Villa v. 2 Newcastle United																			
1 Preston North End v. 2 Manchester City																			
1 Grimsby Town v. 2 Small Heath																			
1 Newton Heath v. 2 Blackpool																			
1 Leicester Fosse v. 2 Burnley																			
1 Tottenham Hotspur v. 2 Bristol Rovers																			

The clubs engaged in each match are numbered 1 and 2. To fill in the above coupon, insert in the space provided the number of the club selected to win. To predict a draw, put X. THE FIRST COUPON IS FREE. A penny stamp must be inclosed for each coupon used in addition to the free one. Nine extra coupons may be used for Sixpence, and eighteen extra coupons for One Shilling.

I send in this coupon as a competitor for the prize advertised in this paper, and subject to the conditions printed on this page:

Name and address.....

THINGS TO REMEMBER.

1. Coupons may be sent either from "Pearson's Weekly" or "Short Stories."
2. All coupons must reach us not later than Friday, November 16th, first post.
3. Competitors should cut out the whole coupon, score it as directed, put their name and address in the space provided, and send to "COUPON No. 6," Pearson's Buildings, Henrietta Street, London, W.C.
4. All coupons are at senders' risk, and if they go astray, from whatever cause, we do not accept responsibility.
5. Competitors must attach their private address to their attempts. No prize will be sent to any post-office, refreshment rooms, or other places at which letters are called for. Attempts bearing such addresses will be disqualified.
6. In the event of a tie the prize will be divided.
7. Competitors may send in any number of attempts.
8. It must be taken as a condition of the competition that anybody competing therein agrees to abide by the Editor's final decision.

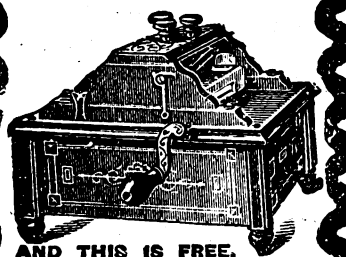
Intending competitors in the above would do well to procure a copy of "The Football Who's Who," which contains valuable information and statistics showing the previous records of the various clubs, and the particulars of the points of about a thousand of the best known players. This book will be found of great service in determining the chances of the teams engaged. It only costs a shilling, and may be obtained of all booksellers, and post free for 1s. 3d. from the Publisher, 17 Henrietta Street, London, W.C.

Digitized by Google

ORCHESTRAL

35/- FOR AN ORGANETTE WORTH £4 4s.

The finest and most unique musical instrument ever made. Worthy a place in every home. Highly praised by all lovers of GOOD music. Built just like a full-sized Organ, with 2 sets of reeds and 3 beautiful stops. Requires no teaching or knowledge of music. **A CHILD CAN PLAY IT** with effect equal to the performance of a talented pianist.



AND THIS IS FREE.

We are presenting FREE to all applicants a copy of our Householder's Money Saving Guide to Jewellery, Watch, Cutlery, &c., buying. Profusely illustrated. Handsomely got up. A wealth of useful household information. Teaches you how to save money in buying. Write for it to-day —at ONCE. It is worth a postcard.

J. M. DRAPER (Dept. 366), Organette Works, Blackburn.

ORGANETTE

VARICOCELE.

Every man suffering from Varicocele and the allied troubles, should send for treatise, describing their Causes, Symptoms, Results, and Successful and Painless Treatment without surgical operation or the use of cumbersome trusses and electrical appliances. Will be sent sealed, post free, three stamps.

S. S. MURRAY,
7 Southampton Row, London, W.C.

WHY BE FAT?

When a lady, who has discovered a simple means of Self-Cure will be happy to send particulars of same to any sufferer from this distressing complaint. Free on receipt of stamped addressed envelope. ADDRESS:

Mrs. TREVOR WELLS,
63 *HIGH HOLBORN, LONDON, W.C.*

HAVE YOU TRIED KEATING'S LOZENGES FOR YOUR COUGH?

ANY DOCTOR WILL TELL YOU "there is no better Cough Medicine."—One gives relief: if you suffer from cough try them but once: they *will* cure, and they *will not* injure your health; an increasing sale of over 80 years is a certain test of their value. Sold in 1½d. tins.

THE MOST NUTRITIOUS.

EPPS'S

GRATEFUL—COMFORTING.

COCOA

BREAKFAST—SUPPER.

POST FREE THREE STAMPS

A Treatise on the Modern and Successful Treatment of Nervous Diseases and Exhaustion, by local absorption.

Fully up to the advanced ideas on the subject.
THE MARSTON CO.,
59 and 60 Chancery Lane, London, W.C.

DRUNKENNESS

CURED. This can be done with or without patient's knowledge. Send me a stamp and I will tell you how. (Send no money.) Address, in confidence, Mrs. C. H. (Room 8), 195 Oxford Street, London, W.

SULPHOLINE LOTION,

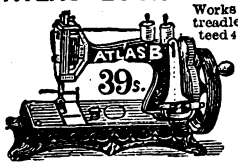
For clearing the skin from Spots, Blemishes, Redness, Roughness, giving a Beautiful Complexion and pleasing appearance.

SHILLING BOTTLES.

TOO STOUT

I was for years; by chance I came across a simple home remedy that reduced me from 17st. to 10st. 12lb., and I will willingly send particulars **free** to any sufferer enclosing stamp. Mrs. L. E. FELL, 195 Oxford Street, London, W.

ATLAS LOCKSTITCH MACHINE.



Works by hand or treadle. Guaranteed 4 years. Equal in quality and size to any machine. To ensure satisfaction, we will send machine on receipt of 5/- P.O. for ONE MONTH'S TRIAL. Balance can be paid 5/- Monthly. Call or write for designs and Samples of work. **39/-**

THE ATLAS SEWING MACHINE CO.,
184s High St., Camden Town, London, N.W.,
63 Seven Sisters Rd., N.; 14 High Rd., Kilburn.

A Magnificent Complexion Assured

By the Free Use of

LILLIE POWDER.

PRICE ONE SHILLING. BY POST 1/2.

The LILLIE SYNDICATE,
3 (S.S.) HENRIETTA STREET,
LONDON, W.C.

Free

From the Antexema Co., 83 Castle Road, London, N.W., if this paper is named, a booklet on the Skin and a FREE SAMPLE of

"Antexema."

It is absolutely the most wonderful Skin Cure that has ever been discovered. It gives immediate relief from itching and burning and cures all skin diseases and every form of

Eczema.

1/1½ BOTTLES, post free for 1/3.

ALL FAT PEOPLE

can safely **Reduce Weight and cure Corpulency permanently** by taking **TRILENE TABLETS** (Regd.) for a few weeks. They are small, agreeable, harmless, and never fail to IMPROVE both HEALTH and FIGURE without Change of Diet. An English Countess writes: "*Your Trilene Tablets act admirably.*"

Send 2s. 6d. to **THE TRILENE CO.**, Sole Proprietors, **66 Finsbury Pavement, London.**

SAMPLES OF TESTIMONIALS.

Princess Liechtenstein writes from Landsberg, Austria: "Pray send your excellent tablets directly." Mr. Canham, 87 Alexandra Road, Norwich: "Tablets cured my wife of extreme stoutness; it has never returned." Mrs. H. Cox, 28 Watnall Road, Hucknall Torkard, writes: "The Tablets reduced me 1½ stone." Mrs. S. Alexander, 102 Dixon Street, New Swindon, says: "They reduced me 28lb., and I am cured." Mrs. Darnley-Smith, of Landscove Vicarage, Ashburton, says: "Tablets have reduced me very much." Mrs. Crossley, of Rose Hill, Torver, Comston, says: "I weigh much less and can breathe so much easier; I am delighted."

2/9 CHALLENGE TO THE WORLD—OUR WARRANTED TIMEKEEPER, 2/9

With a guarantee to keep correct time for three years, will be sent to any address on receipt of P.O. or stamps value 2/9 and three stamps extra for postage. To every purchaser during this month we give with it ABSOLUTELY FREE a strong Mexican SILVER CHAIN. All we ask of you is to show them to your friends, as by doing so you advertise our business.
GENEVA WATCH IMPORTERS,
148 Old Street, London, E.C.

RUPTURE

Gentleman (cured himself) will send Free Particulars of inexpensive self-curative treatment. Stamped address.—(Box 49), 59 Castle Street, Carlisle.

2,500 CYCLES FREE.

Our Lady's or Gent's Link will be sent, free of any charge for delivery, on receipt of 1/6. We are Giving these Machines Away as

A STARTLING ADVERTISEMENT,

feeling assured that after you receive the Bicycle you will recommend our firm and explain to your friends how you obtained it.

1/6 FREE. 1/6

Genuine Offer.

We will send with the Bicycle a nickel silver lamp and pump, and the whole will be packed in wood crate and sent to your address Free immediately you take advantage of this advertisement and the offer we send. Do not hesitate, as by delay you may lose the chance. All orders dispatched in rotation. Send 1/6 P.O. or stamps, and stamped addressed envelope for receipt. ADDRESS—

LONDON DIRECT SUPPLY Co., Dept. S.S.
4 Duke Street, London, W.C.

Digitized by Google

Transposed Letter Competition.

First Prize . . . . £5.
Second Prize . . . . £2.
Third Prize . . . . £1.

CLOSING DAY NOVEMBER 26TH.

LAST LIST.

AGR; ETS; AEMN; ORTY.

MARK YOUR ENVELOPES "BRAIN."

Here are four sets of letters, and prizes will be awarded to the competitors who send in the longest words containing the letters in each of their combinations.

For example, the following words contain the letters IST in their different combinations: fIST, ITSelf, SIT, STIpend, ouTSIde, adverTISe.

CONDITIONS.

1. Write your attempts on one side of the paper only, and post the four lists in an envelope marked "Brain," to reach this office on Monday, November 26th.

2. **All words must appear in HEAVY TYPE in Nuttall's Standard Dictionary, and must be different.** ***Compound words with or without hyphens, and proper names are not available.***

3. The letters of the combinations must either be underlined or put in red ink or capitals in the words in which they occur.

4. In the event of a tie, the prize will be divided.

5. The Editor's decision is final, and competitors must enter on that understanding.

RESULT OF BRAIN GYMNASIUM.

Nos. 241 to 246.

THE prize of £2 has been awarded this week to Miss N. Daley, of 49 Salisbury Street, Liverpool, whose attempt was the first correct one dealt with.

A copy of "The Red Men of the Dusk," by John Finnemore, has been sent to each of the following:

Sergt. H. Hodge, Plumstead.
Thomas H. Howard, Swine, Holderness, East Yorks.
Miss M. Watson, Anerley Road, S.E.
W. Tackley, Willes Road, Kentish Town, N.W.
Rev. G. P. Horne, Newby Wiske, Northallerton, Yorks.
W. J. Cole, Merthyr Tydfil.
Mrs. Berry, Heathfield, Sussex.
R. Gilbert, Cowper Street, Glasgow.
R. Longfield, Kew Road, Richmond.
F. J. Smith, Alpha House, Saxmundham.

THE PRIVATE LIFE OF THE QUEEN.

BY ONE OF HER MAJESTY'S SERVANTS.

With numerous Illustrations. Crown 8vo, cloth. Price 2s. 6d.

Some of the 27 Chapters are:

The Queen Among Children.
The Queen's Fads and Fancies.
The Queen's Fortune and Expenditure.
The Queen as a Housekeeper.
What the Queen Eats and Drinks.

SHORT STORIES ADVERTISEMENT RATES.

Single column, per inch, per insertion	£0 10 0
Double " " "	1 0 0
Full page inside, facing page of matter, either white paper or 2nd or 3rd page of cover, or back page, per insertion	10 0 0
Half-page " " "	5 0 0
Quarter-page " "	2 10 0
Eighth-page " "	1 5 0
Front page, whole " "	12 10 0
" half " "	6 5 0

All spaces above one-eighth of a page are charged at per page rate.

Series discount: 5 per cent. for 13, 10 per cent. for 26, 15 per cent. for 52 insertions.

Black blocks are charged 25 per cent. extra. All advertisements are subject to approval. All copy must be sent in by Noon on Tuesday, Nov. 20th, if intended for the issue on sale Dec. 4th, and dated December 8th. The Proprietors reserve the right to hold over or suspend the insertion of any advertisement without prejudice to other insertions on order. All communications should be addressed to the Advertisement Manager, "Pearson's Weekly" Offices, Henrietta Street, London, W.C.

Printed and published by C. ARTHUR PEARSON Limited, Pearson's Buildings, Henrietta Street, London, W.C.

Digitized by Google

THE John Noble

Model 313.

Tailor designed Reefer Coat and full wide Skirt, in Cheviot Serge, or Costume Coating. Price **10/6** only **10/6** complete. Carriage, 6d. Or the Skirt alone for **5/6**. Carr., 5d.

Model 256.

Made in Costume Coating or Cheviot Serge. Full Tailor Skirt and well-cut Bodice with velvet revers. Price complete Costume, **10/6**. Carriage, 6d. Or the Skirt alone for 5/6; carriage, 5d. Prettily Trimmed HAT (as sketch). **7/6**. Carriage, 5d.

Model 296.

Smartly made Dress in Cheviot Serge or Costume Coating. Bodice trimmed Ribbon Velvet and well lined.

Lengths and Prices:

36	39	42	46	50 in.
10/-	11/-	12/-	13/-	14/- ea.

Carriage 6d. extra.

COSTUMES AND MANTLES FOR LADIES AND CHILDREN

Sent without delay by Parcel Post, safely packed. Satisfaction given or money returned.

PATTERNS SENT POST FREE

of the very durable fabrics in which the Costumes are made:

THE JOHN NOBLE CHEVIOT SERGE, and THE JOHN NOBLE COSTUME COATING, &c., as requested.

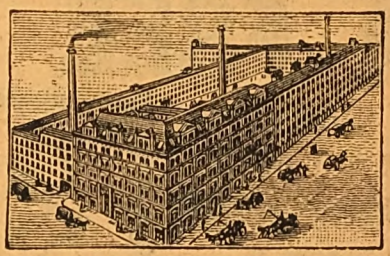
A FULL DRESS LENGTH of either Cloth (6yds. 52ins. wide) for **7/6**. Carriage 8d.

Colours: Black, Navy, Myrtle, Brown, Fawn, Khaki, Grey, and Royal Blue.

Sizes in Stock of Ladies' Costumes are: 34, 36, 38 in. round bust (under arms); Waists, 24, 26, 28 in.; Skirts being 38, 40, 42 in. long in front. Any other size made to measure, **1/6** extra.

MOURNING ORDERS
executed and sent off at one day's notice.

JOHN NOBLE Ltd.,



BROOK STREET MILLS, MANCHESTER.

Model 274.

Tailor designed Sacque Coat in Fawn or Black Beaver Cloth, **8/6** Velvet Collar. Price only **8/6**. Carriage, 6d. Please say size of bust (under arms) when writing.

A LADY'S CAPE.
SPECIAL VALUE.

Model 339.

Lady's Cape, well made and finished in good Black Cloth, **8/6** with collar and front trimmed Black Fur. Length 26 inches. Price only **8/6**. Carriage, 6d.

HANDSOME TOQUES.

As sketch, **6/11** each. Carriage, 6d.

THE
JOHN NOBLE KNOCKABOUT FROCKS FOR GIRLS.

Made in good strong Serge, with long sleeves and pocket. Price **1/6** for 2lin. long in front, and 6d. for every 3in. longer. Carr., 4d.

WINTER DRESS FABRICS.

Homespuns, Fancies, Silk Mixtures, Alpacas, Velveteens, Jacquards, &c., and All-Wool Serges.

The Finest Collection in the Kingdom at specially Moderate Prices.

A LARGE BOX OF PATTERNS

lent to choose from, and sent carriage paid, together with the **New Fashion List** illustrating Special Values in **Children's Costumes, Millinery, Underclothing, Waterproofs, Houselinen, &c.**

Readers will oblige by kindly naming "SHORT STORIES" when writing to

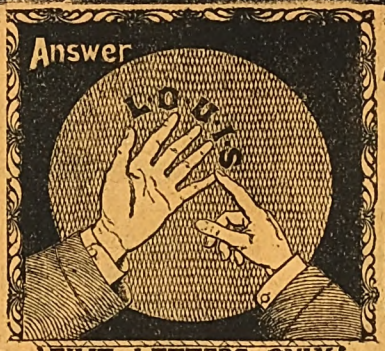
JOHN NOBLE LTD., MANCHESTER.

Dept. No. 46, Brook Street Mills,

Digitized by Google

HOW DO YOU SPELL

VELVETEEN?



FIVE LETTERS ONLY.

Don't Forget this when you buy.

EVERY YARD IS STAMPED

L-O-U-I-S.

ZEBRA

Grate Polish

No Hard Work.

A FREE TRIAL FOR 2/6.

50

FULL SIZE

HIGH-CLASS TABLE REQUISITES

FOR

25/-

(Cash Price 23/-.)

LIST OF CONTENTS.

Prices 1s. bought separate.

	s.	d.
6 Table Knives	3	6
6 Table Forks	5	3
6 Dessert Knives	3	0
6 Dessert Forks	3	9
2 Table Spoons	1	9
6 Dessert Spoons	3	9
6 Tea Spoons	2	0
1 pair Sugar Tongs	1	0
1 Sugar Sifter	1	6
6 Egg Spoons	1	6
2 Salt Spoons	1	0
2 Mustard Spoons	1	0
50	29	0

GOOD ENOUGH FOR A GENTLEMAN'S TABLE.

"4 Albany Place, Montpelier, Bristol.
"Sept. 1, 1900.

"Dear Sirs,—I herewith acknowledge receipt of cutlery received last evening, which gives entire satisfaction. I am, indeed, pleased with same, and shall do all I can to recommend you to my friends.

"Yours truly,
"A. SAVAGE."

"Grimaly House. Brackenboro' Road,
"South Linc.
"August 27, 1900.

"Dear Sirs,—I received the parcel of cutlery, and was very pleased indeed with it, and very good value for the money; it is really surprising how you can do it for the price. Thank you for your prompt attention.—I remain, yours sincerely,

"G. S. WRIGHT."

Any reader of *Short Stories* can have one of these parcels on monthly payments as follows:

You send us 2/6 with your name and address, and we will send one on approbation.

If you approve of it, you send us 2/6 on receipt, and 5/- each month for 4 months, making the full 25/-.

BUT OUR-NETT-CASH-WITH-ORDER-PRICE is 23/- only.

If you do not approve of it, we will refund cash sent if Parcel is returned within seven days.

J. N. MASTERS Ltd., Cutlers, RYE, SUSSEX.

"Roxley Nat. School,
"June 1, 1900.

"Dear Sir,—I am in receipt of your parcel of cutlery, 25/-, and am very pleased indeed with it. I did not expect the thing could be nearly so good at the price, especially on the terms you supply them on. Thank you very much.—Yours truly,

"A. A. PORTER."

PRIVATE.—No one likes going into a shop to buy an "ENGAGEMENT" or "WEDDING RING" or "PRESENT." **YOU** can get one PRIVATELY from us by post in a few hours. Write for our CATALOGUE (128 illustrations) and RING SIZE CARD FREE. Address:

J. N. MASTERS LTD., RYE.

Digitized by Google

ONE WINNER GETS £100 FOOTBALL PRIZE.

SHORT STORIES

A WEEKLY MAGAZINE FOR HOME AND TRAIN

No. 621. FOR WEEK ENDING NOVEMBER 24TH, 1900. [ONE PENNY.

Worry and Low Spirits.

It is astonishing to what an extent we are all liable to occasional ailments. A mental trouble, pecuniary care, or food eaten in the wrong manner or at irregular periods, or food in itself indigestible, may, and often does, give us an "attack of the blues," a Bilious disorder, a disagreeable fit of Indigestion, or a Sick headache. During these periods our energies and strength appear to wane away, so that we are loth to undertake the day's duties and find difficulty in summoning sufficient resolution to carry them out. Besides which our Nerves are disorganised, and minor troubles, otherwise accounted "trifles as light as air," at these untoward periods fret and fume us to a degree out of all proportion to their importance. Everything is indeed jaundiced to our view, so that we fear impending trouble, pecuniary losses—in other words, the black dog "Care" has us for his own, and we anticipate evils for ourselves that happily rarely come to pass.

As a remedy for these and other Stomachic and Liver Ailments we know of no remedy so staunch and true as an old friend whose merits we have investigated and are fully able to indorse, to wit—Guy's Tonic. Many of our readers, we understand, keep this remedy by them for use in case of attack and take an occasional dose to prevent possible Digestive or Liver trouble. Minor ailments are best treated promptly with a remedy, proved like Guy's Tonic, to afford immediate benefit and effect permanent good. Otherwise that which is but a slight ailment may grow into a serious and *chronic* disease. Even also will Guy's Tonic act curatively and restoratively in the more serious phases of Stomachic and Liver disorders. It is pleasant to take, skilfully prepared, and as we have found out by personal inquiries give universal satisfaction to those who purchase it.

Head Pains and Depression Removed.

Mr. T. H. Griffin, of 32 Albert Road, Walthamstow, writes:

"I have already experienced benefit from the Tonic in the partial removal of head-pains and Depression."

Mrs. M. E. Standen, of Acton House, Wiltersham, writes on the 23rd. August:

"I feel it only right for me to let you know the great benefit I and my daughter have derived from taking Guy's Tonic. I have found it all your little pamphlet says. I have recommended it to several of my friends, and shall continue to do so whenever an opportunity occurs."

A new size (Six Ounce) Bottle of Guy's Tonic, price 1s. 1½d., is now on sale at all Chemists and Stores.

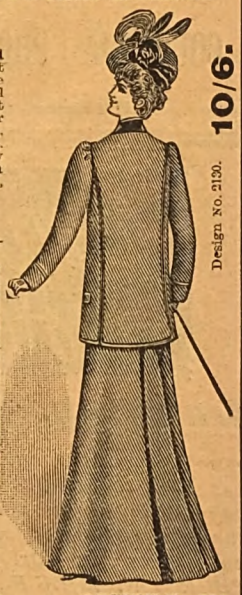
Allen Foster & Co

THE LONDON MANUFACTURERS

Buy Direct at First Cost from the Leading Firm of London Manufacturers.

DESIGN No. 2130.
TEN-AND-SIXPENCE.

The Famous Sacque Back Coat and Skirt Costume can be ordered with the coat made double or single-breasted, produced in the **Specialite Serge** or **Venetian Cloth**, all colours. It has a velvet collar, and the skirt is cut full with the box-pleated back—grand value for **Half-a-Guinea.** Testimonials from all parts. Securely packed, and sent carriage paid 6d. extra. This Coat and Skirt also makes up exceedingly well in the **Pretoria Tweed** or **Melton Coating.** Price only **17/6**; carriage paid, 6d. extra.



Design No. 2130. **10/6.**

PATTERNS FREE.

Design No. 2131. **10/6**

Write for
NEW WINTER SKETCH BOOK
AND
CATALOGUE OF BARCAINS.
PATTERNS & ORDER FORMS POST FREE.

Ladies are invited to call and inspect goods at our New Showrooms,
47 Golden Lane, E.C.
Business hours 9 a.m. to 7 p.m. Saturdays 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

DESIGN No. 2131.
HALF-A-GUINEA.

The Fashionable three-quarter Sacque Jacket, 30-in. long. Made in a superior Beaver Cloth in Black, Fawn, Brown, and Royal. This Jacket has a Chesterfield front with the new side pockets. Price only **10/6**; carriage, 6d. **The greatest value on the Market.** Send for one. All sizes in stock. In sending order, give bust measurement and arms. Money returned if not approved.

Design No. 329. **8/6**

DESIGN No. 329.
EIGHT & SIXPENCE.

The Fashionable **Braided Flounce Skirt.** Made in good quality Black and Navy Serge. Warranted fast dye. This Skirt is cut in the latest shape, and has a 16in. braided Flounce round bottom, which is lined good linenette. Price only **8/6.** Securely packed and sent carriage paid, 6d. extra. SATISFACTION GUARANTEED.

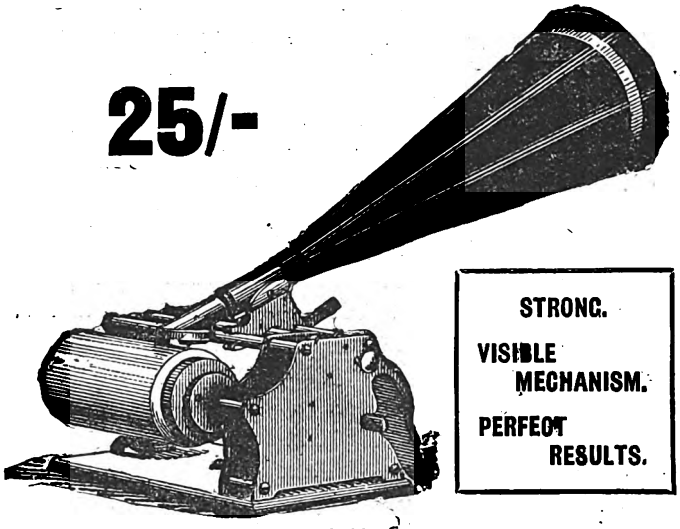
PATTERNS FREE.

ALLEN FOSTER & CO.,
THE LONDON MANUFACTURERS,
47 Golden Lane, Barbican, London, E.C.

Advertisements should be sent to "Short Stories" Advertisement Department, Henrietta Street, London, W.C.

Digitized by Google

A GRAPHOPHONE FOR 25/-



25/-

GRAND PRIX, PARIS EXPOSITION.

Reproduces Same Records as all Small Cylinder Talking Machines.

Makes Music in the Home, and is an Inexhaustible Source of Amusement and Pleasure.

STRONG.
VISIBLE MECHANISM.
PERFECT RESULTS.

The pleasure in owning a Graphophone is largely increased by being able to make and reproduce your own records. The Graphophone will record your own voice as well as reproduce specially prepared records.

Graphophones are sold from 25s. upwards.

The Toy Graphophone for Children, 8s.

Send for Catalogue C. to

COLUMBIA PHONOGRAPH COMPANY, Genl., 122 Oxford Street, London, W.

Shilling packets

Kaputine "the" safe Remedy For Headache

WARNING. *Instead of using the common White Headache Powders, which generally consist entirely of a crude drug, which has been condemned as dangerous by the medical papers, insist on having a bona-fide anti-quack remedy, recommended by such eminent medical authorities as Dr. RAMAGE, L.R.C.P., Dr. THURSTIN, L.R.C.P., late Dr. BOYD-WILLIAMS (Liverpool), the Editor of the Medical Journal, "Health," etc., etc. The name of this safe remedy is KAPUTINE.*

ALL LEADING CHEMISTS SELL IT, OR CAN GET IT FOR YOU IN A FEW HOURS.

Sold by BOOT'S, TAYLOR'S, DAY'S, WHITE'S and other Stores. Most Co-operative Stores sell it.

PACKETS, 1/-. SAMPLES ONE PENNY,

or KAPUTINE LIMITED, HUDDERSFIELD, will send it FREE for 12 stamps.

WORTH A CROWN A DOSE.

ESTABLISHED 1851.

BIRKBECK BANK

Southampton Buildings, Chancery Lane, London.

2% on CURRENT ACCOUNTS, on the minimum monthly balances when not drawn below £100.

The BIRKBECK ALMANACK, with full particulars, post free.

FRANCIS RAVENSCROFT, *Manager*.

VARICOCELE.

Every man suffering from Varicocele and the allied troubles, should send for treatise, describing their Causes, Symptoms, Results, and Successful and Painless Treatment without surgical operation or the use of cumbersome trusses and electrical appliances. Will be sent sealed, post free, three stamps.

S. S. MURRAY,

7, Southampton Row, London, W.C.

ALL FAT PEOPLE

can safely **Reduce Weight and cure Corpulency permanently** by taking **TRILENE TABLETS** (Regd.) for a few weeks. They are small, agreeable, harmless, and never fail to IMPROVE both HEALTH and FIGURE without Change of Diet. An English Countess writes: "*Your Trilene Tablets act admirably.*"

Send 2s. 6d. to **THE TRILENE CO.**, Sole Proprietors, **66 Finsbury Pavement, London.**

SAMPLES OF TESTIMONIALS.

Princess Liechtenstein writes from Landsberg, Austria: "Pray send your excellent tablets directly." Mr. Cunham, 87 Alexandra Road, Norwich: "Tablets cured my wife of extreme stoutness; it has never returned." Mrs. H. Cox, 28 Watnall Road, Hucknall Torkard, writes: "The Tablets reduced me 1½ stone." Mrs. S. Alexander, 102 Dixon Street, New Swindon, says: "They reduced me 28lb., and I am cured." Mrs. Darnley-Smith, of Landscove Vicarage, Ashburton, says: "Tablets have reduced me very much." Mrs. Crossley, of Rose Hill, Torver, Comston, says: "I weigh much less and can breathe so much easier; I am delighted."

SEVEN PRIZE MEDALS.

C. BRANDAUER & Co's CIRCULAR POINTED PENS

These series of pens neither scratch nor spurt. They glide over the roughest paper with the ease of a soft lead pencil. Assorted sample boxes, 6d., to be obtained from all Stationers. If out of stock, send 7 stamps direct to the works, Birmingham.

Digitized by Google

SHORT STORIES

No. 621.] For the Week Ending Nov. 24th, 1900. [One Penny.

THE FIRST SPEAR.

A Romance of the Indian Plains.

Under the grateful shade of a "tope" of grand old peepul trees was pitched the standing camp of Colonel Simkin, Cantonment magistrate of Broilempore, a station some ten miles off in the district of Oude.

The colonel was a genial, hospitable old "Shikaree," who took a delight in gathering about him a few sporting friends for a bout of pig-sticking in the neighbouring plains, or a week's big-game shooting in the Goruckpore Terai.

The site chosen for the camp was at once picturesque and advantageous, with a fine open country stretching around, admirably adapted for riding down the mighty boar, and plenty of jungle patches and sugar "Khets" near at hand, affording excellent covert and literally abounding with "pig."

The withering breath of an Indian summer had not yet parched the plains, and instead of that brown arid aspect which the face of nature would surely assume a few weeks hence, the surrounding country was still green and refreshing looking, its general flatness being relieved by the beautiful Nepaul Hills in the background.

Colonel Simkin himself, albeit now rather stiff in the saddle, was an enthusiastic pig-sticker and once a well-known member of the time honoured Nugger Hunt. Many a maddening race of "first spear" had he gone through in the Deccan, that great metropolis of hog hunting, and though this was several years ago, pleasant memories of those glorious meets beside the Grove of Arkola, of those dashing gallops over the sheet rocks and rolling stones of the Ghauts, came back vividly to his mind, the very perfume of the aromatic shrub peculiar to the Deccan hills seeming to arise round him and embalm those memories like some sweet incense of the past.

Amongst the colonel's guests (for such the hospitable old fellow made them in his "Dewan-Khana," or big dining tent) were a couple of sporting ensigns who had lately arrived from England, and who consequently came under the denomination of "griffs or griffins"—signifying neophytes in the manners and customs of Anglo-Indians.

These two youths were bosom friends; but alas, soon after their arrival at Broilempore, something, or rather somebody, suddenly came between them; the old story—a woman with whom both fell in love at the same moment. Now, as Claudio says:

> Friendship is constant in all other things
> Save in the office and affairs of love—

and the friendship between Ensign Spoonley and Ensign Mashwell was there and then converted into the fiercest rivalry.

The Siren who had thus captivated these susceptible "subs" was one Mrs. Verigay, "a charming widow from the hills" (as she was universally spoken of), and a particular friend of Mrs. Simkin's.

This lively little lady and the colonel's wife represented the fair sex in camp, two or three hard-riding officers from the station completing the party. Mrs. Simkin generally went out with her husband on these sporting trips to superintend the commissariat and look after the sportsmen's comfort, and on this occasion begged Mrs. Verigay to accompany her, who, it is needless to say, jumped at the offer since she knew she would have two such ardent lovers in camp to amuse her. A terrible flirt Mrs. Verigay, it must be confessed, but there was no harm in her—at least, let us hope not; yet

> Be thou chaste as ice, as pure as snow,
> Thou shalt not escape calumny—

and it was scarcely likely that such a fascinating little woman, with so many jealous rivals of her own sex, should

All rights reserved.]

Digitized by Google

go unscathed in that hot-bed of scandal, an Indian station; nor did she.

But be that as it may, Mrs. Verigay drove her pair of youngsters in Cupid's curricle with consummate skill, kept them both well in hand—never allowing one to jib against the other—and gave to each exactly the same amount of rein and the same amount of attention.

At this season the nights in camp were marvellously brilliant, with a tropical moon turning darkness into day; and there was a crisp freshness in the air, which made it cosy to sit round a blazing log-fire outside the mess-tent after dinner.

There the jovial little circle told ghost stories, ran over their sporting adventures or sang songs to beguile the evening hours, and every night from the majestic peepul-grove, to the wild accompaniment of the jackal's yell might be heard trolled out in sonorous tones that well-known pigsticker's chorus:

> The boar, the boar, the mighty boar,
> The brave old boar of the plain!
> Here's a health to him who fears no fall,
> And the next great boar that's slain.

But while the toast of the brawny pig was on their lips, another toast, that of woman, sweet woman (otherwise Cissie Verigay), dwelt deep in the hearts of two of those musical sportsmen.

By-and-by as song, chat, and laughter flagged, and some dropped off to sleep in their easy chairs, or turned into their tents for the night, others wandered out into the bright moonlight for a romantic ramble; *others* in this case meaning either Mrs. Verigay and Ensign Spoonley, or Mrs. Verigay and Ensign Mashwell, whosever turn it happened to be, for the widow managed these walks with amazing tact, and generally contrived to favour both in the same evening, thereby preventing the chance of bloodshed.

"Now then, Spoonley, my lad," whispered Colonel Simkin one night as he saw Mrs. Verigay and Mashwell steal away together from the camp out into the moonlight, "stop where you are and have another peg. Two's company, three's none, as the boy on the donkey said when the devil jumped up behind. It's the Masher's innings—give him a chance."

"Poor beggar," thought Spoonley pityingly, "so I will. She's only humouring him—of course I know it's all right. Didn't she as good as tell me before dinner that she would be mine, and mine alone? What more can a fellow want?"

And so reflecting comfortably the happy lover settled himself down beside his host, with a huge Trichinopolee cheroot in his mouth and confidence in his heart. Long time they sat with their four legs stretched out over the protruding arms of their cane-bottomed chairs, chatting drowsily, whiffing and sipping; two pegs apiece disappeared, two cheroots went to ashes; the log fire burnt low and the colonel snored. Still those two returned not.

At length Spoonley became fidgety, rose suddenly from his chair and—no he wouldn't play the spy, why need he? (In truth he dared not, for fear of offending the widow.) So he sneaked up to the mess-tent instead and ordered another peg stealthily, a strong one; then returned to his seat feeling more composed. Indeed, such a still beautiful night was conducive to composure, especially when backed up by several brandies and sodas.

In the open country around it was almost as light as day; a shimmering light which glinted through the dense foliage of the peepul tope and made the tents loom grey-black through the partial darkness—the darkness made more apparent by those struggling rays.

Distant sounds fell upon the silence of the night—more or less dreamy sounds at that late hour—the muffled "tom-tom" from the far-off village, the faint tinkling of the cow-bell, the hoarse bark of the everlasting pariah; but one by one these died upon the senses, or became merged in the dreams of Ensign Spoonley.

* * * * *

"Then you mean to say you love him too?"

"I do—I confess I do."

"What, better than me?"

"Well, I won't say that; indeed, I don't know which I love the better yet."

These murmured sentences broke upon the slumbering Spoonley's deadened ears, 'twixt sleeping and waking, and the words exactly dove-tailed in with that which he had been dreaming.

He jumped to his feet with a start and a groan—the groan being partly caused by "pins and needles," partly by what he heard, and partly by what he saw, namely, the "widow" and the "masher" standing lovingly together beside the smouldering embers and almost within his touch.

"Oh, you're awake, are you, Mr. Spoonley?" said the silvery voice of the Siren, which to him sounded rather like irony. "Now, listen to me," she went on, with a little puzzled expression on her pretty face and nestling towards him in turn, "I'm in a fix, my dear boys, like the donkey between two sacks of hay. You have both proposed to me within the last few hours, and I really don't know what to say. I can't accept you both, *can* I? So, I tell you what—I'll make a proposal to you in return—ah! and here comes our dear hostess who shall witness the compact! Pray forgive us for being so late my dear," she exclaimed, as Mrs. Simkin joined them (the colonel had long since retired without waking Spoonley), "but we have rather important business to settle!" Here she gave a sly look and a smile at her friend which the lady seemed quite to understand. "Ahem! These two gentlemen, my dear Mrs. Simkin, I must inform you, have been good enough each to honour me to-day with an offer of marriage, and as I cannot at this moment make up my mind which to accept—" (Here both suitors drew themselves up to their full height and scowled at each other, whilst the "charming widow" smiled sweetly and impartially upon the pair.) "I say, as I don't know *which* to accept," she continued, "I propose that like the knights of old they should ride a 'tilt' for my hand!"

"A capital idea," cried Mrs. Simkin, looking askance at the love-stricken ensigns, "a capital idea, and the best way out of the difficulty!"

"Well, to-morrow, as there is to be a grand beat for 'pig,'" went on Mrs. Verigay in a very business-like tone, "I can only add that, of you two, he who wins first spear in the first contest falling to either may come to me and—and claim his well-earned reward."

Ensigns Spoonley and Mashwell started; they were taken aback and not a little indignant. There was a levity, an absurdity, about such a condition that jarred upon their sensitive natures; yet, despite a murmured remonstrance, they eventually bound themselves by the compact.

A few minutes later as the amorous rivals retired to their tents to gather strength from sleep for the coming struggle, suppressed laughter from the ladies reached their ears and the words:

Digitized by Google

"What will the Great Mogul say to this to-morrow when he comes? Ha, ha, ha!"

The Great Mogul! Who was the Great Mogul?

* * * * *

Early next morning the pig-stickers duly assembled in the "dewan-khana" at "chota hazree," or little breakfast, our two young friends attired in the most approved fashion. Nor did they leave anything to chance in the matter of gear, though they little guessed, when they so carefully equipped themselves, for what a priceless stake they were going to compete.

Their saddlery was of the best, and their spears the most reliable, with steel heads of the correct "sealed" pattern, and shafts of stout male bamboo, cut, so they avowed, with all regard to native superstition—that is, at night by the light of the new moon; not of the moon of the night before, of course, but by some other moon guaranteed by the vendor.

Their horses were two wiry screws (half-bred Arab "casters" from the native cavalry), which happened to be well matched in point of speed; and each ardent swain, though still chafing inwardly at the undignified nature of the compact, felt sanguine of his own success.

The ladies put in an appearance at breakfast before the sportsmen started from the camp, and Mrs. Verigay stimulated her admiring griffins afresh with the sweet words and looks which she bestowed on each in private with perfect impartiality; begging them, with the most earnest appeal with her liquid eyes, to be very careful that they didn't break their precious necks.

Both suitors drew themselves up to their full height and scowled at each other.

Meanwhile Mrs. Simkin had confided to her husband the conditions under which the ensigns were to "ride to pig" that day, and which conditions Colonel Simkin, having heard and chuckled over, kept to himself so as not to spoil sport. He proceeded to pair off his spears (of which there were half-a-dozen in all) after the fashion of the old Nugger Hunt, taking care to couple the griffs, and then gave the word to start.

Thereupon the party mounted and trotted off towards the distant "rummah-grass" jungle, where the first "honkwa" or beat was to commence; and as they left the shady peepul-grove the two youthful knights of the bamboo surreptitiously snatched separate moments to wave and kiss their "gauntlets" gallantly to the queen of their hearts.

On arriving at the covert-side the spears were quickly posted, each sportsman dismounting and waiting anxiously for the commencement of operations. A line of coolies, with sticks and native unmusical instruments formed the beat, and a most unearthly noise they made on being given the signal to begin.

In short the wild yells, the thrumming of the "tom-toms," the hollow bass of the "doobla," or big drum, the "wah-wahing," and now and again the winding blast of the conch, was enough to arouse the departed spirits of the wild boars which had been "stuck" since the conquest of the country. By such a fiendish row any porcine family hidden in the jungle was pretty sure to be set moving before many seconds had passed.

Presently excited shouts, responded to by deep spasmodic grunts and the waving of the tall yellow grass, announced the fact that the quarry was afoot—that a big sounder had been started.

Hurrah! Away they scamper in front of the beaters, tearing fiercely through the long, reedy jungle.

The hearts of the rival griffs were thumping like a couple of donkey engines as they heard the grunting sounder approach the border of the jungle nearest to *them!*

Oh, what moments of suspense! It seemed as if they never would break! But at last one porker thrusts his snout out of the thick cover, and the next moment follows it with his fat, hairy body, which is followed in turn by nine or ten more fat, hairy bodies, the last to leave their stronghold being a huge monster as big as a donkey, the mighty father of the family.

For a moment the hoary patriarch halts and listens, with his little, twinkling eyes flashing with anger, and his head thrown on one side; then, with a sonorous snort of defiance, away he shambles after the others.

A stentorian "Tally-ho!" is now heard from the colonel, followed by "Go-o-on away, my boys!" and every man leaps nimbly into his saddle and grips his horse with muscular energy; Ensigns Spoonley and Mashwell cannoning against each other as they try to mount, both by their own over-eagerness and the dancing fretfulness or their impetuous steeds.

"Confound it all, my dear fellow, where *are* you coming to?"

"Well, *do* look out yourself, man, it's not *my* fault!"

But there is no time to argue, the quarry has broken, and their business is to ride—to ride for their very lives—for love! for honour! for Mrs. Verigay! for everything in the world worth living for.

Digitized by Google

The country around looks good going enough at a glance, yet there are nasty quicksands, bandicoot holes, and other pit-falls to bring the unwary to grief; but who thinks of such trifles in those maddening moments? who cares for rocks, stones, nullahs, cacti or prickly pear with the pig before them and a good nag underneath them? —who thinks of the poor horses' broken knees or the rider's broken bones?—who thinks of anything save that one great prize, *the first spear?*

The sounder are given a start of some four hundred yards, and are seen heading for a tamarisk thicket in the distance; but long before they can reach it the thundering horsemen will be in their midst and scatter them to the four quarters of the wind.

"Forrard! forr-rard!"

Away the hunters dash in the wild intoxicating race, flying past clumps of palms and sand-hills, over acacia bushes, deep fissures, and almost unjumpable ravines—down into a dry stony nullah, and clambering up the steep bank opposite, with a shout and a hustle, and the agility of so many cats accustomed to scaling the perpendicular—onward they rush with ringing clatter! Oh, what a delirious blood-boiling gallop! Such thrilling moments once felt are never to be forgotten in a lifetime! Talk of foxhunting, let our top-sawyers of the shires only try this sport once if they want a new sensation, and when they have tried it, we warrant they will say with us that of all sport in the saddle the palm must be given to pig-sticking.

Every eye is fixed on the big boar, and every man picks him out from the rest for his own spear, as something worthy of his steel. Gradually the horseman gains on the panic-stricken sounder; but in that furious spurt two or three falls have already occurred, albeit our indomitable griffins are still to the front—well to the front, too, as they find to their delight—for their high blooded casters prove faster for the short distance than any of the other horses out.

Hand over hand they now draw up to the flying pig; bit to bit, and knee to knee, they race along, straining every nerve to detach the old jungle-king from his subjects, and ride him down by themselves.

Presently to their joy the foam flecked monster separates of his own accord from the now flagging herd, and takes an independent line, followed at once by the excited youngsters.

The colonel is watching them to see fair play, and is glad to notice that the rest of the party are not likely to interfere in this keenly contested match.

Now they are almost upon him. See, he is nearly done, look how he sways from side to side like a drunken man and his dashing enemies increase their superhuman efforts to snatch the much coveted honour—always coveted—but now, their whole future and happiness depending on the issue. No wonder they yell like escaped lunatics and ride like fiends.

It is a critical moment. But just as they are at his quarters, the hard pressed quarry doubles sharp and throws them off his line, then darts away in a new direction and suddenly disappears.

Good heavens, where's he gone to?

The mystery is quickly solved. The boar has merely dropped sheer twenty feet into a dry nullah a few yards ahead. His baffled pursuers manage to pull up in the very nick of time to save their necks, and view the old varmint afterwards clambering up the opposite bank, on reaching the top of which he halts, as much as to challenge them to "come on," and then with a contemptuous "whoof" and a flourish of his tail scuttles away once more across the "Maidan."

With shouts and smothered oaths the delirious sportsmen gallop along the nullah side, in the vain hope of finding some rideable spot where they may cross. but failing, charge valiantly together at the least precipitous part, and are rewarded for their pluck by scrambling over somehow and escaping a nasty spill by the very skin of their teeth. The cunning old boar has meantime got a fresh start of them, but he is badly blown, and very soon they are at his heels again.

He sees his danger and twists sharply from one to the other like a coursed hare, but his pertinacious foes stick closely to him, and the next instant both flesh their blades simultaneously in his brawny neck. "Who-hoop! First spear!" shouts each triumphant youth, as they dart forward and withdraw their points.

But the wounds are slight, though the spurting blood is sufficient to prove them, and now the furious hog, with every bristle on end, is brought to bay!

"First spear!" again scream the excited griffins, wheeling sharply round to finish off their work.

But Colonel Simkin has seen it all and shouts hoarsely in reply:

"No, no, dead heat! dead heat! as I live! At him again, my lads!"

But now the foaming patriarch,

Whose frothy mouth, bepainted all with red,
Like milk and blood being mingled both together—

takes the offensive, and with an angry roar charges full tilt at Spoonley

"My dear fellow, where *are* you coming to?"

Digitized by Google

knocks his caster's legs from under him with an ugly gash which lays open one cannon-bone, and brings horse and rider sprawling to mother earth. Then like lightning, before Mashwell can turn aside, he charges again and upsets *him* also, horse and all, in the same dexterous fashion.

Now indeed it might have fared badly with either or both of the prostrate griffins had not the colonel dashed up opportunely and buried his shaft behind the plucky old tusker's shoulder, transfixing the heart, and rolling him over in his death agony.

"Bravo, colonel! bravo boys!" shout the others as they come up one by one, and see the dazed ensigns bruised and bleeding and their horses' legs cut to the bone, but also see lying weltering in his life-blood at their feet the mighty hero of the jungle, as gallant a boar as ever bit the dust, thirty-seven inches at the shoulder, with a splendid pair of tusks, nine inches long!

Bravo indeed!

Dead heat for first spear! There was no doubt about it, according to the colonel—but it *was* hard lines! the disappointment was intense—yet both felt they had ridden straight and pluckily (the only chance a man has in such a sport as pig-sticking), and so said all. But this was not to be the end—not by any means the end. That first spear *must* be won beyond dispute, and so to pastures new where they may try conclusions again without delay.

* * * * *

About an hour after tiffin-time, two "dhoolies," or palanquins, were carried into camp—the said dhoolies (which the colonel had been obliged to procure for the purpose) containing what remained of the heroic ensigns who had that day risked life and limb—and *all for her!*

Behind the dhoolies came the two "syces" (grooms) leading two jaded, lame-on-all-fours, broken-kneed, broken-winded, mud-blood-and-lather-covered steeds—the fiery casters of the morning.

Poor brutes, they had had a hard time of it indeed, but not more so than their riders.

After the disappointment of the "dead heat," the enthusiastic griffs were more on their mettle than ever—more resolved to do or die—and they certainly did half kill themselves in their vain but frantic efforts to win an indisputable first spear.

Cropper after cropper had they come—were cut and bruised from head to foot and smarted all over from the cruel effects of prickly pear.

For the fact must be told that during one of their fierce struggles they had actually ridden at each other in their jealous desperation and rolled over together in a convenient clump of that uncompromising cactus, so that though the Colonel had saved them from being wounded by the boar, they carried the marks as of a hard conflict.

Now each again claimed "first spear" for the second time that morning, but it had been a near thing, and no one was up to see, so they returned into camp arguing the point clamourously from their dhoolies, and appealed at once to the charming widow, who came forth from the peepul-grove to receive them in her most loving and solicitous manner.

"Don't believe him, Mrs. Verigay, it might have been a dead heat the first time, as the colonel says so, but the second I'll take my oath wasn't, I was at least two lengths before him."

They returned into camp arguing the point from their dhoolies.

"Oh, I like you, Spoonley, look here, Mrs. Verigay, 'pon my soul and honour, I——"

"I tell you you weren't, and you know perfectly well that——"

"Then you mean to say I'm a liar, sir, because if so ——"

"I mean to say no gentleman would deliberately ——"

"There, there, my dear boys, hush, pray hush," cooed the dulcet voice of the bewitching 'widow.' "What am I to do with you?" (Here Mrs. Simkin appeared.) "You both claim first spear, do you? And therefore both claim me, I suppose. Well, there's only one person in the world who can decide the point, is there, my dear?" turning to Mrs. Simkin—"and that person is the great Mogul!" (The Great Mogul! Who the dickens is this Great Mogul?) "Ah, and here he comes. Gentlemen, allow me to introduce you—Mr. Mashwell, Mr. Spoonley, Mr. Verigay, my husband."

Oh, it was a cruel joke, though a cleverly kept secret—enough to make those poor confiding griffs turn misogynists on the spot and forswear the fair sex for ever. But they didn't, nothing of the sort.

They were young and recovered from their wounds, moral and corporal, long before their wretched horses did. Now we hear they are greater pals than ever, and have come across many more "charming widows," but are very careful never to both go after the same woman again, at any rate at the same time.

QUI-HAIE.

Digitized by Google

The Sanctuary on the Rock.

THERE was a marked difference in Ralph Hornby when he returned from that tour in France; it was a long time before we discovered what had taken place. But when we did learn all about it, we were amused and pleased to find that a woman had wrought in him the very change which he had always said no woman could bring about in any man.

That was a sweeping declaration of his, but it exactly indicated his opinions. His estimate of women in general was not a high one; he smiled sarcastically at stories of their love and devotion, and declared that they were all nonsense.

A girl would remain "true" to her lover just so long as she did not meet another man with better prospects or more money, and in support of his assertion he pointed to the number of broken engagements and second marriages.

His arguments were no more logical than his notion was correct, but no one succeeded in bringing about an alteration and he was allowed to continue in his cynical frame of mind. His mother died when he was a mere infant and he had no sisters; that was the excuse which charitable people urged in his behalf.

Naturally, the change was quickly noticed. How it was brought about is told in the following story.

Ralph Hornby spent a month at a fashionable watering place on the French coast, and it did not take him more than a fortnight to get very tired of the society into which he was thrown. He had been brought up partly in France and was as much at home there as in his own country, but this did not prevent him from tiring of the same tittle-tattle, the same routine, day after day.

"This sort of thing will drive me back across the Channel—if it doesn't drive me mad—in no time," he muttered one afternoon as he strolled further along the sandy beach than was his wont. "I wonder where I should get to if I went on walking for an hour or so? It looks pretty wild along there, with the rocks and reefs. I can imagine that it would be an awkward place for a ship in rough weather. Well, it may be lonely, but that will be a change, so I'll go."

He walked on for some time, lost in thought and paying no heed to the scenery which he had gone that way on purpose to see. He awoke from his day-dream with a start and looked about him.

It certainly was a lonely spot. He was in a hollow; some distance behind him lay the cliffs on which was the village or town whence he had started; almost at the same distance in front of him there arose rock after rock; on his right was the immensity of the ocean, and on his left a long stretch of sand with a background of forest.

"Pretty dismal, this," he muttered. "I think I can just about manage to get to those rocks; then I shall rest and afterwards tramp back. By that time I ought to be fatigued enough to go to bed early and sleep like a top. In that way I shall escape the routine of one half-day, at any rate."

He did not expect to find anything interesting or attractive on the rocks, but in this he was mistaken When he reached the foot of the first, which rose to a height of about one hundred feet, he thought he could distinguish something on the summit, and he resolved to climb up and reconnoitre. It was not particularly easy work, but by making use of his hands and toes he reached the top rather hot and a little out of breath.

The first thing that caught his eye was a roughly-moulded figure evidently intended to represent the Virgin Mary, around which were neatly placed nearly a dozen vases filled with fresh cut flowers. Ralph looked at the flowers in surprise; who could it be that came to this lonely spot with fresh flowers? Who could it be who had turned the bare summit of a rock into a sanctuary? A woman. So much was clear, so much was readily admitted by Ralph, who began to experience a feeling of reverence which was not common to him.

He walked round to the other side of the ledge and peered over. It was not inviting; the other rocks were more distant than he had expected, and below him was an abyss of water. He saw the jagged rocks, almost covered by the waves, and he shuddered as he realised how dangerous the Channel was and how hopeless would be the fate of any craft that might be driven within half-a-mile of where he stood. Out at sea he saw the bell-buoy intended to warn mariners to keep away from the hidden and half-hidden reefs. Landwards, the rock sloped towards the edge of the forest.

He turned again to the little sanctuary, gazing curiously at the rough figure and at the fresh pinks, roses and wild immortelles, so daintily arranged in the vases. It was strange; he must find out who did it.

He stayed there for a good half-hour, half-expecting that someone would appear; but he remained alone, and finally turned his face towards "civilisation."

Every day for a whole week he made what he called his pilgrimage; he varied the time of his arrival at the rock in the hope of being able to surprise the worshipper at this isolated shrine, but in vain.

The flowers were always kept fresh; they never showed signs of drooping and they were always of the same kind, and he began to wonder—with a feeling of awe—whether some miracle was being wrought or whether the flowers were renewed by human hands.

Unconsciously, a change began to take place in Ralph Hornby; he became more meditative and his flippant utterances became fewer. He could not believe in a miracle, and this brought him face to face with an instance of devotion at which he would have sneered only a few weeks previously.

He cast himself on the sand at the foot of the rock and remained there in deep thought until the waves began to reach his feet, when he became aware that the rising tide had cut off his chance of returning along the sand beach.

He did not clamber up the rock again at that point, but walked inland until he reached a more favourable spot; then he reached a higher land and made his way towards the pine forest, which ran parallel with the beach, with the intention of making his way homeward by a path through the woodland if he could find one.

Digitized by Google

Ralph Hornby was not a lover of nature and took but little notice of the beauty of the forest as he followed the indistinct footpath which wound in and out of the pine trees. He stumbled here and there over the brushwood, alternately wondering whether he would be able to find his way to his hotel, and where the pinks, roses, and wild immortelles came from.

Just for a moment the thought flashed across his mind that he was falling in love with an unknown—he, Ralph Hornby—and he laughed rather uneasily.

"This is a lively sort of path, and it will be getting dark before long."

He had just given half-audible utterance to this reflection when he caught sight of a cottage or cabin almost hidden away under the trees.

"Hallo, here's a chance of getting a little refreshment!"

A woman of matronly appearance was cutting up beans for cooking, and about her roamed some fowls intent on finding a meal. It was a lonely spot for anyone to live in, yet there was an air of comfort about it which made Hornby step briskly towards the woman and ask for something to drink.

The woman turned on her stool, looked through the door into the room and nodded. Ralph turned in order to see what this pantomime meant; he fancied that he detected a feminine figure disappearing through another door.

With his usual politeness he entered into conversation with his temporary hostess, their talk being interrupted a minute later by a young woman with a glass of water. Ralph repressed a start of surprise as he faced the newcomer; she was dressed in poor clothes, but her face was unlike that of any woman he had seen—it struck him by its expression of simple trustfulness and by the animation of the eyes, both giving the countenance a charm beyond comparison.

"You have vegetables here, but no flowers?" asked Ralph of the elder woman, as an idea came to him.

"Oh, yes; indeed we have!" replied the younger woman quickly. "If you look through that door right away over the market garden you will see some flowers."

Ralph looked in the direction indicated and saw pinks and roses of exactly the same kind as those in the vases on the rock. He glanced inquiringly at the speaker, who coloured a little at having her secret discovered—at least, that was how Ralph interpreted the flush.

Ralph Hornby did not sleep well that night, which fact he attributed to the length of his excursion during the afternoon. He was awake by five on the following morning, and at six o'clock he was on his way to the rock, this action stultifying his own explanation of the cause of his unrest.

Perhaps, after all, it was not the girl he had seen who placed the flowers round the rough figure on the rock. This thought tormented him and he did not seek to find out why it affected him to such an extent.

Surely, those flowers were grown in other parts of the forest, or nearer at hand, than at the back of that hut! It was early and he might see her at the shrine; he would see her, if he had to wait all day.

His heart gave a great bound, when, from the sandy beach, he saw a figure above him. Slowly, as cautiously and as noiselessly as he could, he ascended the side of the rock and reached the top; he had wished to reach the living figure before his approach could be noticed and he had succeeded.

Before him was the girl he had hoped to find; she was kneeling, looking towards the sea—the great sea that was so calm just then, which could be so cruel—kneeling in an attitude of supplication.

Ralph stood transfixed, his eyes rivetted on the girl's face. It was a pain face, yet how beautiful it looked now. He had thought it charming yesterday, but he recognised that love and devotion can effect a wonderful change. Here was the love and the devotion, at which he had so often scoffed, combined with the religious spirit which makes it more profound.

Yes, she was praying for the safe home-coming of a father, of a sweetheart, who was away on the deep sea. He looked seawards and noticed for the first time a fleet of fishing-smacks on the horizon; they were going on a voyage.

Sweetheart! If she were praying for a sweetheart, then he was confronted by an instance which flatly contradicted all he had said. He admitted it—admitted that he was wrong; and then a feeling of resentment sprang up within him.

Why should another possess this woman? She had shown him, unknowingly, that a woman could be so far above his estimate that he wanted her for himself. She had taught him so much, she must teach him more!

She arose at that moment and saw him. He doffed his cap in salutation, and she responded with a faint "Good morning," and smiled in recognition. She did not seem at all abashed. He must find out at once whether there was a sweetheart; he feared there was.

"You were praying for the safe return of one who is dear to you?" he asked meaningly, though half-ashamed of his intrusion.

"Yes, for Jean," she answered artlessly.

"He will be away a long time?"

"Yes," she answered again with just a trace of sadness. "He is dead. He died there, in the channel, trying to rescue the crew of a sinking ship."

There was a long pause. Then:

"You bring these flowers every day?" asked Ralph.

"Yes, Jean loved these flowers and this was our favourite spot. Here we vowed to be true to each other in life and death. It has pleased the good God to take him from me, but I know that as he looks down from above Jean will be pleased that I keep these flowers fresh. It is two years ago now, but I shall keep them fresh until I go to meet him."

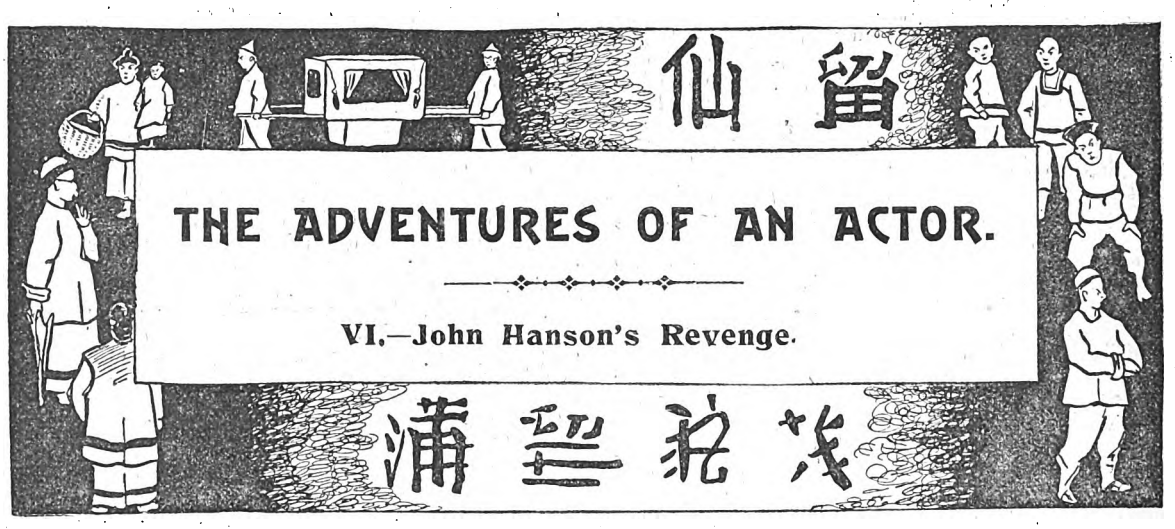
So Ralph Hornby came back to England cured of his cynicism; and by an irony of fate he himself has remained true to the girl with whom he fell in love, but who knew not of that love.

As with Ralph, so with others; women have the power to work the salvation of men if they care to exercise it.

GEO. KNIGHT.

SOME RATTLING SHORT STORIES
will be found in the Christmas Number of
THE ROYAL.
READY THURSDAY NEXT.
Stories of the Sea, of Travel, of Society, of Adventure, of Children, of Court Life.
All magnificently illustrated by the leading black and white artists.
Don't Forget. The Xmas Royal. Next Week.

Digitized by Google



THE ADVENTURES OF AN ACTOR.

VI.—John Hanson's Revenge.

At Christmas time Ben Jowson always had a few weeks stock season at the Grand Theatre, Crumbleby, before the travelling pantomime deigned to book his wretched shanty.

Jowson was the sole proprietor, lessee and manager of a theatre, colloquially known as the disgrace of the North. He was proverbially mean and would not spend a penny on keeping the place in decent repair, at least so far as the back of it was concerned. He would sometimes consent to a little tinkering to the roof, where it let the rain through on the heads of the audience. But the dressing-rooms, generally by some fate the last portion of the theatre thought of, here were no exception to the rule. The floors were full of holes, and to escape a sprained ankle one needed to walk them with caution.

When the weather was bad the wind blew through and through them; water streamed from the roof, and down the walls, making existence anything but pleasant.

We were in the middle of the fourth and last week of the stock season, when the events happened that I am about to relate. Most of us were young and strong and had so far escaped with the usual coughs and colds expected at Jowson's theatre.

John Hanson's wife, our character old woman, had not fared so well. She struggled on to the end of the second week, then utterly collapsed, and had since been lying at her lodgings in a precarious condition.

The old man was quite broken down over her illness. His heart was not in his work one could see; he spoke his lines mechanically, and, unlike him, constantly dried up in the most pitiful manner. All the grand old school, grip and power, had gone out of his work. He was thinking, poor fellow, of his dearest in the world lying helpless in their poor lodgings.

"Well, John," said Bann, the heavy man, as Hanson entered the dressing-room, late on the Thursday night, "how is she to-night?"

"Worse and worse, my boy, thank you, I fear there is no hope."

"No, no, don't say that," we all exclaimed.

"It's true, my lads, quite true, I fear Margy's and my partnership is going to end. It is hard, very hard after five-and-twenty years together, in good times and bad. If she dies my life goes out with hers. The world will be dead to me if she leaves it."

We tried to comfort him, but it was a sorry task.

"That wretch Jowson ought to be hanged," exclaimed our fire-eating Juvenile man. "I'm blessed if I don't punch the life out of his fat carcase, when I've got my last week's salary. For I shall never come back to this death trap."

"Yes, my boy," said Hanson, "that's just what it is, a death trap, and what do you think the beast has done? Margy is ill, dying, all through his rotten theatre, and he has stopped her salary just when I want all the cash I can get hold of to buy her medicine, and delicacies."

"Oh, what a wicked shame," exclaimed the Juvenile man.

"Why don't you see him about it," I said, "surely he is human?"

"Not where his purse is concerned," replied Bann.

In spite of Bann's unhopefulness we persuaded John to appeal to Jowson that very night, but it was not until the next morning that he managed to catch him in front of the theatre.

The interview, and the results of which, he has often since related to me in every detail, for John knew my tongue would be silent while he lived.

Jowson was busy opening letters in his office when John presented himself.

Just glancing over his shoulder at him, as he stood in the doorway, Jowson said:

"Treasury is on Saturday night, after the show, (no runaways for me) and you can't sub. any more before then."

"I don't want money, Mr. Jowson, I want justice. And as to running away, I have never done that in my life, nor am I likely to commence when I have my poor wife at death's door; though by Heaven, there is inducement enough to run away from this death trap."

"Humph! I suppose you are referring to my theatre, Mr. Hanson. Well, all I can say is, that you are the first actor I have ever had a complaint from, and I have been here for fifteen years," said Jowson, intrenching himself behind a form of argument, as old as it is ridiculous.

"Then more shame to them for being either cowards,

Digitized by Google

or long-suffering idiots," replied John. "I suppose it never occurred to you the place might require renovating?"

"Look here, Mr. Hanson, my time is valuable, and I can't afford to waste it with a grumbler. What do you want to say to me?"

"I want to ask you what you are going to do about my wife. She is dying from inflammation of the lungs, caught in one of your dressing-rooms, wet and draughty, and absolutely uninhabitable, a place unfit to stable an ox. I have a long doctor's bill to pay, not to mention other expenses. You have stopped her salary; I have come here to appeal to your generosity, and to ask you to re-consider the matter."

"You know my rule, Mr. Hanson, no play, no pay."

"Mr. Jowson, I have been in the profession for over thirty years, and have never known the rule inforced when the illness occurred through fault of the management."

"Oh, my fault, is it? Why is no one else ill?"

"They are young and strong enough to cope with damp and cold. It is very different when one is old."

"My dear sir, I can't help your troubles."

"Will you at least pay the doctor's bill?"

"Perhaps you would like me to keep you and your family altogether, Mr. Hanson, for as long as you are pleased to live," said Jowson, insolently.

"Man, man, haven't you an ounce of humanity in your whole composition?" cried John in a breaking voice.

"I am no fool, Hanson, to be taken by every idle tale. I think you have said enough; good morning," said Jowson angrily.

"Ye gods, what man is this!" exclaimed John despairingly, with hand lifted in appeal to Heaven.

"No more heroics, Hanson, leave the office," cried Jowson in his bullying tones.

"Ah, you know you are safe, you lily-livered scoundrel. You know I am too poor to take my case into court. I should get justice there."

"Leave the office," Jowson shouted.

John looked at the man for a moment in silence.

His sunken glittering eye had often thrilled an audience, and the coward before him now trembled under his glance. He made one step towards him, as if to sieze him by the throat, Jowson cried out in terror, and John hesitated.

Though nearing sixty years of age John was as strong as a lion, while the younger man was helpless and weak with bloated fat.

"Bah! I would not pollute my soul with your miserable death," cried John, "but remember this, Ben Jowson, if my wife dies, hers will be the last death this theatre will ever cause."

So saying he left the office, slamming the door after him.

He walked quickly past the houses into the fields until his anger cooled, and then he turned his steps homeward. Home! No he could not go back to the misery that awaited him there; he knew his duty called him, but he salved his conscience with the thought that Margy hardly knew him now, and had he not sat up with her all night?

So he turned into the Red Lion Hotel, near the theatre, and sat down alone in a small bar, brooding over his wrongs, and blaming himself for not thrashing Jowson while he had the chance.

He was awakened from his apathy by the sound of Jowson's voice coming from the saloon bar, which was only separated from him by a thin partition.

"Yes," Jowson was saying, "the beggar came into my office, threatened my life, and cursed and swore at me till I had to take him by the scruff of the neck, and kick him out of the theatre."

Hanson rose from his seat to give the lie to the boaster, but controlling himself sat down and listened again.

"You did quite right, Mr. Jowson," said a local voice, "he is a dangerous man, I don't like the look in his eyes at all."

"No, it's a kind of mad look, isn't it?" said another, "a man like that might do anything. Shoot you in the back, or set fire to your house."

"More likely set fire to the theatre as he is so dead against it," replied the first.

"I'll put the police on his track, if he's not careful, that's what I'll do," cried Jowson.

"I suppose you are fully insured, Jowson," asked one of his friends.

"No, I've been in that theatre for fifteen years now, and I haven't wasted a penny in making insurance companies rich, and I'm not going to start now."

"Well I don't know. Everybody insures now-a-days, you know," was the reply.

Hanson did not wait to hear any more. He crept out of the bar, and went home with new thoughts burning in his brain, and a cunning smile on his face. He turned at the top of the street and waving his hand at the Red Lion, said aloud:

"Thank you, my enemies, thank you."

Mrs. Hanson died on Saturday morning, shortly after midnight. We were surprised at the calm way in which John took the blow. When we went to offer our condolences he only said:

"Thank you, my lads, thank you, I am glad Margy is at rest. She is happier now. It is only my selfishness that would bring her back to life, to struggle, and toil once more."

That night he played with all his old fire and strength as if trouble had not visited him. But when during one of the *entr'actes* the orchestra played in a selection that ever dear old air, "Home sweet home," it awakened in him fond memories, and he laid his poor old grey head on my breast and wept like a child.

After the performance that night John left the theatre with the rest of us, and went home. When the household he lodged with had locked all doors and gone to bed he went upstairs and remained kneeling for some minutes by Margy's bedside, then he rose to his feet, kissed her cold lips, and stealing downstairs left the house by the back door unheard.

The men were busy loading a trolley with our baggage when he arrived at the theatre, and in the hurry and bustle he entered unnoticed. He hid himself underneath the stage among the rafters and beams of the traps waiting there until the hall-keeper made his final round to turn off the gas at the metre, not five yards from him, and lock all doors.

When the last sound had died away, he crept out of his hiding place, struck a match, and found his way to the gas metre. Taking a file from his pocket he set to work to file all the pipes through that lead to the theatre.

Then he took the large gas key from the corner in which he had seen the hall-keeper place it, and turned on the gas. While it was escaping he turned his attention to various heaps of rubbish; wood shavings the

Digitized by Google

carpenters had left in their recent work, preparing for the pantomime, old broken battens, and scenery stored there below the stage.

These he hurriedly piled in order of ignition against the flimsy walls of the dressing rooms, situated in a ramifying portion of the main building.

By the time his work was finished, and a goodly pile stood in front of him, the escaping gas became almost stifling, so he hastily set fire to the mass, and after waiting to see it had thoroughly caught, felt his way up the stairs on to the stage.

As he neared the top the sound of someone moving in the front of the theatre reached him, and for the moment his heart stood still with the fear of being discovered. He ran to the door at the side of the stage leading to the auditorium, and looking down the passage saw the glimmer of a light approaching him.

* * * * *

Was it the hand of fate that made Jowson pause as he approached the door of his house that night. His encounter with Hanson the day before, and the subsequent fears, the foolish imaginations of his friends had filled him with fear, had combined to make him very uneasy. His foot was on the door step when he remembered he had left a sum of money, amounting to a few pounds, in his office.

The house being a good one that night, he had reserved more cash than he had needed to meet current expenses. He had safely left money in his office for years during his ownership of the theatre, but this time he did not apply the argument he was so fond of.

Hanson might break into the theatre (not a very difficult task to one who knew the place) he reflected, break open the drawer that contained the gold, and steal it without fear of detection.

After looking carefully round the house to see that John was not on arson bent, he retraced his steps to the theatre, let himself in the front way and unlocking his office and the cash drawer, transferred the gold to his pocket. He was again about to leave the theatre when he thought he heard a sound proceeding from the vicinity of the stage. He listened and heard it again more distinctly.

"Heavens! It's Hanson come for the money," he said aloud, and went back again into the office.

Brave Ben kept a loaded revolver in his desk which he always carried when taking home large sums of money on dark nights. He drew forth this weapon, now, and lighting a taper went down the passage, muttering:

"I'll shoot the thief like a dog."

When the door at the end of the passage opened and shut, he quickened his steps. Just behind it he paused, and for a moment his nerve failed him.

He wondered whether Hanson stood on the other side ready to fell him as he entered, then considering how well armed he was, and that it might not be John after all, he threw open the iron door, and held the taper high above his head.

There stood Hanson in the middle of the stage with desperation written on his face, for Jowson barred his only way of escape from the explosion that was bound to follow soon.

"So I have caught you redhanded, have I, you thief," shouted Jowson.

"Let me pass, for in two minutes we shall both be blown to the devil," cried John hoarsely, approaching him.

Jowson's answer was a report from the revolver. The bullet passed through the fleshy part of the old man's arm, but before Jowson could fire again he had him by the throat with one hand, and the revolver wrist by the other.

The taper fell to the ground still burning there, and by its fitful light the two men struggled. With John's grasp on his throat Jowson could not utter a sound, but managed to fire another couple of shots into the air from the revolver they struggled for.

It was the old man's left hand against Jowson's right, but so superior was the former's strength, that before he could fire again the revolver was wrenched out of his hand. Swinging it free, John brought down the butt end of the revolver on Jowson's head, who fell stunned like a pole-axed ox.

Trembling from head to foot with excitement, and weak from loss of blood that poured down his arm, John tried to raise the fallen man and drag him down the passage, but his powerful muscles gave way under nervous exhaustion. His hands refused to grasp and his arms to lift.

A few hours ago John would gladly have welcomed death, but now life seemed as dear to him as it had ever been. The fire he could hear crackling and roaring beneath him; volumes of smoke swept up the stairs, and the smell of gas every moment became stronger.

With reluctance he left Jowson lying there still insensible, and murmuring, half weeping, "poor fool, poor fool," he staggered down the passage, pulled himself up to a window, opened it, and let himself down to the ground by means of the iron piping, all of which he had arranged beforehand.

Home again, unseen and unheard, he bound up his wounded arm, and carefully packed his torn and blood-spattered clothes at the bottom of his basket. He had only just closed the bedroom door when a loud explosion rent the air, and a red glare shone through the window blind, becoming brighter every minute.

The town was soon a tir, and cries of fire, and the patter of clogs came from every side.

He feigned sleep until his landlady knocked him up to see the fire, then he went out with the rest. He waited there, watching the firemen's futile efforts to cope with the flames, until he heard the news that Ben Jowson was reported to be inside the building, and could not be saved. Then he went alone to his room, and sitting beside his wife's bedside, he whispered in her ear:

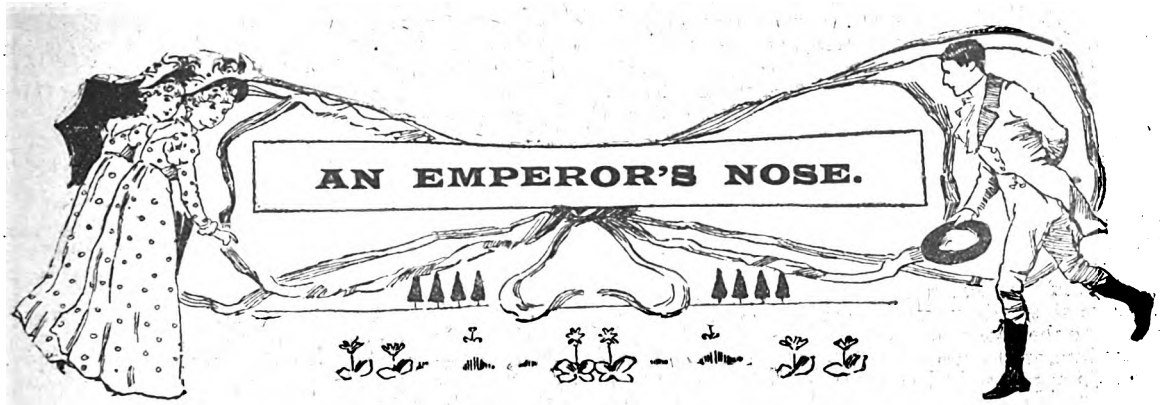
"Margy, darling, your death is avenged."

DOUGLAS VIGORS.

At the moment of going to press we have received the following telegram from Mr. Bowser:

***"Coming back to town next week. Am starting to learn bicycling.*—BOWSER."**

Digitized by Google



Two years before the outbreak of the Franco-Prussian war, and the downfall of the last Napoleon, an Englishman named James Birney arrived in Paris from London. He was what might be called a jack of all trades. He had been a small merchant in Liverpool, a bookkeeper in Edinburgh, a manufacturer in Yorkshire and an editor in Portsmouth. He was a good natured, easy going man, taking life as he found it and making no fuss. If he got a few shillings in hand, he would find some new excuse to get rid of it; if he was out of funds, his creditors would have to extend his account. Nobody called him smart, but everybody said he had a strong fund of humour and philosophy.

When a man in Cincinnati invented a bullet-proof shirt, Mr. Birney somehow got hold of the European agency—that is, he went to Paris at least to bring the patent directly to the attention of the French emperor, who was always on the lookout for military novelties. The Englishman's cheek and persistency secured him an audience after weeks of red tape. He had insisted that he would not deal with the minister of war or any other official, and was at last granted an audience with the emperor. It was in the war-office, and several cabinet officials were present. A musket was lying on the table, and Napoleon greeted the agent with:

"Well, sir, what about this bullet-proof shirt?"

"I have it here, your majesty," was the reply as the shirt was held up to view.

"Put it on."

"With pleasure."

"Now go to the farther end of the room."

"Certainly, your majesty."

"Now, sir," continued the emperor as he lifted up the musket, "I am going to fire at your breast. Are you willing to take the chances?"

"Fire away!" was the reply.

The emperor fired, and although the bullet did not penetrate the shield the force of it knocked Birney head over heels and silenced him for the next ten minutes. While it was decided that the shirt was not a success the Englishman's nerve excited such admiration that he was given a handsome present in cash and graciously dismissed. He seemed to want to say something to the emperor before he left the room, but did not have opportunity. Early the next day, however, he bobbed up at the war-office for an interview with the minister.

"It is no use," said that official as he gave him a minute. "The emperor has decided that he will not buy the shirt."

"I knew that yesterday, of course," replied Birney. "I am not here about the shirt, but altogether another thing. The fact is I do not like Napoleon's nose, and I want to improve it."

"Mon Dieu, man, but what do you say!" exclaimed the minister as he sprang to his feet.

"I say the emperor's nose is wrong, and that I can improve it. I wanted to tell him so the other day, but he hustled me out too quick. Can you bring about another interview?"

"The emperor's nose? You say it is wrong? You say you can alter it? Man what mean you?"

"I mean just what I say," calmly replied Birney. "I am not a surgeon, but several years ago I invented a little attachment to cure a badly-shaped nose. It has been tried in half-a-dozen cases and proved itself a big success. I brought one along with me, not knowing what I might run up against, and if you will give the emperor a hint——"

"Mon Dieu! Mon Dieu!" gasped the minister as he looked at the Englishman with wonder and terror in his eyes. "Then you have gone crazy! You are out of your mind. You know not what you say."

"I am all right from head to foot, my dear sir, and I can't understand your agitation. What's the matter with my scheme for improving Napoleon's nose?"

The minister rang his bell with nervous hand, and a minute later Birney was out on the pavement with a flea in his ear—that is, he was told to take himself off or he would be locked up as an insane person. It was rather a surprise for him, and it took him a day or two to get over it, but he finally came up smiling. If the minister would not help him, there were other officials who would. He tried two or three of them, with the result that he was eventually haled before the chief of police. That official probably sized him up correctly, for he said to him:

"You do not realise what you are doing. Don't you understand that you can be sent to prison for this? You do not appear to have lost your mind, and you are no fool, and the best thing you can do is to get out of Paris at once."

"But what is the crime?" argued Birney. "All I have done is to say that I can improve on the emperor's nose. Can a man be sent to prison in France for that?"

"He can, sir, as I wish to make you understand. You must not talk this way. You have made trouble for yourself, and you had best get away as soon as possible. Should the emperor himself hear of your insulting words you would be sent to some fortress for five or ten years."

"Shoo! You don't say so! But you Frenchmen are queer people! Well, I don't want to leave Paris

Digitized by Google

for a few days yet, but I'll keep quiet about Napoleon's nose. I had no idea he was so touchy about it. Not another word from me if that's the way things are."

The chief added another warning, though he saw the humour of the thing, and smiled behind his mask. Birney might stay on for a few days, but he must keep that nose attachment of his in the background and his tongue between his teeth. He went out of the police office meaning to do it, but scarcely twenty-four hours had passed away when he accidentally met a French doctor who could speak English fairly well. Birney was naturally asked why he had visited Paris, and of course he told of the bullet-proof shirt. Having got started, he couldn't stop there.

"I say, do you know I could alter the emperor's nose in less than a month?" he remarked in a burst of confidence. "Yes, sir. I could improve that proboscis of his at least fifty per cent. in three or four weeks, and I wouldn't charge a halfpenny either."

"The emperor's nose!" gasped the doctor. "But what ails the emperor's nose?"

"Out of plumb, sir, and no excuse for it. All I want is three weeks' time. Can't you get me an audience with him?"

"The dickens! Why, man, you are insulting the emperor! You ought to be locked up!"

"Oh, come now!" laughed Birney in a protesting way. "I never saw such people before. Can't the emperor's nose be out of plumb as well as any other man's?"

The doctor left him without even a cold bow, and probably went to the police, as Birney was arrested an hour later. According to his story, he was sent to prison without a trial and detained for a full year. Then he was taken out one day and conveyed to the war-office and into the presence of Napoleon.

"Sir," said the emperor after glaring at him for awhile, "is my nose out of plumb."

"It is as plumb as a plumbet," was the ready reply.

"Does it want any alteration."

"Not the slightest"

"And how is it with yours?"

"It's out of joint, your majesty, but I think I could follow it out of France."

"Then you may try."

And try he did, and his nose led him back to the land of the free without any lingering on the road.

C. B. LEWIS.

THE YELLOW SEAL.

"LOOK here, Tommy, this is becoming absolute persecution. Just read this."

Tommy Singleton gingerly took between his finger and thumb the document handed to him by his friend.

"Um, um."

"DEAR MR. BRERETON.—I am alone this evening and have something to propose to you which, I think, will be to your advantage. Anyway, come, and we can discuss it.—FULVIA MASTERS."

"Oh, and you will go, I suppose?"

"I don't quite know. Tommy, I hate the whole thing. If I could believe that this visit was to be the last I'd go with a light heart."

"Well, then, don't go. It's easy, surely, for you to find an excuse. The woman hasn't hypnotised you, has she? If you don't want to go, why—don't go, that's all, and there's an end of it. I only wish the lady would make eyes at me—she's powerfully rich, isn't she?—I wouldn't hesitate. My boy, you don't sufficiently appreciate your opportunities. What does it matter if she's a trifle beyond the canonical age. Forty! It is a good age, a mellow age, a——"

"Oh, shut up!" irritably interrupted Brereton. "You know nothing about it. You go prospecting the town over as an unattached member of the ideal detective contingent, but in matters of this sort, in the reading of the more delicate problems, social or domestic, you're a child, Tommy—an innocent, a mere potterer and dabbler."

"Thanks, awfully. You've quite roused my interest and professional instinct."

"Professional! Why, Scotland Yard would repudiate you with scorn, wouldn't own you on 'free-service' terms even."

"And thou, too, Arthur! Well, well, time will unravel the skein of mystery and do me justice. You're going, I see. Now, don't be rash. If it is to your advantage to accept the widow's offer, proposal, or whatever it is, think twice before declining. By, by!"

Within half-an-hour Brereton was seated in Mrs. Masters' drawing-room in Phillimore Place.

Arthur Brereton, stockbroker's clerk—young, passably good-looking, impressionable, and mildly æsthe ic—had made the acquaintance of Fulvia Masters, a rich widow, at an up-the-river bungalow during the past season. He interested her, and before long she attached him to her chariot-wheels in the capacity of trifle-holder, boon-companion, and devoted attendant generally.

There happening at this particular time to be no especial counter-attraction, Brereton fell in complaisantly enough with her humour, but when, later on, the lady developed tender tones, soft sighs, and a disposition to an early and late appropriation of his time and services, he began to find the situation to be somewhat tiresome.

Twenty-five without an adorative object is, in these days, certainly unusual, but Arthur Brereton was, for some reason or other, the proverbial exception. He had not as yet met with his fate, the fact fairly accounting for much that followed.

Each day did the widow become more pronounced in

Digitized by Google

her expressions of affectionate regard which, in a moment of thoughtless self-delusion, he professed to return. But the reaction was as cyclonic as had been the surrender. Alone and away from the influence of the widow's presence, in his right mind—if only temporarily—something nearly akin to disgust took with him the place of that other and strangely distorted state of mind.

The day arrived for the break-up of the house-party at Taplow and for the return of Brereton to City life. Since that time up to the evening of his visit, in response to her invitation, Fulvia Masters had, upon various pretexts, contrived to see much of him.

A rich woman, and with much idle capital, she would often drive into the City in the middle of the day, and under the cloak of business—the buying a few "Egyptians," an investment in "Kaffirs,"—would decoy Arthur out to lunch with her.

Of course, her investments, transacted through his firm, brought him both commission and credit, for they were always large. But he loathed the task she imposed upon him, and himself for the part he brought himself to play.

"Ah, truant, I have seen nothing of you for nearly a week," she said smilingly as she nestled down into a low easy-chair. "You were not in the City yesterday."

"No, I—I—have been unwell these last few days, and have had a week's rest."

"But you are recovered now?" she said quickly, leaning forward, her elbows on her knees and her face supported by her hands.

She was a decidedly and wonderfully fascinating woman. Forty? Yes. Fair and fat? No. Spare rather was she, and with large dark eyes, which under excitement glowed like coals of fire.

"Oh, yes, I'm all right now, thanks. And you?"

"Only so-so. But I've not asked you to come and see me in order that we may talk doctor's shop. Mr. Brereton, I am going to ask you an apparently impertinent question."

"That is an impossibility," he remarked.

"You think so? Well, it is for you to decide that point." She paused a moment, and then said suddenly: "Would you care to increase your income were the opportunity offered you?"

"I—I don't understand," he replied a little nervously. He half-feared from this preamble a definite declaration and a proffer of the widow's hand and—bank balance.

"No, but would you, could it be done in a business-like, practical way?"

"I should wish first to hear the way," he said, bending his head slightly.

To his astonishment she told him—he imagined the fact to be known only to his employers and to himself—that his firm were prepared to admit him into partnership provided that he could bring into the concern capital to the amount of £10,000. To his further wonderment the widow, if he would so agree, proposed to advance the sum for that purpose.

He could see by the glitter in her eyes and by the restless interlacing movement of her fingers that for her much depended upon his answer. However, he could not bring himself to a decision there and at once. He told her so, and she had perforce to be content with the crumbs of hope.

He left her, promising that on the following day he would communicate to her the result of his consideration of her generous offer. He thanked her, thanked her warmly, and reached his own rooms in no enviable state of mind.

* * * * *

Macpherson, Lyle, and Brereton have a large "deal," on hand for Fulvia Masters. It is observable that the widow is of late moody, reserved, irritable even.

Six months ago, when Arthur Brereton joined the great Copthall Court firm as junior partner, she for a brief while was radiant. But the brightness visibly dimmed day by day, until now she seemed to have virtually changed places with the object of her erstwhile admiration.

It was on this wise. Edie Drew, a niece of Mrs. Masters' dead husband, came to stay with her. This was about three months after Arthur's promotion. The girl was a charming little creature, a contrast in every way to her aunt, being fair and gentle, where the other, as befitted her brunette type of feature, was alike masterful and unsympathetic.

Arthur Brereton met her for the first time in her aunt's presence, and the latter, keen to note the drift of things where the young fellow was concerned, saw that he was not a little impressed. This decided her to curtail the visit of the young lady, who on her part was not by any means disposed to fall in with her aunt's views.

The young people, as if by instinct, refrained from any expression of mutual interest while actually under Mrs. Masters' roof; but as "love laughs at locksmiths"—or at any rate, they say so—so does he usually snap his fingers at the precautionary measures, ordinary and extraordinary, of guardians and duennas.

It was on the morning of the "deal" referred to that an apparently accidental early meeting by the rhododendron clumps in Hyde Park led to a confession and an engagement. The fact that Edie was returning that day to her Yorkshire home no doubt quickened Arthur's movements, and hurried him, perhaps a little prematurely, into the irrevocable.

It was when Edie told him how that she should certainly inform her aunt before leaving London of her engagement that Arthur saw trouble ahead. He knew, or at least shrewdly suspected, the jealous nature of Fulvia Masters, and the knowledge or suspicion, added to a twinge of conscience with regard to his own conduct, as being, so to speak, not altogether of the strictly straightforward order, rendered him now uneasy and anxious.

About three o'clock in the afternoon of the same day Mrs. Master's card was brought in to him. Having all necessary instructions with regard to the business to be done by them for her that day, he was not a little surprised at this visit; in fact, in the light of a recent personal event, he was vaguely apprehensive.

He was roused to attention by the sharp clicking of the closed door. As he sat, leaning slightly over his writing-table, she towered above him. She was an exceptionally tall woman.

"Arthur Brereton," and there was a dangerous light in her eyes, an ugly contraction of brow, prophetic of storm and trouble, "have I deserved that you should strike at me in this way—this mean, sneaking, underhanded way? Don't interrupt me, please." He had half risen as if to expostulate with her. "I have not much to say, but that little will, I think, be to the point and soon said."

"Mrs. Masters," he here succeeded in saying, "do not, I beg of you, hastily utter anything that will make our

Digitized by Google

future friendship impossible. But will you not be seated?"

"No, sir, I will not be seated. Our friendship!" she added with fine scorn. "It has never, at least upon your side, been worth so much that its loss is to be regretted. Oh, I will not occupy your valuable time longer than a few moments, I assure you," seeing that he looked nervously at his watch. "You have this morning entered into an engagement with Edie Drew."

He silently inclined his head.

"Yes, she has told me. I may not blame her; she is her own mistress. But you!" And here her cheeks broke out aflame, although she drew up her figure to its full height. "You! But there; do you remember that summer evening, sir, at Taplow? But a man's memory is like the summer itself, gone before its coming can be realised. Woman's is as her life."

"Mrs. Masters, I am quite prepared to justify my action in the matter of my engagement to Edie, and if I have said or done amiss in—with——"

"If!" she said with barely suppressed anger. "If is but a little word, but it may kill, Arthur Brereton, it may kill."

She moved to the door, placing her hand upon the handle, and half turning towards him.

"We shall never meet again," she said, "never. But you—you will both hear and know."

She was gone, and the door closed behind her.

Passing the house in Phillimore Place shortly after he saw that it was shut up. On inquiry he found that Fulvia Masters had gone abroad for an indefinite period.

Then, one morning, he received a letter from Edie saying that her aunt had died suddenly. The English doctor at Interlaken had written describing the rapid decline into which she had fallen, and forwarding, by virtue of her last request, various documents to her lawyer in London.

Among the papers was her will, executed evidently prior to her leaving England, as it was witnessed by two of her servants, who had remained in charge of the Phillimore Place house.

The strangest thing about it, however, was a legacy left to Edith Drew. A large sum of money, and, so the will ran, "one certain pint bottle of rare old Malaga wine, with a 'yellow seal,' the same not to be opened until the wedding-day of the said Edith Helen Drew, and then the liquor to be drunk by bride and bridegroom to my memory."

* * * * *

"Oddest thing I ever heard in my life," said Tommy Singleton to his friend the evening before the wedding. Tommy was to be best man. "The old woman," he continued, "must have got a bit 'wobbly' in the top storey, I should say. But is there any penalty attached to the non-fulfilment of the bottle business?"

"Yes," replied the other. "In the event of the bottle being opened before the time specified, or of a refusal to drink the wine at all, the money otherwise bequeathed to Edie goes to the Hospital for Incurables."

"Where the old lady ought certainly to have been herself. Of course there will be a witness to the due performance of the conditions?"

"Oh, yes, old Shiel, her lawyer, will be at the table to give his attestation."

"Ah! And the bottle—where is it now?"

"It is in the charge of Edie's father, as one of the executors."

"Oh—um—I think I'll go for a stroll, Arthur. See you in good time to-morrow morning. Good-night, my expiring bachelor."

When Tommy Singleton requested at half-past eleven an interview with Mr. Drew at 51 Eccleston Square, that gentleman expressed considerable surprise, but when he learnt the object of his visitor's somewhat untimely call, he grew first interested and then alarmed. At the end of half-an-hour Tommy departed with a small brown paper parcel under his arm.

The wedding-day dawned dull and showery, but Tommy burst into his friend's room with all his usual mercuriality of spirit. There is nothing of any moment to chronicle in connection with the ceremony. It was just the old thing over again—flowers, millinery, and tears—save that, perhaps, the bride, at all events in the groom's eyes, was more than passing sweet.

It was at the conclusion of the breakfast speeches that Mr. Shiel rose, and after reciting the clause of the will relating to the bottle with the yellow seal, requested Mr. Drew, as its custodian, to produce it.

The little, insignificant-looking glass receptacle was handed by that gentleman to the butler, who, solemnly breaking the seal and drawing the cork, poured the contents into two wine-glasses standing ready upon a large silver salver.

At the moment that Brereton uttered the words: "To the memory of Fulvia Masters," he caught Tommy Singleton's eye. He had never seen his friend's face so serious before, and yet there was in it a strange look of triumphant thankfulness.

* * * * *

There is a certain analytical chemist in the North of London, Tommy Singleton's brother, to wit. In his laboratory, upon the topmost shelf in a dark cupboard, is an empty wine-bottle, the cork, topped with a yellow seal, being half drawn.

The scientist will tell you that the bottle at one time contained a prussic acid decoction, and that through the detective ability of Tommy Singleton two lives dear to him were saved, and a jealous woman's after-death-revenge frustrated.

How one bottle was substituted for the other is a secret between Tommy and Mr. Drew.

RALPH ENDERBY.

HOW TO WIN KRUGER'S HAT.

November 26th Your Last Chance.

DON'T you think it would look nice on your drawing-room table, or under a glass case on your mantel-piece? Well, there is no reason whatever why you should not get it. As you probably know, the Editor of *Pearson's Weekly* has bought it, and is offering it as a prize in a simple competition. All you have to do is to send in what you consider the funniest joke you ever heard. It may be either cut from a paper or written up by yourself. In either case you must affix to it a coupon which will be found in the current number of *Pearson's Weekly*.

Digitized by Google

PEARSON'S WEEKLY

FOOTBALL SKILL COMPETITION

£100 PRIZE AWARDED EVERY WEEK.

Result of Competition No. 4.—ONE WINNER GETS THE £100 THIS WEEK.

The £100 this week has been won by **Mr. A. E. BARKER, 30 Gloucester Street, Coventry,** who sent in the correct results to all the matches.

Sheffield United, Wolverhampton Wanderers, Sheffield Wednesday, Notts Forest, Derby County, Newcastle United, and Southampton won their matches. Swindon v Reading was scratched. The remainder were drawn games.

The football matches named below will be played on Saturday, November 24th. To the competitor from whom we receive the correct result of all these matches we will pay the sum of ONE HUNDRED POUNDS. If no competitor gives all the results correctly, the HUNDRED POUNDS will be awarded to the person or persons most nearly correct.

FOOTBALL COUPON No. 7. Matches to be played on Saturday, November 24th.

MATCHES TO BE PLAYED ON SATURDAY, NOV. 24TH.	Free	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
1 NOTTS FOREST v. 2 NOTTS COUNTY																			
1 SHEFFIELD UNITED v. 2 ASTON VILLA																			
1 BLACKBURN ROVERS v. 2 BOLTON WANDERERS																			
1 NEWCASTLE UNITED v. 2 LIVERPOOL																			
1 STOKE v. 2 DERBY COUNTY																			
1 WEST BROMWICH ALB. v. 2 SUNDERLAND																			
1 MANCHESTER CITY v. 2 WOLVERHAMPTON WAND.																			
1 WOOLWICH ARSENAL v. 2 MIDDLESBROUGH																			
1 WALSALL v. 2 LEICESTER FOSSE																			
1 SOUTHAMPTON v. 2 BRISTOL CITY																			

The clubs engaged in each match are numbered 1 and 2. To fill in the above coupon, insert in the space provided the number of the club selected to win. To predict a draw, put X. THE FIRST COUPON IS FREE. A penny stamp must be inclosed for each coupon used in addition to the free one. Nine extra coupons may be used for Sixpence, and eighteen extra coupons for One Shilling.

I send in this coupon as a competitor for the prize advertised in this paper, and subject to the conditions printed on this page:

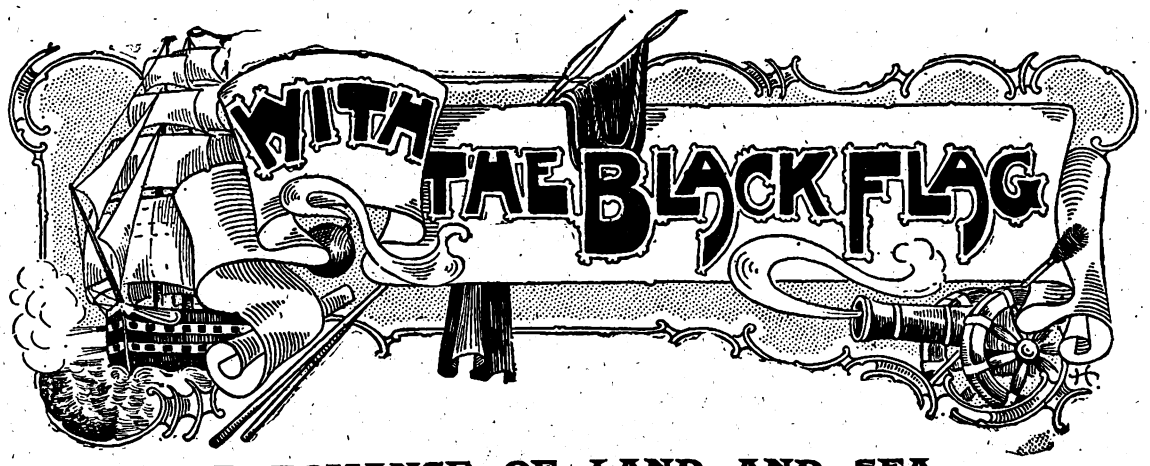
Name and address.....

THINGS TO REMEMBER.

1. Coupons may be sent either from "Pearson's Weekly" or "Short Stories."
2. All coupons must reach us not later than Friday, November 23rd, first post.
3. Competitors should cut out the whole coupon, score it as directed, put their name and address in the space provided, and send to "COUPON No. 7," Pearson's Buildings, Henrietta Street, London, W.C.
4. All coupons are at senders' risk, and if they go astray, from whatever cause, we do not accept responsibility.
5. Competitors must attach their private address to their attempts. No prize will be sent to any post-office, refreshment rooms, or other places at which letters are called for. Attempts bearing such addresses will be disqualified.
6. In the event of a tie the prize will be divided.
7. Competitors may send in any number of attempts.
8. It must be taken as a condition of the competition that anybody competing therein agrees to abide by the Editor's final decision.

* Intending competitors in the above would do well to procure a copy of "The Football Who's Who," which contains valuable information and statistics showing the previous records of the various clubs, and the particulars of the points of about a thousand of the best known players. This book will be found of great service in determining the chances of the teams engaged. It only costs a shilling, and may be obtained of a booksellers, and post free for 1s. 3d. from the Publisher, 17 Henrietta Street, London, W.C.

Digitized by Google



A ROMANCE OF LAND AND SEA.

By William Westall.

Author of "With the Red Eagle," "The Phantom City," "Nigel Fortescue," etc., etc.

PRINCIPAL CHARACTERS.

Major Wyvenhoe, commander of an expedition which went out from England to help the Venezuelans in their struggle for liberty.
Captain Cautley, who is in charge of the ship which took the expedition out.
John Ready, the servant of Wyvenhoe.
General Arismendez, ex-Governor of Pampatar and Vice-President of the Venezuelan Republic.
Don Iago Santleo, a friend of Wyvenhoe.
General Urdenetta, Governor of Pampatar, a bitter enemy of Wyvenhoe.
Bolivar, Supreme Chief of the Venezuelan Republic.
Tamanac, an Indian Cazique, and great friend of Santleo.
Master Wyvenhoe, the leading man at Manoa.

CHAPTER XXII.

The Destruction of Manoa.

"Rosalind! Rosalind!"

"Your father," I said, and going towards the house we presently met him.

"I have news for thee, lass," he exclaimed, laughing ironically.

"News for me! What is it, father?" she asked.

"Would'st like to be wed?"

"Would I like to be wed? You are pleased to make merry, father," rejoined Rosalind, regarding him with wondering eyes.

"Nay, it is too serious a matter to make merry over. A man would take thee to wife."

Rosalind and I exchanged glances.

"Could the judge have overheard us, or was it some other man?"

"Who is the man?" she inquired dubiously.

"Antony Goring. Nobody else. Stephen Parker hath just been here with a proposal from Antony's father, who, as thou knowest, is my bitterest enemy. Thou hast found favour in Antony's eyes, and if I give thee to him it will be a healing of all differences, and I shall have no further trouble. What sayest thou?"

"With your leave, sir, I will answer for Rosalind," I struck in. "Master Antony Goring has spoken too late. I have just asked her to be my wife, to which she has given her consent, and we were coming to ask yours."

"You, you have asked Rosalind!" cried the judge, now as much surprised as we had been. "A simple mountain maid, unlearned, knowing naught of the world to which you belong, is no fit mate for you, kinsman."

"That is my concern, judge. It is enough that we love each other, and the very fact that she is neither a woman of the world nor a worldly woman makes me love her all the more. May we hope for your consent?"

"Yea, verily, and I give it with all my heart, kinsman, knowing that you will make our Rosalind a good husband, and esteeming it a privilege to be still more your kinsman. Moreover, this will be a fitting answer for Antony Goring. I told Master Parker that I would as lief see Rosalind dead at my feet as the wife of one whose soul is as foul as his face. But Stephen being a wise man he counselled me to send a message less likely to stir up further strife, so I bade him say that I would consider the matter, and speak to my daughter. Now it will be enough to answer that as she is betrothed to Master Rupert Wyvenhoe I cannot gainsay her."

Rosalind's eyes filled with tears.

"I thank you my father; your kindness fills the cup of my happiness to overflowing," she exclaimed joyfully, putting her arms round his neck and kissing him.

"Mine also," said I. "I was your debtor already, now I am more your debtor than ever, and I have still another favour to ask. As you know, my home is in England——"

"And you want to take Rosalind thither. It will nearly break our hearts to part with her, and she will be loth to leave us. But that is far off, you will abide with us yet a long while. Nay, I am no Laban; I don't ask you to serve for Rosalind as Jacob served for Rachel. The sooner you marry the better I shall be pleased, so as to let Master Antony know of a surety that the prize he would win can never be his."

"It cannot be too soon for me. What say you, Rosalind? When shall it be?"

"Nay, kinsman, you are my master now, it is for you—when you and my father will."

"Your sweetheart, darling, not your master, and call me no longer kinsman, say Rupert."

"May I? Would it please you?"

"Much."

"Then I shall always call you Rupert."

"I do not know what is the custom here, but in England it is the bride's privilege to name the day. Had you not better speak to your mother?"

"Yes, that would be best. Hie thee to thy mother, child

Digitized by Google

Make the time when you will, only let it be short," said the judge.

"She is young and artless, and as innocent as an angel; for which she is perhaps none the worse," he added when Rosalind was gone.

"For which she is all the more precious. I am very fortunate and you are very kind, and for the present I shall say nothing about taking her away, only I must not trespass too long on your hospitality——"

"No more of that, an you love me, Rupert. You will only be a child the more, and my barns are full and my house hath many rooms. Ah, Master Antony will get an answer he little expects."

"I hope the rebuff you are going to give him will not add to your difficulties. If looks go for anything he is likely to be a dangerous enemy."

"He looks everything that is bad, the red-skinned knave, and I am sure of one thing, he would give me more trouble as a son-in-law than an enemy, and he and his people are enemies already. But never fear, ere long I shall master them all."

I hoped the event would justify the judge's confidence, though I had misgivings. About the earthquake shock, and the pillar of smoke, for as such I deemed them, he said never a word.

I had not expected that he would, but it did surprise me that these portentous signs were ignored by everybody else, even by Santley, from which I could only conclude that they had either become contemptible by long familiarity, or that Manoeros were perversely blind to portents, possibly from ignorance, which any other people would have regarded with apprehension and dread.

But as it was not for me to sound a note of alarm I held my peace, resolving, however, to take Rosalind from the mountain so soon as I could do so without giving umbrage to her kinsfolk.

Mistress Wyvenhoe and her daughters decided that the marriage should take place a month after the betrothal. And then something else happened.

I had noticed for some time that Santley and Diana were very friendly. My declaration emboldened him to make his, which met with acceptance from all quarters, and it was arranged for both weddings to take place on the same day.

In England this would have seemed undue haste. At Manoa it was nothing unusual. There were neither settlements to make nor trousseaux to prepare. The girls' outfits had been in preparation since their childhood, and it was very little Rosalind would be able to take away with her.

The judge dowered his daughters with gold and I was surprised by its amount and value. It was mostly in the shape of trinkets—bracelets, brooches, chains, rings and other baubles.

There were also some ancient Spanish coins, obtained I know not whence, and several ingots. The rings were of certain specified weights, and passed on occasion as coin, since though it pleased Master Wyvenhoe to say, and in a certain sense, truly, that they had neither money nor mints at Manoa, tokens of value, albeit not officially recognised, had long been in vogue and were found useful.

The judge's liberality was opportune and relieved me of an anxiety. My own funds were so low that they had not sufficed for our travelling expenses to the coast and the voyage to England, and it was to the last degree improbable that I should find anybody in Bolivia or Peru to whom I could sell a draft on London.

Nothing of moment befell in the interval between our betrothal and the weddings.

When my rival got his answer he was very angry, used bad language and vowed vengeance against both the judge and myself. But the judge only laughed, saying that people who threatened vengeance seldom executed it, and that Master Goring was too much of a cur to dare to raise his hand either against him or Master Rupert. Which I have no doubt was reported to Antony and added fuel to the fire. But I was too happy and too much taken up with my sweetheart to let his threats trouble me.

Even my forebodings as to the fate of the mountain, in

"You, you have asked Rosalind!" cried the judge now as much surprised as we had been.

the event of a serious earthquake happening and Mount Lofty becoming an active volcano, were almost forgotten, though I did once broach the subject to Santley. He saw no cause for alarm.

The tremblings had been going on ever since his grandfather could remember, and were so frequent that nobody noticed them. Lofty did not smoke. What I imagined to be smoke was merely a dark cloud hovering over the summit. Smoke and clouds were so much alike that they might easily be mistaken for each other.

Santley spoke so confidently that I did not care to argue the point, though I still held to the opinion that what I had seen was smoke, and what I had felt were small earthquakes.

The betrothal of the judge's daughters was a notable event at Manoa and excited general interest. He was the first man on the mountain and greatly respected as well by reason of his personal qualities as his official position.

The good wishes he received were numerous and hearty, his waning popularity revived, whereby his friends were encouraged and his opponents so much discouraged that they almost ceased opposing. All of which vastly delighted him.

"The very thing. We wanted something to unite us. This double marriage will do it, and we shall have the finest wedding feast that was ever known at Manoa," he exclaimed.

Everybody in the village, except the Gorings and their clique, and many from other parts of the mountain were invited and regaled with the best their Master and Mistress could give them. He himself, as Chief Magistrate, per-

Digitized by Google

formed the ceremony and presented each of the brides with a marriage certificate drawn up in proper form.

Then there was a banquet, at which Santley and myself had to make speeches, and to the banquet followed a fandango that lasted till past midnight, a very late hour on the mountain. Never, I think, was a more joyous party, the guests were all gaiety and good humour, and danced as though they might never dance again, and poor souls they never did.

Truly, and without exaggeration, this was the happiest day of my life. It was happiness to know that Rosalind was mine, to see her smiling face and look into her glowing eyes, to join in the dancing and mingle with the guests as they strolled in the grounds, hear their merry laughter and receive their kindly greetings.

Yet so overshadowed is that day by terrible memories that I can never think of it without a sense of horror and a sinking of the heart.

We were to spend our honeymoon at home for the very sufficient reason that, short of camping out, we could not well spend it anywhere else. Nevertheless, we meant to make a few excursions, the first, in company with Santley and his wife, to the lake that fed the river; but as this would involve an early start and a long climb, the lake being considerably higher than Manoa, we decided not to set out until the day but one after the wedding.

Arrangements were made accordingly, the mules selected, provisions prepared, and the servants who were to accompany us, including John Ready, bidden to be ready betimes.

After supper the judge proposed that he and I should take a turn in the garden, which we did, leaving Rosalind and her mother in the verandah.

"My daughters have ever been dear to me, but it is only now when they have taken to themselves husbands that I know how dear they are, and how much I shall miss them. Diana will always be near us. But Rosalind. You will not take away the child very soon, Rupert," he said anxiously.

"Not soon at all," I returned. "Not for ever so long. Only my friends, with whom I have not been able to communicate for months, will think I am dead, and if there were any possibility of sending a letter——"

"If that will content you it shall be done. Tamanac is a great traveller, can find his way any whither, and likes wandering. He will take your letter to Choco, or some other place on the coast, and by hook or by crook get it dispatched to England. Then you will not think of going before the end of this year?"

"I won't think of going before the end of this year, at the soonest."

"I thank you, my son, for your complaisance, and the matter being for the present settled we will say no more about it. Sufficient for the day is the evil—oh, Heavens!"

The judge gave a spasmodic bound and lurched heavily forward. In trying to save him I slipped and we both went down. An arrow had pierced his back, and as I fell a second arrow whizzed over my head, and stuck in a tree a few paces in front of us.

I rested the stricken man's head on my shoulder and called for help, on which Ready, who was near, came running.

"He is surely not mortally wounded, John?" I cried.

"Judge Wyvenhoe will never speak again, sir," answered John, looking at his face; "this arrow has pierced his heart."

Just then Rosalind and her mother, who had heard my call, also came running. They had no need to ask what had happened. The prostrate body, the ghastly face, the murderous arrow, told their tale only too well.

I shall not attempt to describe the scene that followed. It was one of the most painful experiences of my life.

When the body had been taken into the house Ready and I tried to track the murderer but it was too late, the light had failed, and there was so much cover about that he had every chance of getting away unseen.

Soon, Santley and several friends of the family came, all in consternation and, save Santley, in utter bewilderment. Nobody had a doubt as to the identity of the murderer.

"Antony Goring hath done this," was in all their mouths. Yet nobody proposed to do anything. The judge had kept matters so entirely in his own hands, that now he was gone the whole community appeared to be paralysed. Moreover, this was the first murder ever committed in Manoa, and there existed no machinery for dealing with so terrible a crime.

I urged Santley to take action.

"What would you have me do?" he asked.

"Arrest Antony Goring and charge him with the crime."

"He would deny it, and we have no evidence against him. Also he is protected by a strong party, resolutely led; our leader is dead, and there is none to take his place. The deputy-judges are old men and too timid to move a hand. The council will meet to-morrow, perhaps to-night, to elect a

To the banquet followed a fandango, which lasted till midnight.

Digitized by Google

new judge who is sure to be Walter Goring. Only by force can it be prevented."

"I would use force then."

"If we can command it, which I doubt. I will make inquiries and consult with our friends."

In warm climates the interval between death and burial is of the shortest, and on the next day Master Wyvenhoe's body was followed to the grave by nearly all the village and interred with the forms usual at Manoa, which included a religious service led by one of the late judge's oldest friends.

After the funeral we had a family conference. In Santley's opinion there was no possibility of bringing the murderer to justice. Walter Goring, who had been elected judge, and several members of the council were, he believed, implicated in the crime, and would set their faces against any attempt to open an inquiry; moreover, their party was united and resolute, ours dispirited and disorganised. Some of them had already gone over to the enemy, and the people at large were too easy going to take up arms even in order to avenge the death of one who had devoted his life to their service.

"So nothing can be done?" I asked.

"At present, nothing. Later on, perhaps, we may find a leader, reunite our party and oust the Gorings. But that will take time, and though I am sorry to say it, my friend, you must go now."

"Go! What for?"

"Because if you don't you are likely to be held fast here, so long as you live. Those who opposed your coming are now in power, and for the same reason as they opposed your coming will forbid your going. They say that no stranger can be trusted to keep secret Manoa's history and whereabouts, on the preservation of which depends its prosperity and independence, if not its existence."

"When would you have me go?"

"This night."

"Nay, that would be too much like running away."

"It must be as James says, Rupert," interposed Rosalind with a peremptoriness which surprised me. "Delays are dangerous, that second arrow was meant for you, Antony Goring hath other arrows in his quiver, and there is no guarding against foes who lie in ambush and shoot you in the back."

This settled the matter, Rosalind was willing to go, and after what had happened I felt no desire to prolong my sojourn in Manoa.

"To-night you may get away without difficulty, nobody will suspect you of a design to leave so soon after the poor judge's death," observed Santley. "Later, even to-morrow, there might be obstacles. Diana and I will set you a day's journey on the way. We must make our preparations swiftly and secretly. Instead of taking your letter to the coast, Tamanac will guide you thither."

"May I not go too, James?" asked Beatrice.

"And leave your mother?"

"Let us all be together till the last moment; we will both go," said Mistress Wyvenhoe.

"I see no objection, it will be only two mules the more; and you and Beatrice would be very desolate, left here by yourselves after parting with Rosalind."

And so it was arranged. Tamanac, whose comings and goings were not regarded, and a servant whom we could trust, started with four pack mules when it was dusk. They were to wait for us at the rest house, near the foot of the ladders, where the Cazique would obtain two additional mules and load them with provisions.

We others did not set out till past eleven, which at Manoa was almost the middle of the sleeping night. Rosalind and I took with us only such things as were necessary for the journey, including of course her golden dower, the value of which I estimated at upwards of three thousand pounds sterling.

Santley led the way, and John Ready brought up the rear. Our unshod mules made no noise, nobody crossed

I rested the stricken man's head on my shoulder.

our path, we went steadily on, and at four o'clock reached the rest house, where we found Tamanac and had breakfast.

"How if we are followed?" I asked Santley.

"Our flight won't be known for two or three hours. It will take at least one to organise a pursuit, and with a start of eight we shall not easily be overtaken."

"You forget the ladders."

"No I don't. The topmost ladder was lifted an hour before we set out, and cannot be replaced for at least three days."

(To be concluded next week.)

In the Christmas Double Number of

"SHORT STORIES"

will appear the first of a series of articles entitled

"BRITAIN'S WARS."

They are written in a very readable style, and the whole will form a complete history of the most important wars in which Britain has been engaged.

Digitized by Google

SHORT STORIES ABOUT TELEGRAMS.

We devote, every week, two pages of *Short Stories* to pithy, humorous anecdotes similar to those which appear in these columns. A prize of £1 1s. will be sent to the reader who submits the best storyette this week, and a copy of "The Knight of King's Guard," by Ewan Martin, to each of those whose attempts are used. The anecdotes may be either original or selected; in the latter case the source *must* be stated. The prize of One Guinea offered for the best Storyette in this competition has been won this week by Mr. E. C. Lempriere, 22 Seymour Road, Harringay, N. Attempts this week must deal with Stories about ELEPHANTS, and must reach the Storyette Editor, *Short Stories* Office, Henrietta Street, Strand, London, W.C., by Monday, November 26th. Post-cards only, please.

A Little Misunderstanding.

SHE was reclining in a low chair in the drawing-room, thinking about her dear Wil ie, who had been legally her property for the space of three months, when a telegram arrived for her. Hurriedly tearing open the buff envelope she scanned the contents, then fell back in a swoon.

The message was from her brother in the city, and read:

"Will run over to-day—George."

Her maid at last restored her to consciousness. Her Willie run over! She could not grasp the full significance of it. One thing she would do—go to him at once; so she hastily attired herself, and at length reached her brother's office, who, having sent the news, would be able to tell her all about it.

"How is he, and where have they taken him?" Her brother stared at her stupidly. "Oh, don't keep me in suspense! Tell me where he is!"

"Where who is?"

"Why, Willie."

"At his office, I presume. I haven't seen him to-day."

"Then what does this mean? Isn't he run over? Is this one of your silly jokes?"

George took the flimsy from his sister, read his own message, then exploded with laughter. It was a long time before he could convince her that his simple intimation that he would run over and pay her a visit, was not a detestable practical joke.

E. C. L.

Tricking the Post Office.

SOME time ago a journalist went into a post-office to send a telegram and post a letter.

"Can't sell stamps now," said the clerk; "it's after hours."

"But this letter is very important," urged the journalist.

"This office is only open for telegraph business," said the clerk decidedly.

The journalist took a form, wrote a telegram—fourteen words—and handed the clerk sevenpence. The clerk gave him a sixpenny and a penny stamp, and the journalist calmly struck out the last two words on the form. stuck the sixpenny stamp on his telegram, and walked out of the office, affixing the penny stamp to his letter in doing so.

W. A. S. H.

The Wrong Lords.

THERE was a dinner in the Marlborough Rooms. The principal talk was about a certain bill.

"I wonder what the Lords have done?" said the chairman.

"I'll wire to the nearest club and ask," replied a well-known M.P.

So he sent the telegram, with a request that the latest news of the Lords' division should be sent to him.

This was the reply:—"Latest from Lords'—Australians, 150 for eight wickets. Trott not out."

J. B.

Impossible.

A PEEBLESHIRE worthy was about to get married. The marriage was to take place at the home of the bride-elect who resided at a village some distance from where William lived.

The eventful day having arrived, the prospective bridegroom started for the station. On the way, however, he was hailed by the village grocer, who entertained him so heartily that the end of it was William missed his train.

The grocer suggested sending a telegram, and at William's dictation wired as follows:

"Don't marry till I come.—William."

W. J. B.

They Knew it Wasn't My Writing.

FOR the past few years my summer holidays have been spent at Scarborough, and, as I usually stay at the same house every year. it has been my custom to secure apartments beforehand by letter.

This year I omitted to write until a couple of days only remained before my holidays began, and, fearing lest I should be too late by writing, I sent a "wire," telling them to reserve apartments for me as usual.

On arriving there, in due course, I was surprised to be told that the house was full, the rooms I used to occupy only having been engaged that very morning.

"But why did you let the rooms?" I demanded hotly, "when I had engaged them myself by telegram two days ago. Didn't you receive it?"

The good woman threw up her hands in horror as she exclaimed:

"Oh, sir, I am so sorry; but when your telegram came we thought someone was playing a trick on us, for both Betsy and myself agreed as how it wasn't in your own handwriting!"

Expostulations being useless, I had to find fresh quarters.

A. V.

Digitized by Google

Not What I Wanted.

A FRIEND of mine held a good position in the Zoological Gardens.

I had been out of a situation for some time, and he promised to let me know when a vacancy occurred that I might fill.

Imagine my feelings one morning when I received a telegram to the following effect:

"A vacancy in the monkey-house; come at once."

R. J.

A Matter of Punctuation.

MR. JONES had a country house, and had run up to town. On his return journey, the train came into collision, occasioning damage and delay. Mr. Jones was shaken, but not otherwise hurt. He got a friend to telegraph for him, which he did, to the following effect:

"Serious accident. Mr. Jones remains. Coming 8.30 p.m. train."

But the clerk transposed the message, thus:

"Serious accident. Mr. Jones' remains coming 8.30 p.m. train."

And when that unfortunate gentleman arrived, instead of finding his carriage, there was an undertaker with a hearse waiting to convey his remains to his sorrow-stricken family.

W. C. L.

Smartly Done.

THE other morning, whilst at breakfast, I received the following telegram:

"Come at once. Father very ill.—Mother."

Hastily finishing my meal, I hurried off to catch the train. When I arrived at my destination I met my father, who never looked better in his life, who greeted me with:

"Good morning, Tom. What brings you down here so early?"

At first I could hardly believe my senses. What was the meaning of the telegram? Was someone fooling me? It really looked like it. For reply I handed him the telegram, which I had fortunately brought with me.

"Someone has been having a bit of fun out of you," he said.

"Going a bit too far, I think," I exclaimed.

"Anyhow, if I were you," he said, "I would hurry back home as soon as possible, and see if anything turns up."

So hastily bidding him good-bye, without waiting to see my mother, as the train started in a few minutes, I returned home again. When I arrived there, I let myself in with my latch-key.

The house appeared to be deserted. I searched the lower rooms for my wife, but found, instead, that burglars had been in while I was away. They had taken all the silver they could lay hands on. A horrible feeling came over me. Had they killed my wife?

I called out aloud, but received no answer. I rushed upstairs, and, lying on the table in my wife's bedroom was a telegram from her sister, the contents of which were: "Mother very ill; wants to see you particularly. Come at once."

This was the solution of the mystery. The burglars had sent the telegrams, so that they could go on with their work unmolested.

About three o'clock my wife returned, and had practically the same tale to tell as I. She had got her telegram five minutes after I had left, and had hurried off at once, only to find her mother in the best of health.

The plans the burglars had laid had worked well. We are more careful now about telegrams.

E. L.

Misunderstood.

A CERTAIN man travelling in America had not enough money to reach his destination, so he went to the railway official and told him his friend had large shares in the company, and if he would telegraph to him he would let him have a pass.

The railway official did so, and received the following reply:

"Don't let Tom walk."

The official at once gave him a pass and he reached his destination and at once went to thank his friend.

The railway official soon after received the following telegram:

"You idiot, I said, 'Don't, let Tom walk,' and you gave him a pass."

E. H.

Only the Code.

DURING the early period of the last revolution in Peru, the leaders of the revolutionist party stayed in Chili, and directed the movement by means of the cable.

I was at the time in charge of an English business house in Lima. My rooms were over our office, and one night I was awakened by a loud rat-tat-tat on the iron-bound door below. I went out on to the balcony, which overhung the street, and to my amazement I found that the house was surrounded by soldiers.

"What do you want?" I shouted in Spanish.

"The head of the firm," was the reply.

I went down and admitted the officer—he was a full-blown general—and his aides. I wondered what I had done.

"Is this cablegram for your firm?" he asked.

I read it. There was one word, "*blindado*"—the Spanish for ironclad.

Then I roared with laughter.

The gold-laced general looked indignant.

"You will find it no laughing matter, señor, to plot against the government, and arrange for ironclads."

So I explained. I had ordered some goods from Chili, and this suspicious cablegram was merely to advise me that they had been shipped, "*blindado*" being the cipher word in the code book.

H. N. R.

£25 IN PRIZES.

PEARSON'S TALKING PUZZLE.

Second Edition Now Ready,

Price 6d.; Post-Free from this Office, 7½d.

Digitized by Google

THE HEROISM OF "KID."

In Lowchester Cathedral Choir School we once had a hero, and this is the story of his heroism.

He was a fragile little fellow with a white face and big blue eyes. His name was Kenneth Irenœus Dalland; and, because the initials of his name spelt that derogatory monosyllable, he was always called "Kid"—always, that is, when he was not called "Miss Kitty" or "Saint Irenœus"—for so innocent and quiet and simple he was, or seemed, that any one of those names appeared to suit him.

He was more "had on" than all the other kids in the school put together. Somehow he seemed to lend himself to it. He was so guileless and trustful, and believed everything the fellows told him. He it was who was dispatched to the Lodge at the Close Gate to ask the stout old janitor at what time the balloon might be expected to go up; he it was who was sent to the chemist's for two gallons of pickled canary seed; and it was he who was deputed to collect subscriptions from leading citizens on behalf of the "Lowchester Society for Relieving Aged and Deserving Beetles."

From these, and many like expeditions Kid always returned with the same expression of trustful good fellowship; and he joined, as heartily as anyone, in the laugh against himself. But sometimes when the dormitory was still, and the fellows asleep, he would have a good cry because they thought him such a simpleton.

The boy who took most delight in proving to the satisfaction of everyone the extreme greenness of Kid was a fellow named Pearson—the noisiest, jolliest, most reckless boy in the school—a boy with curly hair, eyes that were a-twinkle with fun, and a voice which seemed made for the merry music of laughter. Pearson used his wits—and they were of no mean order—in devising original methods of making Kid's innocence a cause of mirth, and his efforts were crowned with conspicuous success.

And yet Pearson was Kid's hero and special idol. In all Pearson's triumphs he rejoiced, and he suffered with Pearson in his moments of misfortune. Whenever Pearson underwent personal chastisement—which he did, on an average, six times in the week—Kid's big blue eyes would grow dim with sympathetic tears, and on one occasion he expended a month's savings on a pot of soothing ointment wherewith to salve the hero's wounded palms. But Pearson cared for none of these things; it was another, and more delicate, kindness which melted his heart.

It chanced one day that the mighty had indeed fallen. Pearson the intrepid, Pearson the mocker of Mr. Gardiner's lithe cane, was standing in a remote corner of the playground convulsed with sobs. He had returned from an interview with the master with reference to his latest and most daring escapade, in which that sorely tried man had resorted to new and unwelcome tactics.

He had not whacked Pearson, he had talked to him. He had made touching references to Pearson's mater, who was a widow, and to the sad condition of the half-yearly report which she was expecting. It was that which got Pearson down, and he was having a dark hour of meditation and repentance.

At that moment Kid happened to cross the playground accompanied by another boy. He gave one pained glance at his hero; then, getting between his companion and Pearson's corner, he suddenly called the former's attention to some object on the school roof, and, his eyes being thus drawn from the contemplation of Pearson's fallen state, led him away.

Presently he returned alone. Pearson was standing in the centre of the playground. He came to Kid and shook him gently by the shoulder.

"Kid," he said, "you saw me blubbing just then?"

"Yes, Pearson," Kid replied.

"But Renshaw didn't?"

"No, Pearson."

"Kid," said Pearson, with lips a-tremble, "you're a brick! Some day I'll do as much for you."

About a fortnight later Pearson's opportunity came. Some repairs were to be done to the interior of the Cathedral, and the workmen had erected a scaffolding, the top of which rose higher than the triforium gallery. Pearson examined this structure critically as he passed out from service. He drew Kid aside.

"Look here, Kid," he said, "the chaps think you're a bit of a muff—got no pluck, and that sort of thing."

Kid nodded.

"I've done my share in making them think so," continued Pearson bluntly.

Kid nodded again.

"But I know you're not," said Pearson. "And you were jolly decent to me the other day; so, if you'll take your cue from me, I'll show the chaps what you are."

Kid was grateful, and there the matter dropped.

That evening after tea Pearson said in careless tones:

"Say, you chaps, do you know what Kid and I are going to do to-morrow dinner-time?"

No one could guess.

"Well," continued Pearson, "you know that jolly big wooden thing they've rigged up in the nave. Kid and I are going right up to the top of it when the men are at dinner, and going to look over the side. It would be ripping," he concluded, with a lame attempt at explanation, "to have a bird's-eye view of the tombs and things in the nave. I'm taking Kid because he's the only chap I can trust not to funk. And see here," he added, "if any fellow comes grinning at us he'll get his head jolly well punched. We don't want all Lowchester hanging round." And he winked ostentatiously at Kid.

* * * * *

"It's all right," cried Pearson the next day as he and Kid passed into the Cathedral after morning school, "those chaps are all out on the road; there's no one about, and there's the ladder. Come on Kid; don't funk it!"

"I'm not funking it," said Kid quietly.

He looked at the scaffolding. The long upright supports held two platforms, one considerably lower than

Digitized by Google

the other, and the top of the ladder rested on the upper stage.

"Elders and betters first," said Pearson as he put his foot on the bottom rung of the ladder and began to ascend. "Follow me, Kid."

He ran lightly up the ladder, Kid following with a throbbing heart.

"Wh-whew!" cried Pearson, with a long whistle, as he stood at length on the top platform. "It's no end of a way up. No notion it was so high. Does it make you giddy, Kid?"

"N-no," said Kid, who now stood beside him, "I don't think so."

"It does me," said Pearson shortly.

"Then let's go down," cried Kid earnestly. "Do let's go down, Pearson!"

"Do you think I'm going to funk?" asked Pearson in a rather shaky voice. "Not me! Don't let's gas about it; I'm going to the end to have that bird's-eye view."

Without another word they walked to the end of the platform. Above them rose the vaulted roof; beneath them were the projecting, roughly-hewn planks of the lower platform, and beneath that—far beneath—the cold tiles of the nave floor.

"Now we've got to look over," said Pearson. "I'll look over first because I'm the biggest chap. Out of the way, Kid, let me come."

Kid held back and allowed Pearson to pass him. He was trembling a little, but his fear was not for himself. Pearson walked to the edge of the platform, his lips firm set. Not for the world would he have confessed how curiously his head was swimming and how loudly his heart was beating. Kid watched him as he advanced so near the edge that the toe of his boot was over the end of the platform, and deliberately looked over.

"There," he said, looking up again quickly, "I've done it. I said I would. But you'd better not, Kid, you——"

The end of the sentence was lost in a sudden shrill cry. Kid ran to the end of the plank, stretching out his hands. There was a dull thud, then a dead silence. The cold sweat stood in beads on Kid's brow, and a feeling of sickness nearly choked him. But in his heart there was no fear, only a great dread and a courage which drove away all thoughts of his own danger.

He stood where he was, and called Pearson's name in an agony. His voice echoed dully through the great hollow aisles, but there was no answer. He called again, and this time he fancied that he heard a groan just beneath him. He closed his eyes for a second, and whispered a prayer to the great Love who hears and heeds in the silence. Then, crouching cautiously on his hands and knees, he looked quickly down.

"Thank goodness!" he murmured, for there beneath him, on the projecting planks of the lower stage, lay Pearson, pale and huddled together, but alive. Kid paused a moment. The projecting portion of the lower platform upon which Pearson lay was immediately beneath him, about twice his own length below. But this lower platform was much narrower than the one on which he stood, and was altogether a frailer structure.

"The ladder," he thought, and hastened to it. But a glance showed that it was impossible for him to reach Pearson by that means, for the ladder, resting on the top stage, was useless for the lower and narrower planking below.

Kid slowly returned. He sat down on the edge of the upper platform with his legs dangling down. If he was to reach Pearson he must jump, and jump with care. To misjudge his leap would be—he cared not to think what. Slowly he lowered himself over the edge of the platform, clinging tightly to it. He hung by his hands over the lower scaffolding.

For a second he hung so; then, loosening his hold suddenly, allowed himself to drop. He alighted with a bang, and the shock sent him forward on his hands and knees. He scrambled up, and, kneeling beside his friend, called him by name. Pearson's eyes were closed and his face was colourless, but his breath came warm on Kid's hand. Presently he opened his eyes, and drew a long breath.

"Halloa, Kid," he said slowly, "where am I? Yes, I remember. Say, Kid, I can't move. There's something up with my leg. I was a cad to bring you here, Kid. Forgive a fellow, won't you?"

His eyes closed again. Kid was bending over him when he became aware of a new and terrible danger. The projection upon which they were crouching gave a great crack, and Kid felt it tremble. Then he saw that the planking was a fragile structure, joined for some temporary purpose to the firmer fabric beyond. There was another crack, then another, and another, and he knew that their support was giving way beneath their weight.

Then there came to Kid a great courage and a great determination. Stooping low, he seized both Pearson's listless hands, and drew them across his own shoulders. He looked neither up nor down—he fixed his eyes straight before him. The terrible silence of the great place lay solemn all about him. Raising himself to his full height, and putting forth all his strength, he moved slowly forward step after step across the narrow creaking planking, bearing Pearson, half dragged, half carried, with him.

Once he slipped and nearly fell; once he gave a little cry as the terror of danger swept across his mind. Then he set his lips and panted on till he gently laid his burden on the safe, though narrow, platform which was his goal. Then, throwing himself down by Pearson's side, he sobbed as though his heart would break.

Next moment there was a short, ominous crack, and the fragile planking upon which a moment before they had been went hurtling down with a rattling crash upon the tiles of the Cathedral floor. Kid put his arm round Pearson's neck and shuddered.

Then the workmen, returning at a later hour, found them; and, a ladder being directed to the lower scaffolding, strong arms bore Pearson safely down, Kid following with a white, grave face.

* * * * *

Pearson lay in bed with his leg in splints, and Kid sat by his side. Pearson was holding Kid's hand in his.

"Kid," he said suddenly, "you're a brick! You saved my life, Kid. I——"

"Chuck it, Pearson!" said Kid.

There followed a long silence.

"I'm always getting into some mess," said Pearson at length. "I wonder what the mater thinks; she——"

The door opened, and a lady in black stood on the threshold. She went quickly to the bed, and stroked Pearson's curly hair from his brow.

"Mater!"

"My dear boy!"

Kid softly left the room, closing the door behind him.

"I'm his chum," he said to himself, "but she's his mater."

SPENCER J. GIBB.

Digitized by Google

Cradwicke Park Mystery.

THE death of Mrs. Upton of Cradwicke Park was a shock to the whole of the district for miles round, and its mysterious character caused it to be a source of wonder and a topic of conversation for much longer than the proverbial nine days.

She was a young woman, not more than twenty-five, and had been married only a few months at the time of her death. Cradwicke Park was hers in her own right; her father had possessed two estates, and when he died he left one to his daughter and the other to his son. Miss Cradwicke had married Richard Upton, a young man from the next county; he had no property of his own, and the marriage was a "fine thing" for him, as other people were ungracious enough to say. The union was regarded as a love match at first, although there had been rumours of disagreements during the last two months.

As to Richard Upton, there was nothing said against him; he was a pleasant kind of young man and had contrived to win the favour of his neighbours.

Mr. Richard Upton went to London for a week. He had only been gone a few days when his wife disappeared. Search was made, but without result, and Mr. Upton was telegraphed for at the address where he was known to be lodging.

He responded immediately and returned by the first train, which started within forty minutes from the time he received the telegram. Further search was instituted and inquiry was made for miles round, and the little river was dragged; then it occurred to somebody that there were certain unfrequented parts of the Park itself which had not been explored.

In one of these out-of-the-way spots, Mrs. Upton's body was found. No one had anticipated that she might have met her death within the bounds of her own estate; the servants had stated that she had left the house with her hat and jacket on, and it was concluded that she was going to call on some of the poor people, as she occasionally did.

There was an inquiry into the cause of her death. The first examination simply revealed a severe scratch on the leg just above the ankle—such a scratch as might be caused by a thorn while scrambling through a hedge, but the loss of blood was so small that this could not for a moment be looked upon as the cause of death. The post-mortem examination threw a little more light on the matter, but it served to make the death proportionately more mysterious. There were traces of poison.

Closer search among the grass and twigs near the spot where the body was found resulted in the discovery of a small phial without a label; the husband admitted that there had been a dispute between them and that his wife, in a fit of anger, had threatened to take her life; but he added that he regarded this as merely an outburst of temper.

There was a difference of opinion, however, between the experts who made the usual analysis; it was pointed out that Mrs. Upton had been dead two days before her body was found, and that, in the ordinary course of decomposition, certain poisons are generated.

Had Mrs. Upton committed suicide or no? In the end, the jury decided upon a verdict to the effect that she had been found dead and that there was not sufficient evidence to show how she met her death.

Upton showed great grief at the loss of his wife and for some months led a very retired life. As there was some doubt about the cause of Mrs. Upton's death, the county police took the matter up, but they soon dropped it again and the interest of the public died away.

There was only one person whose interest was maintained; that was Mr. Fred Cradwicke, who resolved to devote himself to the task of discovering the truth if it were in any way possible to do so. But he kept his resolve to himself.

He made it his business to invite himself to Cradwicke Park for a few weeks, ostensibly to condole with his brother-in-law—who now owned the property by reason of his wife having died intestate. Cradwicke did not

Digitized by Google

suspect his brother-in-law, but he wanted to find out exactly how matters had stood with husband and wife, as that might have a bearing on the probability of suicide. But he could glean no further information than that given to the coroner. So he left the Park in order to make an investigation farther afield.

The question of robbery and murder combined was out of the question, seeing that nothing was taken from the body; it was therefore useless to look about for the probable thieves.

Altogether, the affair was a mystery that appeared to be hopeless of solution, but Fred Cradwicke felt that it was a duty on his part to discover the truth, and he made up his mind to devote a whole year, if necessary, to the fulfilment—or attempted fulfilment—of his task.

It is one of the odd things of this life that you may search for something for a long time in vain, and then, when you are convinced that nothing more can be done and are about to give up the search, a "final try," conducted probably in a half-hearted manner—results in success. Thus it was with Fred Cradwicke.

Only two weeks of the appointed period remained, and Fred Cradwicke found himself in a small village within five miles of Cradwicke Park. He was dispirited and hopeless, and was making his way to the Park with a view to staying there and resting for two or three days.

He found the inhabitants of this village in a state of mild excitement, due to the fact that a fair was being held in a field outside the village. Curiosity, and the lack of something better to do, took him in the direction of the fair.

It was evening, just after six o'clock, and the shows were "about to begin," for during the day there was no chance of business. Fred walked about aimlessly, noting the poor booths and the general meagreness of the whole thing; he was about to leave the field and continue his walk to the Park when he was attracted by some gaudily-coloured pictures hanging outside one of the booths.

These pictures informed the wondering rustics that Nalla Dora, the Great Female Snake-Charmer, had come amongst them to exhibit her wonderful powers over gigantic boa-constrictors and similar reptiles; they showed her in various positions with fearful snakes of extraordinary length and girth twining themselves round her arms, legs, waist and throat, with their heads poised ready to sting her, while she remained a model of calmness. A show of that description was well worth an admission fee of one penny, and the rustics readily parted with their money.

Fred smiled and turned away, but by this time a little more animation had been imparted to the fair and he was impelled to stay a little longer. A goodly number of people had arrived from various parts and the fun was beginning. Fred had always been a student of human nature and it pleased him to stand first here and then there in order to watch the small crowd. It began to grow dark and naphtha lamps were lighted outside the booths, which induced the villagers to remain longer and spend a few more pence. Fred was outside the booth of the snake-charmer when a man attached to the show announced the last performance for the day. Only about half-a-dozen persons went in, and Cradwicke resolved to go with them.

The exhibition of snake-charming offered no particular attraction to Cradwicke; he would have left the booth almost at the commencement but for the fact that he occupied a front seat and did not wish to disturb the other spectators by pushing his way out. Owing to his position he was the last to get into the open, where he was surprised to find himself in the dark; all the shows had turned out their lights and the merry-makers were gone.

Not knowing exactly which way to go to get clear of the field, he tried to follow his late companions and find the opening in that way, but they seemed to have scurried off and he could only hear the occasional sound of a voice at some distance from him. There was no moon and the sky was cloudy, so that it was not an easy matter for him to find his way out.

He looked about him for a few seconds and then made a start in what he believed to be the proper direction, but he had not gone half-a-dozen yards when he brushed against a man who was coming towards him.

Fred was on the point of apologising when the other man uttered a brief "Beg pardon!" Fred never pronounced his apology, for the sound of that voice deprived him of speech. It was Richard Upton.

Fred walked forward for a few yards and then came to an abrupt stand. What was Upton doing there? He appeared to be going straight to the booth of the snake-charmer. Scarcely knowing what he was about, Fred deliberately faced about, so that he might be in exactly the same line of march, and walked back to the booth.

He found the door and pushed it open gently; there was a faint light from the lamp on the platform, and Fred, feeling something like a thief, peered about cautiously. He saw Nalla Dora and Richard Upton standing together on the platform.

There was some secret here which Fred resolved to penetrate. Slipping on his hands and knees, he made his way silently round the booth towards the platform. It was not a spacious place and he had to be careful. He kept his eyes and ears strained to catch every movement and every sound, but in spite of his vigilance he did not notice that another figure was keeping close to him.

"I sent for you because I intend to have an answer to this question—When will you redeem your promise?"

Those were the first words which reached the ears of Cradwicke as he crouched near the platform, and they were spoken by Nalla Dora, not in the strange accent which he had heard during the performance, but in clear English. This girl, as he had fancied, was no Hindoo; she was probably a gipsy of English birth.

"How can I marry you without arousing suspicion?" replied Upton. "In any case, you would not be received by the county people. It would——"

"It matters nothing to me what the county people may think, and it should matter nothing to you if you loved me as you pretended. We could go away—go abroad—and be happy." Nalla Dora spoke with the vehemence of rising passion.

Upton remained silent and the snake-charmer continued.

"I will not listen to your offer of money! I will share the wealth and position which I helped you to get into your own hands! You loved me once, and you left me for a woman with money. That woman is out of the way. You never loved her, and when you had her money you tired of her and would have married me had you been free. You are free now, but you have ceased to love me. But I claim my share!"

"Confound it!" exclaimed Upton, looking about him

Digitized by Google

uneasily. "Don't talk so loud! I tell you, it would be better for you to accept my offer."

"And leave you free to marry the other woman? You see, I know more than you think. Never!"

"Then you will get nothing!" said Upton in a tone of sullen determination. "You have no hold on me. If you tell the public that my wife nearly surprised us in the park when the show was outside our gates a year ago and that you caused that confounded serpent, which you are so fond of taking about with you, to sting her, you must incriminate yourself. What a fool I was to agree!"

Nalla Dora laughed scornfully.

"You call yourself a fool now, but you were ready enough to assist in regaining your freedom, and that before she had made a will, and you helped in making the scratch on her leg to obliterate the mark of the serpent. Listen, if you do not swear to do what I wish, you shall die as your wife did."

There was silence, followed by some angry whisperings which did not reach Cradwicke. Then he saw Upton catch her by the throat with his left hand, and the light fell on a gleaming object in Upton's right hand.

There was a scuffle, a cry that resembled a command from Nalla Dora, and as Cradwicke scrambled on to the platform he was horrified to see a monster serpent twine itself about the form of his brother-in-law. At the same moment Cradwicke was dragged from the platform and a heavy knee was placed on his chest.

"If you move a muscle I'll choke you!" hissed a voice which he recognised as that of the man who had done the shouting outside. "No man shall play with my sister!"

Fred lay there powerless, knowing the tragedy that was being enacted close to him. His eyes wandered to the platform in an effort to see what was going on, as though that might be some help to his wretched brother-in-law, but he could see nothing. He heard two or three gasping cries, and the sound of something being crushed, and then he fainted.

When Cradwicke came to himself he was lying in a dry ditch by the side of a road quite a mile from the field and he knew that some drug or anæsthetic had been administered to him, for it was noon. He staggered and stumbled along the road till he came to an inn, where he told part of what had happened. Upton's body was found at some distance in another direction.

The police did their best to trace Nalla Dora and the man who called himself her brother, but they never succeeded. She certainly never appeared again in the character of a snake charmer.

Cradwicke Hall came into the possession of a distant relative of Upton's. People wondered why Fred Cradwicke never attempted to get possession of the estate which bore his name, but he himself has declared more than once that he would sooner beg his bread than own Cradwicke Park.

DAISY GEORGE.

A CURATE preaching for a charitable institute (deaf and dumb), endeavoured to excite his audience to greater liberality than usual.

At the close of a flowing sentence, in which, without mentioning the name of the house, he praised the staff and the founders, he delivered himself as follows:

"I allude to an institution in our midst, our noble institution for the dem and duff—" (great confusion)—"the duff and dem institute, I mean!"

35 TEN-POUND MEN AND 1 TEN-POUND LADY CAPTURED.

Since last week one more Sealed Envelope has been claimed, the lucky captor being:

Miss A. Millard, 14 Swinburne Avenue, Manor Park, London, E.,

who captured No. 57 in Trafalgar Square.

£360 HAS NOW BEEN PAID AWAY,

and there are still a number of Sealed Envelopes awaiting claimants.

There are also ten Ten-Pound Ladies travelling about the country who are only allowed to deliver their Envelopes to ladies.

The celebrated song

"HAVE YOU GOT THAT £10 NOTE?"

is now on sale, and can be obtained from all newsagents for 1s. 4d., or direct from the SONG DEPARTMENT, Pearson's Buildings, Henrietta Street, London, W.C., for 1s. 6d. Postal Order (not stamps) post free.

PLAYED ON THE STAGE.

Two sketches have been written on the subject of the Ten-Pound Note Scheme, one lasting about half-an-hour and one fifteen minutes.

In No. 1 Sketch the cast consists of four actors and two actresses. In No. 2 Sketch the cast consists of two actors and one actress.

Any organisers of entertainments for Christmas, such as church bazaars or Christmas parties, or private theatricals, who wish to include either of these sketches in their attractions, should write to the TEN-POUND SKETCH DEPARTMENT, Pearson's Buildings, Henrietta Street, London, W.C.

Full particulars of the Scheme will be sent on application to Room 36, Pearson's Buildings, Henrietta Street, London, W.C.

THE OPENING CHAPTERS

OF MR. AUSTIN FRYERS'

WEIRD NEW STORY

"THE UNCREATED MAN,"

APPEAR IN

"THE DAILY EXPRESS"

TO-DAY (Saturday, November 17th).

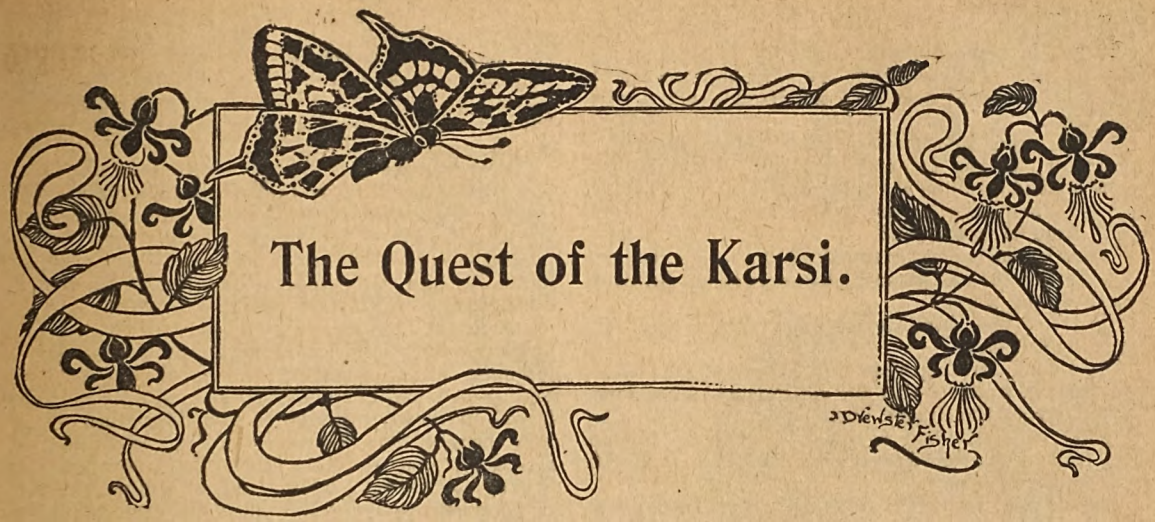
The powerful work of Mr. Austin Fryers is already well known to the readers of "PEARSON'S WEEKLY," but his latest Romance of a Scientist who set himself to war with Nature exceeds all his previous stories in the thrilling nature of its incidents.

Every reader of ***Pearson's Weekly*** should read Pearson's Daily,

THE "EXPRESS."

It is the best and most interesting newspaper published and only costs **½d.**

Digitized by Google



When it was made known that Professor Hunter was married, everybody stared at everybody else in surprise; and when it was ascertained that the marriage was the result of a romantic adventure, everybody opened his eyes still wider.

What! Hunter, who was at least fifty, a learned professor, a traveller who seemed to care for nothing except Eastern languages and similar curiosities—a man who took no interest in women-kind unless it were the stone or wooden image of some half-forgotten goddess, or the history of a female deity in some ancient manuscript—Hunter married, Hunter in a love romance! Impossible!

But it was true; he himself confirmed the rumour in a few terse sentences at the end of a letter on scientific subjects to his old friend, Professor Clayton.

The world wanted to know all about it and Clayton was besieged with inquiries; but he knew nothing of the circumstances. When asked to write to Hunter for details, he remarked that the latter would never give them by letter, he felt certain, and as he was going to Persia himself in a little while he thought it best to call on Hunter and obtain the information by word of mouth.

He did so, and two months later he sent home a long letter from Shiraz, where Hunter was residing for a time with his wife, a Persian lady. He said that Hunter had given permission for the facts to be made known, so that we need not scruple to show the letter to those who wished to learn the full story.

The narrative was given as nearly as possible in Hunter's own words, and ran as follows:

"The adventure really began in Bokhara where I made the acquaintance of an old Persian flower-dealer.

"I was on the look out for anything in the shape of very rare botanical specimens, and this old fellow had books and parchments containing descriptions and rough drawings of many plants which I have never come across in the whole course of my wanderings; musty old papers and volumes which looked as though they had not been opened for a score of years.

"'Ha!' said the old fellow, who spoke English very well and did not take it kindly when I addressed him in his own tongue. 'You are a great traveller, but I can show you more than you have seen in plant life. What do you think of this?'

"He pulled out a book composed of sheets of parchment attached together and to a cover; they were full of Chinese characters and drawings of flowers. Turning rapidly over the leaves, he stopped at one and pointed to it with his forefinger. The drawing represented a species of orchid entirely unknown to the world; it resembled a human head with a cap, and it was called the Karsi.

"'That plant is fictitious!' I exclaimed decisively.

"'Nothing of the kind!' cried the old man just as energetically. 'This volume contains the full history of the flower. It was discovered by an officer in the army of the great Timour the Tartar more than five centuries ago; he saw it on the brink of an ensanguined pool where the slaughter had been heaviest. It was taken away and cultivated by a sect which made a deity of the plant. It has been kept quite a secret ever since.'

"'H'm!' I grunted. 'A likely story. Just as if the temples, or whatever they be, of this sect, could not be entered and the secret discovered. Where is this sect located?'

"'The Russian Governor-General at Tashkend would give a considerable amount to anyone who could tell him!' was the reply. 'The members of that sect keep their whereabouts a profound secret, and there is reason to believe that the world would be all the better if they were dispersed. That is all I can tell you.'

"I took a tracing of the sketch in the Chinese volume and afterwards I made a drawing of the Karsi on card board and coloured it according to the description given in the book. Then I put it in my bag and forgot it for a few days.

"About three weeks later I was at Samarcand in company with an acquaintance who was, like myself, a traveller. We were talking of plants and I showed him the drawing of the Karsi. This incident occurred in the street, and I remember that we both stood still for a few moments while my friend scrutinised the sketch and listened to my account of it.

"'Do you intend to make a search for it?' he asked me jestingly.

"'I would, if I knew where on earth to look for it,' I replied.

"He laughed and then the matter dropped. The rare orchid was brought to my mind again on the evening of the following day while I was seated in the little restau-

Digitized by Google

rant; I had finished a light meal, and was gazing meditatively into space, when a folded paper fluttered into my lap and brought me back to myself. Before picking up the paper I looked round to see who had thrown it there, and discovered near me a tall Hindoo with a very white beard.

"I had seen him two or three times already in Samarcand; he was an expert juggler. Catching my eye, he nodded as much as to say that it was he who had deposited the paper on my knees, and then he went rapidly from the restaurant.

"I took up the paper and found written on it a message which startled me and yet still more excited my curiosity concerning the Karsi.

"'To seek the Karsi is to court destruction. Be warned by a friend!'

"I had but little sleep that night, for I felt that there was a basis of truth in what the old Persian had told me. I looked out for the juggler during the next day, but he was gone; so I resolved to speak to a wise old Mollah whom I had seen every day crossing the square on the way from the mosque.

"The old man had heard about the Karsi, but he could not tell me anything definite concerning the locality where the sect held worship, or even the name of the sect; but he gave me one piece of information which I considered of great importance. He told me that he had heard from a shepherd near the foot-hills of the Thian-Shan Mountains that a Hindoo had been found in a dying state at the foot of the mountain, and round his neck was a chain with a piece of gold on which was engraved a flower similar to that of which I spoke. The Hindoo had pointed upwards to the mountain, but had died before he had been able to utter a word.

"That decided me, and accompanied by two armed Armenians, I set out for the Thian-Shan Mountains and interviewed the shepherd. He confirmed what the Mollah had told me.

"I allowed two days to elapse and then I began my survey of the mountain for some trace of the whereabouts of the strange sect, for I was firmly of the opinion that somewhere in the mountain-range I should find the home of the Karsi. The presence of the Hindoo with the golden token established the fact beyond a doubt in my mind.

"We spent a week in wearying toilings up the sides of the mountains, but we were baffled every time; after struggling up a path which only a mule could climb with anything approaching to ease, we would find that it ended in a deep fissure or in a perpendicular wall of mountain.

"On the eighth day we came to a similar abrupt termination to the path we were ascending—that is, to a wall of rock; but this time I discovered proof that certain things had been hauled up this wall and I felt exultant.

"'I think we are upon the track at last,' I said to my two companions. 'We must see what is on the other side.'

"The wall was about fifty feet high, and I scaled it by cutting holes for my feet and hands. Once seated astride the wall, I lowered a line which enabled my less athletic companions to reach the top. I secured the line and let it down on the other side so as to form a means of getting back again.

"We appeared to be looking into the mouth of an extinct crater about two hundred feet in diameter; a well-defined path led downwards until it was lost in the blackness. Down this path we all three went with grim determination.

"When we had gone some few yards into the darkness, we found a tunnel on our right; we entered this, the two Armenians going just in front. When we were well inside, I struck a match and lighted a taper, which I fixed in a crack in the wall; it did not give much light, but at least it was something bright in the darkness and served to make us feel safer.

"How delusive that idea of safety was; we had not gone half-a-dozen yards further when a figure dashed out from somewhere upon the two Armenians; I heard a cry, and I knew by the sound that they had been pushed into some awful pit. Ere I had time to think more, the figure was upon me and I was engaged in a death struggle with some powerful creature.

"I am not a young man but I am still blessed with a large amount of physical strength and my assailant had his work cut out to master me. He did his best to drag me forward, and in spite of my struggles he managed to to pull me slowly towards the spot where my two men had disappeared. I was beginning to think that I should be forced to follow them, when he tripped and fell heavily on his back; he received my full weight on his chest and was rendered breathless and strengthless for the time being. Before he could recover, I had seized my opportunity and had him gagged and bound.

"I fetched the taper and had a look at him, with the result that I uttered an exclamation of surprise. It was the juggler, but without the beard, and round his neck was a chain with a golden token bearing a representation of the Karsi!

"'I thought you were a friend?' I asked him somewhat ironically. 'It looks like it.'

"By the light of the taper I could see an expression in his eyes which induced me to remove his gag. I had my hands ready, notwithstanding, for I was not quite sure of him, but he spoke in a low voice and told me briefly that he was indeed anxious to be my friend.

"'You are seeking the Karsi,' he said, 'and that means destruction to you unless you are careful.'

"Then he explained that he was the unwilling slave of this strange sect and would gladly be free, but he feared that they would compass his death if he left them. He had seen me show the drawing to my acquaintance, and determined to warn me. Finding that he was unable to dissuade me, he expressed his intentions to help me. As I showed some surprise at his conduct, he informed me that I had befriended his brother some years ago and he was willing to repay the debt of gratitude.

"Acting on his directions, I made my way through the door by which he had entered the tunnel and, after traversing other passages, I suddenly emerged in the open—in a valley of pine trees with a dark stream running through it and forming a moat to what seemed a fortified city on the opposite bank. For there rose a wall to a height of sixty feet, and above this wall I could see palm trees, domes and minarets. This must be the home of the Karsi and the strange sect that worship it! I must see more of it!

"Back I went to Keshub and explained to him what I wanted. He shook his head, but agreed to help me.

"'Go at midnight,' he said, 'and toss this ring over the wall. Ashkaba will find it and will drop a rope from the palm tree. You will climb into the tree and there you will be able to see much when the day dawns. You can only go at night, because then the stream is dried up.'

"He would not accompany me, saying that it was better for him to keep guard. So I waited impatiently for midnight and then went on my mission.

Digitized by Google

"I found the bed of the stream dry, as Keshub had said. I threw the ring over the wall and after a few moments I heard a rope dangling against it. It was knotted and I had no difficulty in reaching the top of the palm tree from which it depended.

"How can I describe all the wonders which met my gaze when daylight came? I saw streets with beautiful houses and lovely plants full of song birds; people of Mongolian type in fantastic dress. I saw processions wending their way through the streets which all converged to a common centre where stood a magnificent temple. I was lost in wonder and more than once nearly betrayed myself.

"At midday there was a special procession, in the centre of which was a sumptuous litter. On it reclined a Persian woman, young and of surpassing beauty, the like of whom has never met my gaze; I followed her eagerly with my eyes and I groaned in spirit when she passed from view.

"Yes, I who have never felt any passion for a woman was now consumed by love for one whom I had only seen for a short time and at a distance! But it was enough, and the appearance of that divine face and figure was burnt on my brain.

"I do not know how I passed the remaining hours, but when it was dark enough I slipped down the rope and crossed the stream, which was knee-deep—I could not wait until midnight. When Keshub saw me, he started in dismay and asked how I dared venture from my hiding-place at so early an hour.

"'What are they doing there with that young Persian?' I demanded without replying to his question.

"He would not answer until I had partaken of food, when he told me that it was the creed of the sect to sacrifice human beings to the Karsi. The emissaries of the sect were sent far and near to entice the young and beautiful to their city under various pretexts, but when the dupes reached their destination they were, after a brief measure of homage and enchantment, sacrificed to the Karsi.

"'Do you mean to say that the lovely woman I saw to-day is to be killed?' I gasped in horror. 'How?'

"'They will take her in a grand procession to the temple at noon to-morrow,' replied Keshub with a half-shiver. 'When inside, she will be taken into a vault and placed on a stone at full length, under the belief that some new delight is in preparation; but the long arms of Karsi will close about her form and drain the blood from her body.'

"'Horrible!'

"Keshub, in reply to further inquiries, said that the vault would be absolutely dark and that the woman's figure would be obscured by a thick black veil and a mantle.

"'I must save her!' I said in a decided tone. 'You must help me.'

"'But how can you do it?' asked Keshub anxiously. 'It is impossible and you will lose your life in the attempt.'

"I did not answer, for I was revolving in my mind various plans for saving the Persian. Suddenly I jumped to my feet.

"'I have it!' I exclaimed. 'You and Ashkaba must help me.'

"From my bag I took some pellets which were made of a poison of the most virulent kind and dissolved them in water, making a liquid with which I saturated my clothing and anointed my skin.

"'The Persian is tall and will be concealed by a veil,'

25,000 TRIAL PACKAGES Free!

Rheumatism Cured by a Single Remedy that You May Try Without Spending a Cent.—Cured Many Cases of 30 and 40 Years' Standing.

JOHN A. SMITH

If you have rheumatism, write to me and I will send you free of cost a trial package of a harmless remedy, which cured me and thousands of others, among them cases of over 50 years' standing. It is a grand remedy, and in order that every suffering reader may learn about it, I will gladly send them a Trial Package free, even if more than 25,000 invalids should apply. Many a distressing case of rheumatism, among them some which defied Hospital, Drugs, Electricity, and medical skill, were successfully cured. In Denham, Ind., U.S.A., it cured a lady who then cured 15 of her neighbours. In Prosser, Nebr., U.S.A., it cured Mrs. C. Morritz, who had been afflicted for 52 years. In Fountain City, Wis, U.S.A., it cured Hon. Jacob Sexauer after suffering for 33 years, notwithstanding having employed seven physicians. At 130 Oak Street, Vincennes, Ind., U.S.A., this remedy rescued Miss. Emma Callender from a case of rheumatism, which her physicians considered fatal. Rev. C. Sund, of Harrisville, Wis., U.S.A., testifies that this remedy cured two members of his congregation, one who had suffered 18, the other 25 years. Thousands of similar instances could be mentioned where this horrible plague has been completely cured. Write at once for a free trial package and other information, for it is an honest remedy that you can test before you part with your money. Be sure and write your name plainly and give your full address, to avoid any mistakes in delivery. Mr. Smith's principal offices are in Germania Building, Milwaukee, Wis., U.S.A., but for the convenience of the British public he has also opened London offices. Address all letters to John A. Smith (Dept 1007), 6 and 7 Stonecutter Street, London, E.C.

Digitized by Google

I said meaningly. 'I must take her place. I am saturated with a poison that would kill half the people in that city if they each took only a small dose. Do you understand?'

"At midnight both Keshub and I scaled the wall into the palm tree and thence we descended into the city. Keshub explained to Ashkaba what I intended to do, and together we made our way stealthily to the house occupied by the lovely victim.

"Ashkaba acquainted her with the doom intended for her and with my plan for saving her; it is needless to say that she nearly fainted when she learnt that she had been duped, but notwithstanding the horror of it, she declined at first to permit me to take her place in the procession, and it was not until she had been repeatedly assured that I had taken proper precautions that she consented.

"It wanted one hour to midday when the procession stopped in front of the house of Naski. Instead of the proposed victim, it was I who—enveloped in a veil and a mantle—stepped forth and took the seat in the litter.

"I will not stop to describe my feelings during the march to the temple; I saw nothing of what was going on, for I was absorbed in what might happen when I was conducted into the vault.

"I dimly remember some sort of formality when I reached the temple, but my faculties began to awaken only when I was descending the steps under the guidance of the priest.

"I could not see whither I was going, for I was in total darkness. When we reached the floor of the vault, I was led along it for a few yards and then bidden to lie flat on a stone which I could feel with my foot, and await the pleasures of paradise.

"As I lay there I was divided in opinion concerning the course I should take. I might leave the stone and grope my way up the stairs, trusting to luck for a chance to escape; before they could discover that their victim had eluded them, I might get away with Naski. But then the Karsi would still live to drink of human blood. On the other hand, if I could kill the dreadful plant, I should save many lives even though I might lose my own. In the end I resolved to go through the ordeal.

"My deliberation was brief, but I had only just arrived at a decision when I felt something gripping me in different parts of the body. I covered my face and neck with my arms in order to protect them as far as possible and then waited in awful suspense.

"Tighter and tighter the horrible things compressed my body; one cord or tentacle had such a tight grip of my left leg that I feared it would be broken, while another twisted itself round my bare wrist. The pain was as great as the mental agony; I feared that my plan had failed and that my end had come, when the tentacles began to loosen. I breathed again and waited, yet still wondering whether the poison had taken effect upon the plant. Some minutes passed ere I could be quite sure, and then with my free arm and hand I groped for my knife and cut myself free.

"The Karsi was dead; so far I had been successful, but I now had to get clear of the temple and the city. I had reached the foot of the stairs when the door at the top was thrown open and a flood of light revealed me to the priest who stood in the doorway, scimitar in hand.

"With a howl of rage he leapt down the steps. I quickly stepped aside and struck him a heavy blow as he reached the bottom, felling him senseless. Then I bounded up the steps and through the door, which I closed behind me.

"Cries of astonishment and fear arose as I walked through the street and the people shrank from me, which was fortunate. It was also lucky that Keshub had kept near the temple, for I might have chosen the wrong street and so upset my scheme. He came to my side, brandishing a scimitar, and bade me run before the people recovered from their amazement.

"We ran as hard as we could, cutting down the few who tried to bar our way, and reached the house of Naski in safety. Here we found the lovely Persian and the Hindoo woman waiting, and without a moment's delay we were off to the palm tree.

"Over the wall and across the black stream on a raft prepared by Keshub; and just as we reached the opposite bank we heard the loud howls of vengeance uttered by the sect that worshipped the Karsi.

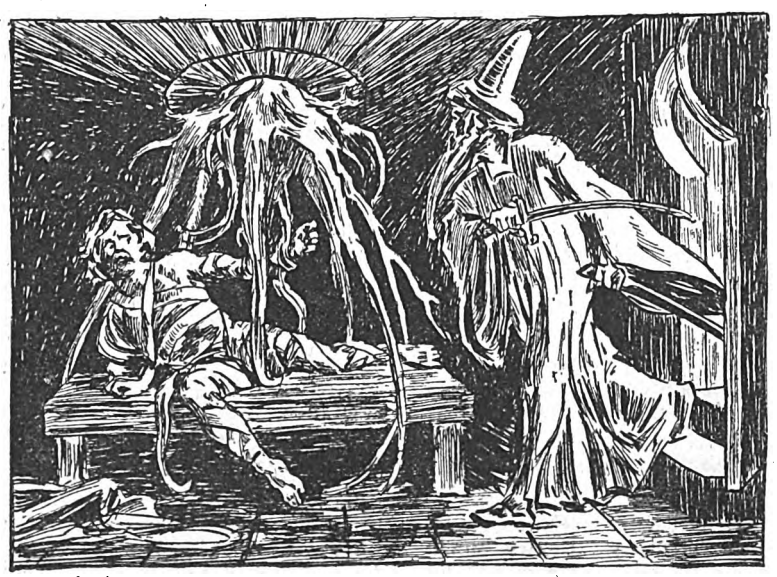
"We sped along through the tunnels, placing such obstacles as we could in the path of probable pursuers. As we neared the spot where the two Armenians had disappeared, we heard a rumbling, which made Keshub hurry us along at a still greater speed.

"'It is the earthquake!' cried the Hindoo.

"Across the mouth of the crater we sped, dreading every second that we should be swallowed up. We could hear the crash of buildings and the shrieks of terror even at that distance. Over the outer wall of rocks and down the mountain side we stumbled, and rested not until we reached the dwelling of the shepherd.

"By the time we reached Shiraz it had become clear to me that I could not live without Naski, and on questioning her I found that she was of the same opinion regarding myself."

G. A. Dray.

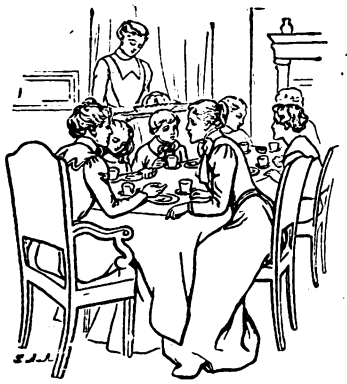


"I felt something gripping me in different parts of the body."

Digitized by Google

Solving the Jelly Problem.

No housewife who has wasted time and effort in attempting to make Table Jellies by the old troublesome and expensive method can fail to appreciate the economy and high excellence of Chivers' Gold Medal Jellies. Instead of facing the difficulty of ascertaining the correct quantities of the various materials used, and the further trouble of straining and flavouring, the modern housewife takes her packet of Chivers' Jelly, and *without loss of time or trouble* and at a minimum of expense, she produces a dainty dish fit for any table. Clear, sparkling, with the fragrance and flavour of ripe fruit, Chivers' Jellies are indeed a dessert to grace a feast. Prepared under ideal conditions of cleanliness and purity, they represent the highest excellence, and that the public



recognise and appreciate this fact is well evidenced by the wide popularity of these delicacies. Chivers' Gold Medal Jellies are nourishing, refreshing, and cooling, just the thing for large dinner parties and children's gatherings. Dr. Andrew Wilson writes: "Chivers' Jellies cannot be surpassed." A lady writes to her grocer as follows: "When I order Jellies, please always send Chivers', as cook says they are so much better"; whilst the *Lancet*, confesses them to be "an excellent Jelly, possessing a flavour of quite a natural character."

Chivers' Gold Medal Jams and Table Jellies are sold by Grocers and Stores throughout the United Kingdom. *Insist on being supplied with Chivers'*. A free sample packet of Jelly will be sent on receipt of post-card to S. Chivers and Sons, Histon, Cambridge.

Don't Cough-use

They at once check the Cough and remove the cause.

The Unrivalled

One Lozenge alone relieves. Sold everywhere, Tins 13½d. each.

Keating's Lozenges

THE MOST NUTRITIOUS.

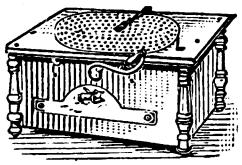
EPPS'S

GRATEFUL—COMFORTING.

COCOA

BREAKFAST—SUPPER.

HAND ORGANS FROM 20s.



Made in three sizes, in black and gold case. Full tone. Six metal tunes, plays all songs, hymns, or dance music. Sent on receipt of 4s. P.O., if desired, balance 4s. monthly. Send for list of tunes, prices, &c. ATLAS CO., 182S High Street, Camden Town, London; 63 Seven Sisters Road, N.; and 14 High Road, Kilburn.

RUPTURE

Gentleman (cured himself) will send Free Particulars of inexpensive self-curative treatment. Stamped address.—(Box 49), 59 Castle Street, Carlisle.

DRUNKENNESS

CURED. This can be done with or without patient's knowledge. Send me a stamp and I will tell you how. (Send no money.) Address, in confidence, Mrs. C. H. (Room 3), 195 Oxford Street London, W.

A SUM of from 12s. to 25s. per week can be earned in spare hours or evenings by either sex everywhere.—Send addressed envelope for particulars to Box 24, Eclipse Works, 89 Aldersgate Street, E.C.

GUN. 12-bore double barrelled breech-loader, top lever, central fire, rebounding locks, extension rib, walnut pistol stock, new; 38/- approval.—G. V. James, 48 Devonshire Street, Bloomsbury, London.

NOSE Wintry weather makes Red Noses. I cure them. Send 1/ for my book on "Their Cause and Prevention," or 3/9 for Medically approved Cure. Particulars of my patent Nose Improver and Ear Machine sent for stamp.—C. LEBS RAY, Specialist, South Castle Street, Liverpool.

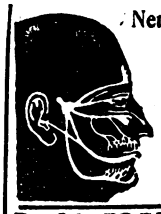
HAIR DESTROYED.

Send me an envelope (stamped and addressed) and I will tell you how to remove all superfluous hair free of charge. (Send no money.) Address, in confidence, Miss E. V. (Room 3), 195 Oxford Street, London, W.

GEO. R. SIMS' "TATCHO."

4/6 TRIAL BOTTLES TO-DAY 1/10

Address—GEO. R. SIMS CO., 81c GREAT QUEEN STREET, LONDON, W.C.



Neuralgia Positively Cured!

Free Test Offered.

The annexed cut presents in the prominent white lines the nerves most liable to attacks of Neuralgia. Sufferers will know only too well the pain tracks, and will be glad to know of a Simple and Sure Remedy. The proprietors will send Free two sample Zox Powders to any reader of *Short Stories* sending stamped envelope to ZOX CO., 11 HATTON GARDEN, LONDON E.C.

POST FREE THREE STAMPS

A Treatise on the Modern and Successful Treatment of Nervous Diseases and Exhaustion, by local absorption.

Fully up to the advanced ideas on the subject.

THE MARSTON CO., 59 and 60 Chancery Lane, London W.C.

WHY BE FAT?

When a lady, who has discovered a simple means of Self-Cure will be happy to send particulars of same to any sufferer from this distressing complaint. Free on receipt of stamped addressed envelope. ADDRESS:

Mrs. TREVOR WELLS, 63 HIGH HOLBORN, LONDON, W.C.

VIE D'OR FOR THE HAIR.

THE AMERICAN TREATMENT.

Vie d'Or puts 10 years on the life of the hair.

SOLE AGENT:

GUSTAV ROSSELLI, 4 New Park Street, Park Lane, LEEDS.

Price 2/9 post free.

2/9 CHALLENGE TO THE WORLD—OUR WARRANTED TIMEKEEPER, 2/9

With a guarantee to keep correct time for three years, will be sent to any address on receipt of P.O. or stamps value 2/9 and three stamps extra for postage. To every purchaser during this month we give with it ABSOLUTELY FREE a strong Mexican SILVER CHAIN. All we ask of you is to show them to your friends, as by doing so you advertise our business. GENEVA WATCH IMPORTERS, 148 Old Street, London, E.C.

TOO STOUT.

I was for years by chance I came across a simple home remedy that reduced me from 17st. to 10st. 12lbs., and I will willingly send particulars free to any sufferer enclosing stamp. Mrs. L. E. FELL, 195 Oxford Street, London, W.

FREE. FREE. NO MONEY REQUIRED. WE TRUST YOU.

Our £2 10s. Real Silver Watch (with chain), or A Real Gold Ring Set with REAL DIAMONDS and other stones.

SEND NO MONEY.

We give you your choice of either of these handsome presents for selling NINE articles of Jewellery at 1/6 each. (Regular price 2/6).

We do not want your money.

Just send us a stamped addressed envelope and say that you will either sell the jewellery or return it to us if you fail to sell it. On receiving your letter we will at once post you the jewellery.

When sold, send us the 13/6 you have received for same, and we will at once send you ABSOLUTELY FREE our £2 10/- Real Silver Watch with Chain, or the Gold Ring, whichever you desire.

A WRITTEN GUARANTEE for TEN years sent with each watch.

You can sell our Jewellery in a few minutes at 1/6 each article. We have thousands of testimonials as to the quality and value both of our Jewellery and Presents.

Send no money. Write to-day.

BRITISH PREMIUM SYNDICATE (Dept. 5). 232 CENTRAL CHAMBERS, GLASGOW.

Digitized by Google

The Brain Gymnasium.

In these competitions a prize of £2 will be awarded each week to the competitor whose attempt we receive giving the correct solutions of all the puzzles. If more than one is absolutely correct the prize of £2 will be given to the first correct attempt dealt with.

If no lists of absolutely correct solutions are sent in, the first prize will be awarded to the competitor whose attempt is first dealt with showing the fewest mistakes.

Each week we shall award, in addition to the above, either ten of our gold-plated pencil-cases or ten popular novels, to be distributed amongst the competitors whose attempts are absolutely correct and have failed to win the first prize, or, if no complete lists of correct solutions are received, to those whose attempts show the fewest mistakes.

Write all your solutions on one sheet of paper, putting the number against each. Post the batch in an envelope marked "Brain Gymnasium," to reach the Editor, SHORT STORIES, 18 Henrietta Street, Covent Garden, W.C., by first post on Monday, December 3rd, 1900.

Readers are invited to submit puzzles, acrostics, conundrums, word-squares, etc., for publication on this page. A gold-plated pencil-case will be given to each reader whose attempts are used. All attempts must be vouched for as original, and, of course, it is distinctly understood that the sender of a puzzle must neither compete in the competition nor divulge to anyone the solution. Any reader found infringing this rule will be severely dealt with.

No. 247.

THOUGH in stature the smallest, I blush to confess
That by increasing my length you make me still less.
What am I?

No. 248.

THE following letters, when re-arranged, will give a well-known proverb:

A B C E HH I K L M N OOOOOO P R SS TTT Y.

No. 249.

MY SECOND by my FIRST is worn;
Of my FIRST'S life, my WHOLE'S a term.

No. 250.

I AM a double comfort to the poor, but I never visit the rich; I dwell in every town in the world, but never in a village; I assist the robber as well as the honest; I live in a house, and sit on the floor, but never on a chair; I assist the corn to grow, but never the grass; now, if you have not yet found me out, but wish to see me, you will not have to look beyond the door for me.

No. 251.

FROM equivalents of the following form a word-square, the diagonals of which will give the names of two of the most important commercial rivers in the world.

A method of driving two or more horses; divided amongst a number; what regimental pioneers wear; order; a carrier; part of a verb, meaning to desire.

No. 252.

THE first you must take is the name of a man;
Next the name of an implement find if you can;
Then a part of your body, not far from your head,
And also a metal (but I do not mean lead).
The next is an article used by housewives,
Then the leaves of a plant which mothers do prize.
The FINALS of these should backwards be read—
But with the INITIALS begin at the head;
And if they together be uttered by you,
They'll tell what now you are trying to do.

FOOTBALL WHO'S WHO.

Cloth, price 1s. net.

Post Free 1s. 3d.

Contains the biographies of nearly 1,000 of the best-known players, together with statistics and much general information relating to all the prominent Association Clubs. It gives information as to the various leagues, cups, and other trophies, rules, fixtures, etc., etc., and will be found invaluable to all followers of football.

Copies may be had from any Bookseller or from the Publisher,

17 HENRIETTA STREET, W.C.

DID YOU EVER SEE

Twenty Teazer?

IT'S COMING

Next Week.

SHORT STORIES ADVERTISEMENT RATES.

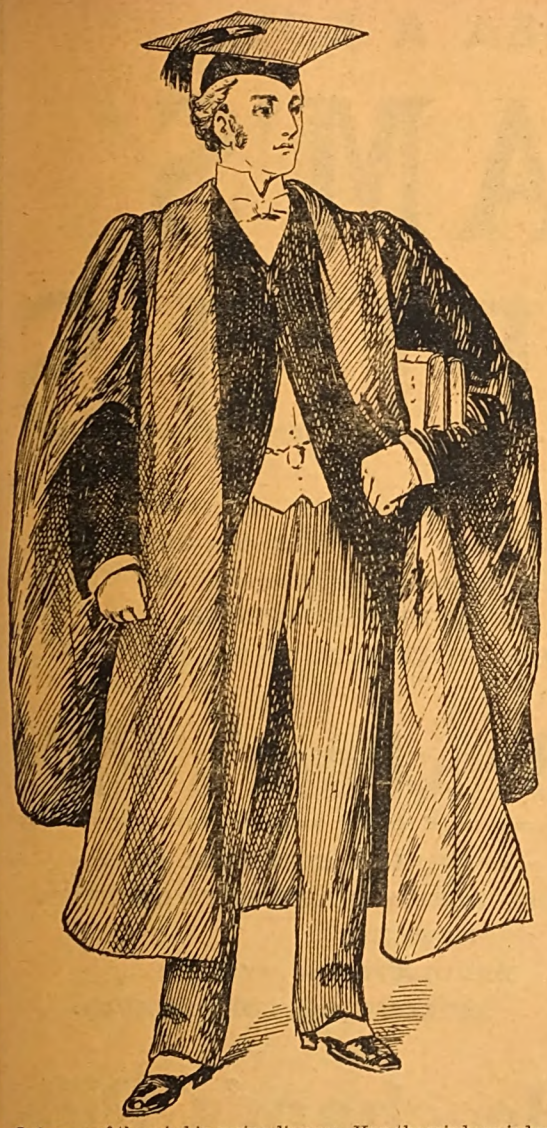
Single column, per inch, per insertion	£0 10 0
Double " "	1 0 0
Full page inside, facing page of matter, either white paper or 2nd or 3rd page of cover, or back page, per insertion	10 0 0
Half-page " " "	5 0 0
Quarter-page " "	2 10 0
Eighth-page " "	1 5 0
Front page, whole " "	12 10 0
" half " "	6 5 0

All spaces above one-eighth of a page are charged at per page rate. Series discount: 5 per cent. for 13, 10 per cent. for 26, 15 per cent. for 52 insertions.

Black blocks are charged 25 per cent. extra. All advertisements are subject to approval. All copy must be sent in by Noon on Tuesday, Nov. 27th, if intended for the issue on sale Dec. 11th, and dated December 15th. The Proprietors reserve the right to hold over or suspend the insertion of any advertisement without prejudice to other insertions on order. All communications should be addressed to the Advertisement Manager, "Pearson's Weekly" Offices, Henrietta Street, London, W.C.

Printed and published by C. ARTHUR PEARSON Limited, Pearson's Buildings, Henrietta Street, London, W.C.

Digitized by Google



A BOOK THAT IS NOT A NOVEL.

"Not a novel! Then who wants to read it? People only read novels and newspapers nowadays." That is what you say immediately. But for once you are wrong. At the present moment hundreds of thousands of people are turning over, and eagerly reading, the pages of a book that is not a novel. They are telling their friends about it, and very soon every one will be reading the book that is not a novel. If you want to be interested, if you want to be instructed, if you want to live long, if you want to be healthy, if you want to be beautiful, you must read the book that is not a novel. What is it called? What does it cost? Where can I get it? What is it all about? It is called "SECRETS OF BEAUTY, HEALTH, AND LONG LIFE." By Professor Boyd Laynard. Its cost to readers of *Short Stories* is One Shilling and Sixpence (post paid). You can get it from Hammond, Hammond, and Co., 19, 21, and 23 Ludgate Hill, London. What is it all about? It is a practical guide to beauty, health, and long life. It is a book to read through with interest and profit. It is a book to refer to when in difficulty or doubt. It is a book for the lady to keep on her toilet-table. It is a book for the business man to have at hand when the strain and worry of work threaten his health. It is a book for the young to read, in order that they may get the most out of life, and live to grow old. It is a book for the old to read in order that they may feel young. Among the numerous subjects dealt with in Professor Boyd Laynard's work, the following are but a few (a complete syllabus showing the contents of the whole 127 chapters enumerating upwards of 500 subjects, and divisions of subjects, can be had free on application to the publishers):

Analysis of beauty—Beauty a possible attainment—The way we make our own faces—Secrets of face transformation—Changeableness of beauty and its causes—Metaphysical secrets of keeping young and preserving a youthful appearance—The author's investigations into the causes why some individuals look younger than others at a certain age—Wonders of the skin—Relation of the skin to beauty—Effects of mental emotions upon the skin—Effects of heat, cold, and changes of temperature upon the skin—Bad complexions and their causes—Diet that spoils and diet that improves the complexion—General care of the complexion—Construction, growth, and wonders of the hair—Why hair falls out, and its remedy—Premature greyness: its causes and prevention—General care of the hair—Superficial hairs and how to treat them—Wrinkles: their prevention and treatment—Freckles, tan, and blackheads—Oily skin, dry skin, and loose skin—How the nose can be improved—Protruding ears and their treatment—Offensive breath—Anatomy of the teeth—Why teeth decay—General care of the teeth—Tallness, and how to attain it—Round shoulders, and how to cure them—How to acquire a full chest—Perfect form and figure: their proper proportions—Thinness, and its treatment—Excessive stoutness—Care of the hands—Care of the feet—Physiognomy; or, the art of reading character from the face—Mental influences upon health—Power of the mind over the body—Influence of the mind in curing diseases—How the mind can induce disease—How violent passions injure health—Laughter as a medicine—Ailments cured by laughter—Wonders of digestion—Relative value to our bodies of the principal articles of food—Fruits and vegetables as medicine: their various influences upon the physical system—Health-preserving diet, and its consistency—Diet favourable to mental exertion and intellectual culture—Influence of various foods upon our passions and propensities—The influence exerted by the mind upon the appetite and digestion—Some perilous articles of food Light, and its influence upon health—Exercise and its relation to health—Baths and bathing; their influence upon health—The way we breathe, and how it affects our health—The marriage state, and its influence upon health—Statistics showing the comparative vitality of married and single persons—100 professions, trades and occupations: their respective influences upon health and long life—Sleep, and its relation to health—Conditions for healthy sleep—Insomnia—The eyes, and how to preserve them—The ears and hearing: how to prevent deafness—The voice: its culture and preservation—Memory, and how to improve it—Stammering, and how to cure it—Prevention of disease—Colds: their nature, prevention and treatment—Indigestion—Constipation—Neuralgia—Rheumatism—Nervousness—Headaches—That rebellious organ, the liver—Blushing: its physiology and treatment—Rules of life for attaining longevity—Compendium of the mental, moral, physical, and external influences that lessen the years of our earthly existence—The mental, moral, physical, and external influences that are conducive to long life—How to live to a hundred—Premature old age and its causes—Short biographies of 30 modern centenarians, whose ages range from 115 to 185 years—Attainment of long life under physical disabilities—General principles that can be laid down for the anticipation of longevity—The eight signs of long life.

"The Most Remarkable Work of the Present Century."

Vide THE PRESS.

ORDER FORM **415,216.**

To HAMMOND, HAMMOND & CO.,
19, 21 & 23 LUDGATE HILL, LONDON, E.C.

Please forward me Professor Boyd Laynard's complete work, "SECRETS OF BEAUTY, HEALTH AND LONG LIFE" (carriage paid), for which I enclose the sum of

ONE SHILLING AND SIXPENCE

*Name*_____

*Address*_____

Digitized by Google

WORTH A GUINEA A BOX.

BEECHAM'S PILLS

OVER 6,000,000 BOXES SOLD ANNUALLY.

CURE BILIOUS and NERVOUS DISORDERS, CONSTIPATION, SICK HEADACHE, INDIGESTION, DYSPEPSIA, And all STOMACHIC TROUBLES.

PURIFY the BLOOD and REMOVE SCURVY, ARE MILD but EFFECTIVE in their action, Remove the Result of OVER-INDULGENCE. CURE RESTLESSNESS and INSOMNIA.

Beecham's Pills

REMOVE WIND and PAINS in the Stomach, AROUSE SLUGGISH and TORPID LIVERS, Ensure Proper Assimilation of FOOD, STRENGTHEN the STOMACH.

Beecham's Pills

Are SPECIALLY SUITABLE for the DISEASES and AILMENTS COMMON to FEMALES, REGULATE the SYSTEM, IMPROVE the COMPLEXION.

Beecham's Pills

Make you LOOK well, FEEL well, and KEEP well, REMOVE PIMPLES and BLOTCHES on the SKIN. LAY the Foundation of GOOD HEALTH, SUITABLE for OLD and YOUNG.

Beecham's Pills

Have stood the Test of over FIFTY YEARS without the Publication of Testimonials. Parents recommend them to their Children, Friends recommend them to one another, and BEECHAM'S PILLS recommend themselves.

In Boxes, 1s. 1½d. (56 Pills) and 2s. 9d. (168 Pills), with Full Directions.

Digitized by Google

NEWSAGENT GETS ONE OF THE £10 NOTES.

SHORT STORIES
A WEEKLY MAGAZINE FOR HOME AND TRAIN

No. 622. FOR WEEK ENDING DECEMBER 1ST, 1900. [ONE PENNY.

A STRAW-BLOCKER AND

DR. TIBBLES' Vi-Cocoa

HIS MATES NOW USE VI-COCOA.

MR. M. A. PEARCE, care of Mrs. Sygrove, Wheathampstead Road, Harpenden:—"I feel I must let you know that I have been taking Dr. Tibbles' Vi-Cocoa with excellent results. I am a straw-blocker at St. Albans, working in a very hot place, and used to be very easily knocked up. I used to drink a lot of beer while at work, but that did me no good. About two months ago I tried Vi-Cocoa, and after a week found I could work much better and longer, and I have used it ever since. I have also persuaded some of my mates to try it, and I think they are of the same opinion as myself. I feel a different man from what I used to when I have finished work. You can use this if you wish."

"Undoubted purity and strength."—*Medical Magazine.* "In the front rank of really valuable foods."—*Lancet.*

DAINTY SAMPLE TIN FREE TO ANY ADDRESS.

Address: Dr. TIBBLES' VI-COCOA Ltd., 60 BUNHILL ROW, LONDON, E.C.

DAINTY SAMPLE FREE

Advertisements should be sent to "Short Stories" Advertisement Department, Henrietta Street, London, W.C.

Digitized by Google

KAPUTINE

The Best & Safest Remedy for

HEADACHE.

NURSE HILL, of the London Association of Nurses, writes:

"I have seen Kaputine administered to many patients, and can truly say it is a remedy which should have a place in every household."

All Leading Chemists sell KAPUTINE, 1/-. Samples One Penny.

If your Chemist has not KAPUTINE send his name and address to KAPUTINE, HUDDERSFIELD, and we will send you a SHILLING PACKET FREE.

WORTH A CROWN A DOSE.

Model 313. Tailor designed Reefer Coat and full-wide Skirt, well made & finished. Price complete, 10/6. Carriage, 6d. Or the Skirt alone for 5/6. Carriage 5d.

THE John Noble

Costumes and Mantles sent by Parcel Post, safely packed. Satisfaction given or money refunded.

PATTERNS SENT POST FREE.

A FULL DRESS LENGTH of Costume Coating or Cheviot Serge, in which the Costumes are made (6 yards, 52 inches wide) for 7/6; carriage 8d. **7/6** Colours: Black, Navy, Myrtle, Brown, Fawn, Khaki, Grey, and Royal Blue.

Sizes in Stock of Ladies' Costumes are: 34, 36, 38 in. round bust (under arms); Waists 24, 26, 28 in.; Skirts being 38, 40, and 42 in. long in front. Any other size made to measure, 1/6 extra.

JOHN NOBLE KNOCKABOUT FROCKS.

Thoroughly well made in Good Strong Serge, with saddle top, long full sleeves and pocket.

Length and Prices:
21in. 24in. 27in. 30in. 33in.
1/6 2/- 2/6 3/- 3/6
36in. 39in. 42in. 45in.
4/- 4/6 5/- 5/6 each
Carriage, 4d. extra.

Please name *Short Stories* when writing to

JOHN NOBLE Ltd.,

BROOK STREET MILLS,

Dept. No. 46, MANCHESTER.

TO THE QUEEN
PURVEYORS

CROSSE & BLACKWELL'S

GREEN PEA. GRAVY. JULIENNE. MULLIGATAWNY. TOMATO. HOUSEHOLD, CRESSY, &c.

SOUP TABLETS

OF ALL GROCERS ETC. THROUGHOUT THE WORLD

HAIR DESTROYED.

Send me an envelope (stamped and addressed) and I will tell you how to remove all superfluous hair free of charge. (Send no money.) Address, in confidence, Miss E. V. (Room 3), 195 Oxford Street, London, W.

NOSE

Wintry weather makes Red Noses. I cure them. Send 1/- for my book on "Their Cause and Prevention," or 3/9 for Medically approved Cure. Particulars of my Patent Nose Improver and Ear Machine sent for stamp.—**C. LEES RAY**, Specialist, South Castle Street, Liverpool.

TOO STOUT

I was for years; by chance I came across a simple home remedy that reduced me from 17st. to 10st. 12lb., and I will willingly send particulars free to any sufferer enclosing stamp. Mrs. L. E. FELL, 195 Oxford Street, London, W.

NEW AUTOMATIC KNITTER.

FOR HOME WORK.

"The machine that knitted the hosiery and comforts for the troops in Africa."—See what *The Times* said.

Knits Socks (a pair in 35 min.), Stockings, Fancy Goods, &c. Easily learned. Lessons Free.

Cash, hire, and Work Terms from "Sorres" dept.: 67 Southwark St., S.E.; 55 Oxford St., W.; 192 Upper St., London, N.; 105 Nicolson St., Edinburgh; 58 Union St., Glasgow; 132 Stephen's Green, Dublin; 89 Great Hampton St., Birmingham; 31 Stokes Croft, Bristol.

ESTABLISHED 1851.

BIRKBECK BANK

Southampton Buildings, Chancery Lane, London.

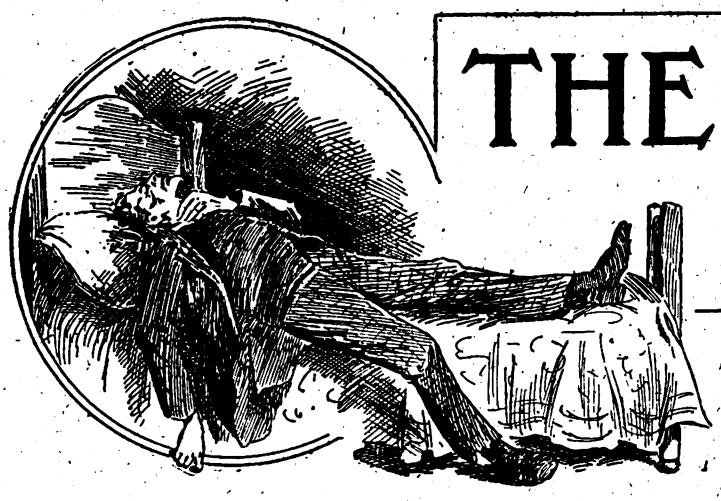
2% on CURRENT ACCOUNTS, on the minimum monthly balances when not drawn below £100.

The BIRKBECK ALMANACK, with full particulars, post free.

FRANCIS RAVENSCROFT, *Manager*.

Advertisements should be sent to "Short Stories" Advertisement Department, Henrietta Street, London, W.C.

Digitized by Google



THE NEW SUPER

THE stage-manager was fagged out. He came hurriedly upon the stage, took off his hat and coat, and threw them to the call-boy, who hung them on an electric light bracket. Then he drew a deep breath and looked about him.

It was a fearfully hot morning; no one seemed in the humour for work, the stage was in semi-darkness, the smell of the burning size was almost intolerable, and the crowd of supers who were now to begin learning their "business" for the forthcoming spectacular piece looked anything but intelligent to the calculating eyes of the stage-manager.

He sat astride his chair and faced the men who were waiting instructions. Such a sorry, shabby lot they looked—did anyone ever see such woeful old hats, or such greenish, greasy coats as they wore—and each man to his fellow bore the strange resemblance that clean shaven men usually do to one another.

The stage-manager snapped his fingers to attract attention.

"Now then, the opening scene! Beginners, please."

The supers began walking up and down the stage, laughing, shaking hands, slapping each other on the shoulder, button-holing each other in a dull, mechanical manner.

"Stop!" cried the stage-manager. "Stop, that won't do!"

The men were motionless in an instant.

"I should like you to understand, if you can," he went on, "that you are all"—here he ran his malicious light-blue eyes over the group—"supposed to be men of good position, in the best of society, walking in a fashionable street amusing yourselves, meeting, talking, and so on. Have you got that into your heads?"

The men murmured assent—at least the stage-manager regarded the murmur in that light.

"Well," he continued grimly, "you will oblige me—I pay you for it, remember; this isn't a charitable institution, you know—you will oblige me by trying to follow my instructions. This is the cue: 'Now do your worst—go!' See?"

The men began again the weary business of posing as gentlemen in good positions.

"Now then, now then!" the manager jumped upon his chair in order to obtain a better view. "Great Scott!" he groaned. "For goodness' sake, look as if you were alive! Spread about a little, can't you? Smile and open your mouths; don't look as if you had stepped out of a waxwork show!

"Don't go about there, Williams, as if you had paralysis and D.T.'s mixed. Edwards, you're sneaking round there at the back like a pickpocket. Come out of that corner, you new fellows! Dress the stage, I tell you! You're all together like a lot of sardines in a box! Run through that business again."

Again and again the men went through the scene till the manager raised his hand in sign of dismissal.

"Next act!" called the stage-manager.

Then he read three names aloud, and in answer three tall men stepped upon the stage.

The stage-manager motioned with his lead pencil for them to stand in line and then examined them critically.

"You'll do," he said to the tallest and most stalwart of the three, "you other two are not quite up to height, you may go."

The man selected stood listening to the stage-manager's directions attentively. He was a tall old fellow, with a fine face that seemed to have a story in it. It was easy to see that he had once occupied a good social position.

"What did you say your name was?" asked the manager.

"Hol——"

The man stopped abruptly and hesitated; then he continued:

"Parker, sir."

"Harker, eh? Speak up."

"Parker, sir," answered the man in a slightly louder tone.

A titter ran through the line of supers; the new man was being put through his facings. They remembered their own experience and enjoyed seeing another go through it.

"Now, then, Parker," said the manager, "you are to play the flunkey. Your part isn't very heavy—not much 'fat' in it—you've only got two words to say. You enter on the O.P. side—opposite prompt side—and announce 'Lady Claudia' that's the lot. You will take as your cue this sentence. 'Call my carriage.' from the leading lady. You see her over there in the hat with the pink feathers in it. You come in, say 'Lady Claudia,' bow, and make your exit up stage, walking backwards."

"Yes, sir," said Parker, looking a little mystified.

He turned his head in the direction in which the stage-manager had jerked the point of his pencil—towards the leading lady.

All rights reserved.]

Digitized by Google

As Parker's eyes fell upon her, she paused in her animated conversation with the principal actor and half turned her face in the direction of the new super, without, however, noticing him.

Parker stared at her for a moment as if unable to believe his eyes; then his face went as white as a sheet and he staggered back like one who has received a blow.

"What's the matter with the man?" exclaimed the stage-manager appealing to no one in particular. "What's

He sat astride his chair.

the matter with you, man? Had too much to drink so early as this? By the look of your clothes I should say you haven't been able to muster enough to get a breakfast, to say nothing of drink!"

The man's white face flushed at these words.

He drew himself up and intimated with a gesture that he was ready to perform the not too heavy part assigned to him.

"Very good. Take up your cue, watch for it, pay attention."

Parker stood at the wings.

The call-boy—who, by the way, was a man—passed him once or twice and looked at his white, drawn face.

"Poor beggar! I am dashed if he don't look half-starved," he muttered.

The next time he passed he beckoned the new super to a dark corner, and held out a can of beer to him.

"Take a pull at this, father," said the man, with an encouraging jerk of his sandy head. "Do, mate, it'll do yer good."

The elderly super shook his head and stared in front of him vacantly.

"Wot, you won't have it? You ain't frightened of a drop of four 'alf makin' yer forget that heavy part of yours? I can't think what made yer take on this job. Was yer ever in a theatre before—straight?"

"No," returned the new super sadly.

"Couldn't get another job, I s'pose? Well, you ain't got the makin's of a star, an' the sooner you get an easier job the better."

The call-boy again held out the can, and the man suddenly took it and drank a few mouthfuls.

"'Ere, 'ave a drop more! Why, you ain't 'ad enough yet to wet yer whistle! That's right,"—as the new super took the can once more—"it'll sharpen you up." And off he went to the property room.

"Parker," shouted the stage-manager, "Mr. S's entrance. Watch for your cue."

Mr. S. entered, the lady with the pink feathers entered a few seconds later; she and Mr. S. began mumbling to each other up stage.

Suddenly the lady of the pink feathers raised her voice, and said:

"Call my carriage!"

"Parker, your cue!" shouted the stage-manager.

"Yes," said Parker, speaking in a dazed manner.

His eyes were fixed on the leading lady, but he made no attempt to go through his part.

"Your cue, man, your cue!" shouted the stage-manager, red in the face.

Parker stood stupidly, and as if they were speaking in a strange language. The other supers made signs to him to go on the stage, but he did not move.

The stage-manager bounded from his chair.

"Get on the stage, I tell you," he cried, and he put his hands on the man's shoulders and pushed him into position. "Now you, sir, remember your cue for the future."

Those who were near saw him flush a dull red, and his hands clenched, but he straightened himself in an instant, announced "Lady Claudia," turned his back to the footlights, and went off the stage in that manner when he should have bowed himself backward.

There was a hush in the theatre, the stage-manager got up slowly, and ran his fingers through his hair.

He was not a hard man by any means this stage-manager, he would do a good turn for anyone; as he said himself, "he'd never see a poor beggar want," but on the stage he was a martinet, and unless people were bright and smart he used bad language—without it, he said, bullock driving and stage management were impossible; besides, it was his living. He had a hard task master himself, one who expected all and forgave nothing—he had his public to please.

"Parker!" he yelled. "Come back!"

"Yes, sir."

"Take hold of my hand."

He held out a beringed hand that might have been a woman's, and the old man took it stupidly.

"Give the cue," said the stage manager.

"Call my carriage!" shouted the prompter.

The stage-manager and Parker walked on the stage, hand in hand, step by step they came.

"Now bow, bow, bow, I tell you!"

Together the two men bent their backs.

"Now—'Lady Claudia.' Say it after me," said the stage-manager.

"Lady Claudia," echoed Parker mechanically, and in a tone that indicated how distant were his thoughts.

He was looking fixedly at the leading lady, who, with a slight flush on her cheeks, was returning his gaze with an expression of mingled haughtiness and contempt.

"Now get off the stage and do it yourself," said the stage-manager. "I see I've got to teach you like one of the pantomime children. Now, sir, again, again, again!"

Poor Parker went over the entrance, the announce-

Digitized by Google

ment, the bowing himself out, till even the brow-beaten supers sympathised with him. But Parker himself went through the performance more like a senseless machine than a human being.

"To-morrow at ten, we will resume this interesting study," said the stage-manager, "and those who have cues, see that you take them up."

Parker went out with the rest of the supernumeraries, but he declined their offers to take a drink with them and moved off slowly in the opposite direction.

When they were out of the narrow street, he turned and hastily retraced his steps towards the stage-door, stopping a few paces from it.

A few minutes afterwards he saw the leading lady emerge from the door and he followed her at a short distance.

He maintained this respectful distance until she entered a side street which had a dead wall on each side for half its length. Then he quickened his steps, caught her up and touched her on the shoulder.

She turned with a start, and, on seeing who it was, uttered an exclamation of anger and recoiled.

"Don't shrink from me, Amy!" pleaded the new super. "I wish to say a few words to you."

"I will have nothing to do with you. Why do you come near me to disgrace me? Have you not brought enough trouble already on your daughter? Go away!"

It was Parker's turn to shrink back. For a moment he covered his face with his hands, while Amy, taking advantage of this, turned to hurry away.

Aroused by the movement, Parker dropped his hands and stopped her once more.

"Amy, I swear that I went to the theatre by accident and not to follow you. I did not know you were there; I have not heard of you for so long. I am starving and that was the only chance I had of earning a shilling or two. Now that I have met you, I ask you to help me."

The woman shut her lips tightly and shook her head.

"You married my mother and then despised her because she was not of the same station as yourself, and you drove her away by your harsh treatment to do the best she could for herself and me."

"I did not. It was an ill-fated union; I was infatuated with her and she married me for my position. I tried to raise her up to it, but she took to drink and disgraced me in the eyes of everyone. Then I failed in my speculations, and she taunted me because I had come down in the world. Then she left me. Heaven knows I would not have said this—I would have respected the memory of the dead—but your cruel words forced it from me."

"That is your view," sneered the leading lady, her tone and manner savouring of the theatre. "If you had done what you ought, I should have been well brought up—I should have been a lady in high society, instead of acting on the stage of a cheap theatre. Have I anything to thank you for?"

"Had your mother left you with me," said Parker earnestly, "I would have done my best for you, but I seldom knew anything of her and I never knew where she left you. I saw your mother only from time to time, when she wished to get money from me, and then she would track me by bothering my relatives for my address until they gave it to her in order to get rid of such a woman. It was not until you were grown up that I saw you again, and then you would not come near me."

"It's all false; another of your trumped-up stories to cover your own doings. You talk of bringing disgrace! How long have you been out of prison? Who stole the pocket-book with the bank notes?"

"I swear by everything sacred that I did not steal it!" said Parker vehemently. "I have said enough against your mother, and I have no wish to say any more. We were found together near the house of the relative from whom it was stolen—he had foolishly placed it on the hall table and forgotten it. They said that I had incited her to take it, but I had only just met her, and, seeing the book in her hand, had wrested it from her in order to restore it. Your mother was let off because she was ill; she died, so they tell me, just before my trial came on and I was sent to penal servitude."

Amy had listened with her lips curled in contemptuous disbelief.

"It's false, every word of it! It is all of a piece with the other things you have done. You have never been a father to me, and I won't have you disgracing me now. Do you hear? If you keep that place as super at the theatre, I'll make your life a misery to you! Mark my words, for when I say a thing I mean it!"

"Take a pull at this, father," said the man.

Then, without another look at the wretched man, she hurried away.

Parker sat down on the kerb and wept. His mind went back over the story, the evidence of which was written so plainly on his features; an ill-starred marriage

Digitized by Google

"That is your view," sneered the leading lady.

with one of inferior social standing, an uneducated woman whose head was turned by fortune and who took to drink, a woman fair to look upon, but bad at heart; loss of fortune, followed by the degradation of prison for an act of which he was innocent.

He had struggled to keep above water since he had been liberated, but to-day's experience—the indignity to which he had been subjected at the hands of the stage-manager and the interview with his daughter—were too hard to bear. He

---

"Hallo! Wot, ain't yer got nothin' to do but sit on the kerb an' snivel?"

It was the voice of the call-boy. He shook the old man gently and helped him to get up.

"'Ere, you come along with me and 'ave something to eat."

The rehearsal was in full swing next morning. In the orchestra they were playing softly. The supers were resting while the principals gabbled through their parts.

The stage-manager darted up now and then, and ran round them like a sheep-dog, finding fault, suggesting, grouping them afresh as the fancy took him. The scene progressed till the cue was given by the leading lady.

"Call my carriage!"

No one took up the cue. Everyone was at a standstill.

"That's Parker's cue. Parker! Parker! Where's Parker?" called the stage-manager. "Anyone seen him this morning?"

"I've seen him," said the call-boy.

"What's the matter with him? Why isn't he here?"

"He told me yesterday," continued the call-boy, "that if 'e didn't turn up this morning, the leading lady would explain why."

The stage-manager looked from one to another in bewilderment.

"But you said you had seen him this morning," he said angrily to the call-boy.

"So I 'ave," was the quiet reply. "I didn't like the appearance of him yesterday, so I went this morning to the place where he 'ad a bed."

"Well, what's wrong? Why doesn't he come?" inquired the stage-manager.

"'Cos he's dead. He killed himself yesterday afternoon after the rehearsal!"

George Knight.

AMONGST MANY OTHER GOOD THINGS IN THE

CHRISTMAS DOUBLE NUMBER of SHORT STORIES

will be the opening chapters of

"THE LOST LADY DELIA,"

A GRAND NEW SERIAL by LOUIS TRACY.

Digitized by Google

How Mr. Nicholson Mislaid the Baby.

MRS. NICHOLSON was standing in a dubious attitude, with the study door half-open, and her eyes turning from the quiet figure in the armchair by the table, to another open door in the passage behind her, through which she could see a flood of sunshine, and in the sunshine a cradle.

"I don't feel quite easy," she said, "I am so afraid she should cry and no one hear her. I wish I had not let nurse go out; but all you have to do," coming into the room and speaking impressively, "all you have to do is to ring the bell violently—violently, remember—for cook. For Heaven's sake, John," leaning on the table and stretching out a pretty hand to attract her husband's attention, "look up, or speak, or answer me, or you will drive me mad."

"What is it all about, Agatha?"

The calm, placid, intelligent face opposite was lifted gently, and the thin finger was slipped on to the page to mark a pause.

"It is baby, John," said Mrs. Nicholson in a faltering voice, and with idle, angry tears rolling down her cheeks. "Here have I, for the last ten minutes, been begging and imploring of you to remember baby; not to nurse her, I wouldn't trust you, but only to ring the bell if she cries."

"Does that stop her? It seems simple enough. I think even I could do that."

But Mrs. Nicholson shook her head, still weeping.

"You may laugh at me or sneer if you like. If it were my own baby I would say nothing, I would bear it all; but Emmy's!"

With a patient sigh the gentleman at the writing-table pushed the book away, and lost his place. He looked at her in a bewildered way.

"What is it Agatha? a baby! oh, Emmy's baby, of course."

"And not one half, one hundredth, one thousandth part as valuable in your eyes," broke in Agatha, with impetuosity, "as the smallest, the most unknown, the most undiscovered star. You need not tell me; I know it."

"Of course," frowning gently, "everyone knows that a star, hower small—stars are not famous according to their size, my dear—is of infinitely more value than one hair of a baby's head. I mean," hastily, "speaking from the entirely scientific point of view; but as you were saying, were you not," a little doubtfully, "something about that unfortunate babe of Emmy's?"

Mrs. Nicholson had dried her eyes, and was confronting him in all the cool splendour of her summer's dress, and with all the calm determination of a woman who has made up her mind.

"Yes, I was," she said; "only, once for all, John, if you call it a babe, I will leave your house at once, and never, never come back; and if you call it unfortunate, I will take that hateful MS. with me and burn it at the kitchen fire. If it were yours," with impassioned irony, "it might indeed be described as unfortunate; but Charles is the best of fathers, and he has always been the best of husbands."

"Yes, yes, of course, my dear. I said nothing against Charles; I did not know we were talking about him. We can finish him up to-night," cheerfully. "If that is all, you had better go out now, while it is fine," turning his eyes to the dazzling sunlight for an instant, and then back to his blotted page. "You can tell me about Charles, you know, when you come in. The best of husbands! I don't know much about them, I fear, but I know a little about the best of wives."

He rose, and laid his hand on the long, slender, soft grey glove that was lying with determination on his neat manuscript. The grey glove closed round his hand gently and clung to him, almost as if it were loth to leave the thin worn fingers; but he patted it gently and laid it aside.

Mrs. Nicholson gave a faint sigh, but when she spoke again, she spoke with less decision and more pleading.

"It is not Charles, indeed it is not; it is the baby. Nurse has gone out, and I have put her cradle in the morning-room, by the window. John," suddenly, "are you listening? What did I say last?"

"The morning-room, Agatha."

"Well," with a sigh of relief, "I see you are taking it in, and forgetting those horrible stars; and how you can compare a star to a baby," parenthetically, "is past me."

"I am sure I never did," he said gently.

"Well, don't interrupt me, John, or I shall never get out. What was I saying? Oh, baby is in the morning-room, and if she cries—makes *one* sound—you are to ring your bell—*this* bell, John—for cook; do you understand?"

"Yes, I believe so. I am to ring the bell—*this* bell—for cook."

"Oh, I *hope* you will," after a pause. "Fancy," her

Digitized by Google

eyes filling with tears again, "if she cried, and no one heard her! Oh, John, you will not deceive me? You will try—and—ring?"

"My dear," speaking with some dignity, "surely I am not utterly destitute of common humanity or common sense. I have interesting work here," pointing to the manuscript and the books of reference heaped around him; "but I suppose, after all, I am human."

"Oh, I *hope* so, I *think* so," cried Agatha, clasping her hands; "only you might not hear her, that was all I meant."

"Then, I think," he said, with a gently sarcastic smile, "that you may dismiss your fears; they are quite groundless."

"Very well," said Agatha, moving in a hesitating way to the door. "I am satisfied, I am trying to be satisfied; don't forget."

"No," cheerfully, "I will take a leaf from Charles's book, the best of husbands."

"Oh,"—the grey glove had closed on the handle of the door, but released it again—"the Paynters are coming to-night, so you must not go out star-gazing."

"All right," obediently; "good-bye."

"Good-bye."

The bright face, that had almost disappeared round the door, came back again, and leant against the worn velveteen of the astronomer's coat; for a minute the lips were pressed to it, then lifted.

"Kiss me, John; you are a dear old fellow after all, and I am a fiend."

The sunshine seemed to leave the room with the sweet bright presence, and hover over the pretty cradle, amongst the sounds and scents of the midsummer day. In the library there was only one shaft of light that came through the high windows, and fell across the old velveteen coat, and the tidy manuscripts, and the open books, and left the handsome, clever, refined face in shadow.

It might have been two hours afterwards—painful after events created a confusion in Mr. Nicholson's mind, and the two hours might have been two days—when he became aware of a laugh in the passage by the door.

His hand had grown tired with writing, but the pen travelled steadily on; his eyes had grown a little tired, and it was a relief to raise them for a minute to the locked door, behind which he heard the laugh. He rose, with a half-smile on his grave face, and paused, struck by a sudden presentiment.

Something came back to him, as he stood in the dull light of the dull room; was it a dream, or a memory, or was it—the baby? He pushed his papers hurriedly away and walked over to the door, and unlocked it, throwing it wide open.

There was nothing in the passage but the yellow sunlight now upon the walls and on the old prints, and Mrs. Nicholson standing in her pretty grey dress, with her slim hands stretched out, and the laugh that had disturbed him still upon her lips.

In the room beyond there was more sunlight and the cradle.

"John," cried Mrs. Nicholson, laughing again as if she could not help it, "what have you done with her? Give her to me. You are earning your title to the best of husbands."

He looked up in quick perplexity.

"What is it, Agatha? What do you want? I have nothing to give you."

"Oh don't, John," she cried impatiently, "don't tease! I want baby."

"Well"—the same perplexed look creeping over his face, and softening its sternness—"take her," stretching out his hand to the cradle in the sunlight.

Agatha's eyes were turned on him for a minute with a look of contempt before which he positively quailed. Then she swept over to the cradle, and tossed out the little pillow, and the sheets with their lace edges, and the pale-blue satin coverlet on to the floor in a soft heap, and stood looking down upon the empty cradle as if she would conjure up the pink face and the flaxen head into their accustomed place.

Mr. Nicholson had followed her on tiptoe, and was stirring the softly shining heap on the floor with his patent-leather shoes, as if he half-imagined that she had tossed the baby out amongst them.

"Well?" said Agatha sharply.

"Well?" he echoed feebly.

"Do you mean to say," she said, putting aside her angry vehemence and speaking tearfully, with her grey eyes turned up to his, "Oh, John, do you mean to say that you have lost her?"

"I never touched her," he cried hastily, "I never—" heard her he would have added, but again the faint memory—that dream—stirred him. "Upon my honour, Agatha," he said abruptly, leaning down into the cradle and poking at the mattress with his thin fingers, "upon my honour, I can't remember."

"You can't remember," said Agatha with slow scorn. "Why, John she roared! Cook heard her in the kitchen. She came rushing up and found the cradle empty, and baby gone; she thought you had taken her into the study, she told me so; but, oh, John, it was somebody else, and they have stolen her!"

"My dear," he said, shaking himself together, and speaking more lightly, "who would steal her?—a baby *roaring*, as you say!" He shuddered. "Why, surely no one in his senses would do such a thing!"

"Emmy's baby!" cried Agatha tearfully, "and that is how you speak of her! Oh, John, dear John, think again; didn't you hear her? Perhaps you have forgotten—perhaps you have put her somewhere, and she has gone to sleep. Sit down, John, and think—perhaps you have put her somewhere and forgotten."

Mr. Nicholson sat down on the window-sill, and covered his face with his hands. He tried to think, but whenever he concentrated his mind on the baby he was dimly conscious of that fading fancy that he could not grasp—that dream of a cry.

It had disturbed him, he remembered, that loud, painful, jarring cry, but it had died away; surely it had died into peace without his interference?

"Agatha," he said, lifting up his face, sharpened with the effect of thought, "I *do* remember *something*—somebody crying; it must have been the babe."

"Yes," said Agatha eagerly, "go on! you heard her! that is right—cook says you must have heard her, she roared so—well, and then? You——"

"I—I can't remember, Agatha. I may have gone on writing, that seems the most likely, I think; but I may have gone to the door. No," shaking his head, "I can't get beyond the cry. I *do* remember that now, distinctly."

"Perhaps," said Agatha hopefully, through her tears, "you have put her somewhere in the library. What have you been doing or using this afternoon?"

Mr. Nicholson followed humbly as she swept in before him, and flung open the great curtains, so that the light rushed in on to his table strewed with plans and MS. Even then he spread out his hands, almost unconsciously,

Digitized by Google

to defend his precious papers from her light scornful touch; but she stood in the centre of the room, looking into every corner with her quick, soft eyes.

"What have you used, John—this chair? You have not been to the cupboard? No," peeping into a dark recess, musty with papers. "What else?"

"Nothing else, Agatha, here, except," with a quick smile, "the waste-paper basket, and that is empty. You can see for yourself."

"Ah," said Agatha, "here is cook," as a heavy breathing became audible in the passage. "Cook," her voice trembling at sight of the sympathetic face, "your master has not seen the baby—at least, he thinks not. He was very busy, but he heard her cry, and he may have taken her up and forgotten. We are looking for her."

"Which you won't never find her, then," said cook in a broken voice. "In my last place but one, where I was general cleaner in Mrs. 'All's family, there was a child disappeared, as it might be this, and it was never found—gipsies or not, it was never come across again."

"Oh don't, cook!" cried Agatha plaintively. "And Emmy coming this evening! Your master thinks he may have put her somewhere and forgotten. He remembers hearing her."

"Which he might," said cook, "not being deaf. Which I don't mean no disrespect, sir, but she was roaring awful; and I says to Mary, says I, 'Master'll never know 'ow to quiet that child, so I'll run up and bring her down a bit;' and I stops to change my apron, and I ups as it might be here, and the cradle, as it might be there, and no sound and the cradle as empty as it is at this minute."

Cook turned dramatically, and pointed one stout arm to the little cradle in the sunlight.

Mrs. Nicholson's tearful eyes followed the hand, and her husband stood uneasily in the centre of the group, with an anxious frown upon his face.

"Which," added cook scornfully, "I think a baby—and such a one, bless her—is of more vally than all this rubbish."

She waved her hand over the table, on which lay the neat MS. and the rows of mended pens; and Mr. Nicholson moved instinctively a step backwards, as if she had an evil eye and his writings would shrivel up at her scornful gesture.

"Cook," said Mrs. Nicholson with dignity, marred a little by a quaver in her voice, "you don't understand. Your master is very clever and his writings are of great value. Of course," with a pleading look upwards, "baby is our first thought just now. There are no wild beasts here so she cannot be eaten. But she has gone, and before Emmy comes this evening she must be found."

"Of course she must," said her husband, plucking up courage from her exceeding gentleness. "We will begin systematically, and go through every room in the house."

So the search began, that ended, an hour later, in the great hall with three perplexed faces meeting each other at the foot of the stairs, in a silence that Mrs. Nicholson broke.

"It's no use, John, I cannot bear it any longer. She is lost."

She flung out her empty hands with a despairing gesture, but her husband caught and held them.

"Don't give up, Agatha; it will all come right. If I search the world through I will find her."

"Or the body," said cook.

Mrs. Nicholson shuddered.

The minute's silence was broken by a sound of merry laughter and the trampling of feet. For a minute Agatha raised her head, listening intently, and then she drooped it with a sigh.

"It is only the rectory boys, John," she said; "they have been in the hayfield all day, and I asked them to tea. I can't speak to them, I am too anxious."

She would have moved away, but the noise and laughter were in the hall already, and the boys were stumbling up towards her in the darkness, over the rugs and skins. Something white was being shoved from one to the other, and was pushed into Agatha's arms at last and held there by a pair of rough sunburnt hands.

"What is it? Oh, Jack, what is it?" she cried, bending down and kissing, to their owner's great surprise, the boy's rough hands.

"Don't, I say," said Jack, drawing them away with a curious shamefaced look. "It's only the baby, Mrs. Nicholson. She was crying in the cradle so I just got in and bagged her. She's been playing in the hay; she nearly got jabbed with a rake, but Jim got it instead. She's a jolly little thing. Did you miss her?"

"Yes, I thought she was lost," said Agatha gently.

"Lost!" with a roar of laughter. "Well, that is good! May we wash our hands for tea? I'm not so dirty, I've been ho'ding her; but Jim's simply mud all over. Here, have you got her? it's so dark I can't see."

The turbulent tide swept away into the dim distance of stairs and passages, leaving a little group in the twilight of the hall; a tall dark figure, against which a golden head was leaning, and two arms with a white bundle folded in them.

"Kiss her, John," came a soft voice out of the darkness. "I know you would rather not, she's only a baby, not a star; but just as a punishment, because you were so stupid."

The tall figure stooped, and laid a dark moustache against the little bundle.

"She's very soft," said another voice; "I don't think I ever knew so much about a baby before."

There was, after a moment's silence, a movement on the man's part, as though he were drawing himself up to his full height, with a view to reasserting his dignity. He cleared his throat.

"After all, Agatha," he said stiffly, "I did not lose the baby."

"I never said you did," said Agatha; "I only asked you, and you *couldn't remember*."

"Another time," with an evident effort, "I suppose I shall be condemned unheard."

"Another time!" scornfully. "You may set your mind at rest. Neither I nor Emmy is in the least likely to trust you again, at least not with anything of value."

"Then how about the baby?" with a laugh.

"That," said Agatha firmly, "includes the baby."

G. B.

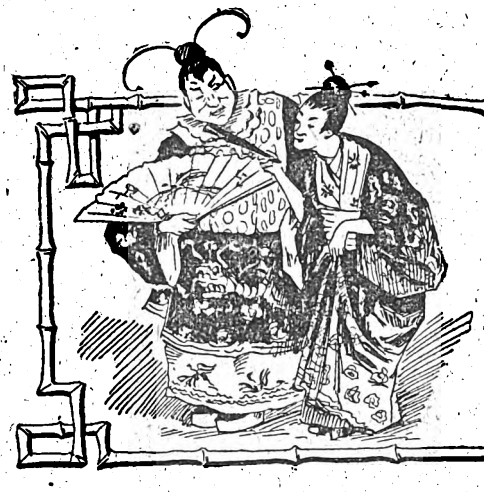
THE 20th CENTURY IS COMING,

but where will it begin? Who will be the first to see the first sun of the new era? Look in

THE CHRISTMAS PEARSON'S

for an answer to this question; the finest Christmas number the world has ever seen.

Digitized by Google



Mr. Bowser's Tribulations.

XXVIII.—HE TRIES AGAIN TO LEARN CYCLING.

WHILE the Bowsers were eating dinner the other evening a package was left at the door, and as they adjourned from the table to the family sitting-room Mr. Bowser opened it and brought forth a sweater, a pair of knee breeches, a belt, and a pair of bicycle shoes and stockings.

"Who are they for?" asked Mrs. Bowser as he displayed the articles with a smile of satisfaction.

"They won't fit you, and I didn't buy them for the cook." he replied.

"But if they are for you, what on earth do you want with them? Three different times within the last two years have you almost killed yourself trying to ride a bike. You will never be able to do it if you live to be a thousand years old."

"Won't I? And why not, please? Am I the only person in the United Kingdom who can't learn to ride a bicycle?"

"You—you are too fat," she protested—"too fat and your legs are too short. You are what they call clumsy. I don't say it to hurt your feelings, but you——"

Ten minutes later he came down rigged out as a Zephyr.

"Exactly, Mrs. Bowser," he interrupted, "I understand your motive. You don't want to hurt my feelings, but you want to convey the impression that I'm an old rhinoceros on wheels or an elephant on skates. I thank you very much and will remember it of you!"

"But you have tried the bike and been almost killed."

"In a careless, casual way I have tried the bike. I tried it as a novelty, and not for my health. I had no interest or ambition It made no difference to me whether I ran up a tree or over a horse and cart. My failures were not failures. I simply fell off the bike and stayed off."

"And is it your health this time?" she asked.

"Purely a question of health, Mrs. Bowser. I am going to ride the bike to save the doctor's and chemist's bills. Brown has kindly volunteered the use of his machine, and I have joined the Zephyr club. We take our first spin this evening. Each spin saves a doctor's bill. Have you anything more to say?"

"Nothing more."

"Then I will go upstairs and get into this suit."

Ten minutes later he came down rigged out as a Zephyr. Mrs. Bowser was annoyed and perturbed, but when she caught sight of him she had to laugh. It was as if a bicycle suit had been put on a beer barrel.

The cat came in from the back yard and took one look at the Zephyr and then made a dive under the sofa.

"Something seems to appeal to your sense of humour," sternly remarked Mr. Bowser as he sat down to put on his shoes.

"I was thinking of Zephyrs," replied Mrs. Bowser as she choked back a laugh.

"Very kind of you, and you shall be rewarded in due time. I might have known just how you would act about it. Whenever the question of my health comes up, you are so determined and obstinate that only one conclusion can be reached. You long to be a widow."

"I hadn't heard that there was anything wrong with your health."

"And why hadn't you? Simply because I am one of those men who can suffer for years and years and never make a complaint. If I should tell you what the doctor told me the other day, you'd be astonished. Perhaps it will be news to you to hear that I have been on the edge of the grave for the last three years."

Digitized by Google

"But now you are going to get away from the edge?"

"I am."

"By running your bike into a kerbstone and being sprawled all over the footpath."

"By thunder, woman," shouted Mr. Bowser as he sprang up and danced round, "do you want to aggravate me till I do something desperate? When did I ever sprawl all over the footpath? I understand your motive in seeking to discourage me, but the plan won't work. I shall go out on the bike for a spin. As a member of the Zephyr club I shall be at the front. I will ride and ride and ride. I will not only ride for the sake of my health, but I will gambol round to have revenge on you. Every evening for the next three months—for the next three years, ten years—I will take a ten mile spin."

Mrs. Bowser sighed, but said no more. He had no sooner left the house than she looked about to see that there were brandy, camphor, hartshorn and mustard in the house.

Brown was waiting with the bicycle at the gate, and he said to Mr. Bowser:

"You have a quarter of an hour yet before the club meets, and you'd better practise up a little. Come round the corner and ride up and down a few times. You've ridden before, haven't you?"

"A few times."

When they had turned the corner and were out of sight of the house, Mr. Bowser made his beginning. He had heard an old rider say that confidence was half the battle. He summoned all his confidence and jumped into the saddle.

After a good deal of clawing he got one pedal, but the other kept out of his way, and the bike wobbled and dodged about and finally banged into the kerb and sent the rider over the handle bar.

Brown looked at him dubiously as he got up and rubbed his bruises, but Mr. Bowser was full of grit.

"I'm a little out of practice," he said in explanation, "but I shall be all right in five minutes. You don't think I'm too fat, do you? Mrs. Bowser says I'm too fat and my legs are too short, but I'll show her before I've finished. Lemme try again."

"Take her right out in the middle of the street and resolve to conquer or die. When you once get on, keep your head."

After two or three vain efforts Mr. Bowser reached the saddle again, and, to his intense surprise, his feet struck the pedals and he was off. A bike sometimes does this in its eccentricity.

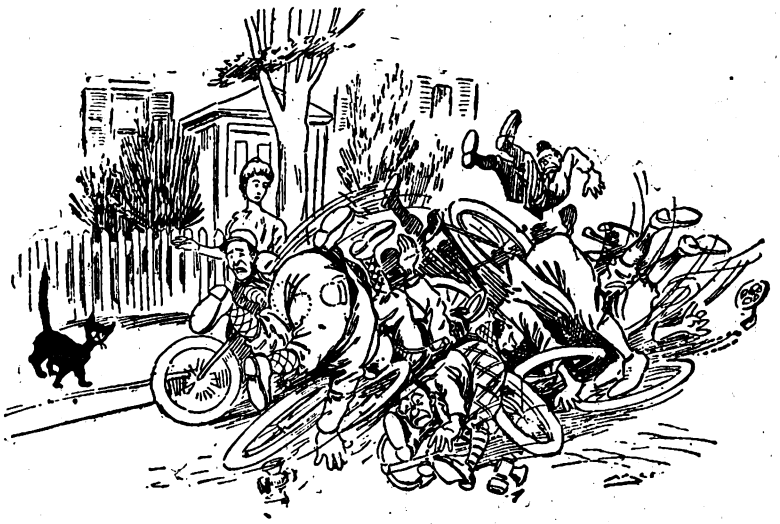
If he had been left to himself, he might have wobbled and twisted the length of a terrace and banged up against a milestone at the corner, but he had not gone a hundred feet when the sixteen members of the Zephyr club came round the corner. Brown yelled and Bowser yelled.

When the sixteen Zephyrs saw something wobbling all over the street, they also yelled, but the yelling did no good. Mr. Bowser tried to fall off or jump off or get off, but six or seven festive riders struck him in chorus and with exceeding unanimity, and what Brown saw was a dark cloud hovering over the street with human bodies and parts of broken wheels ascending and descending and whirling round. Mrs. Bowser and the cat arrived before the performance was over. As they watched the cloud it separated and men and women limped to the kerb and sat down. Mr. Bowser was left alone among the wrecked machines. He was lying on the broad of his back, and the look on his face was like that of a man being burnt alive at the stake.

They picked up the body and carried it along and lugged it into the house, and as they backed out they said to Mrs. Bowser:

"His heart beats yet, and you may possibly save him, but if you do he should be confined in a lunatic asylum all the rest of his days. A man like him is a danger to the whole town and should not be allowed to run at large."

M. QUAD.



Mrs. Bowser and the cat arrived before the performance was over.

[Next Week: "Things were all wrong, but he righted them."]

DO YOU WISH TO MAKE SOME CHRISTMAS PRESENTS?

Something simple, and that requires little outlay.
Something that will give pleasure to your friends.
Something that will be useful as well as ornamental.

WE CAN TELL YOU EXACTLY WHAT TO MAKE?

Go to the nearest newsagent's and ask for

Isobel's Needlework,

PRICE TWOPENCE.

It will be on Sale December 1st. It contains sketches and directions for making many pretty trifles for Christmas Presents and Bazaars, such as

Dainty Table Centres (three designs), A Crochet Chemise Top, Pretty Smocking, A Child's Openwork Sock and Vest, Home-made Serviette Rings, Embroidered Initials, etc.

"ISOBEL'S NEEDLEWORK" may also be obtained direct from 17 and 18 Henrietta St., W.C., post free, 3½d.

Digitized by Google

The Ace of Clubs.

"DICK, this is one of your early nights, isn't it?" asked his wife as he kissed her and the two children prior to leaving home for the office.

"Yes, dear. Why?"

"Because we—the children and myself—see so little of you now that you have under aken this extra work. When you used to come home early, we had some happy evenings together, but it is often eleven o'clock now before you return, and even when you reach home to dinner, you seem so preoccupied that you do not care to talk. We have lost the Saturday afternoon, and on Sunday you are generally too tired or worried to take any interest in the children."

It was out at last. The absence and preoccupation of her husband had worried Kate for a long time, but she had hesitated to say anything to him on the subject.

He had undertaken this extra work for a city friend, as he had told her, for the express pur ose of increasing their income and making things more comfortable for his wife and family, so it seemed rather ungrateful on her part to make any protest; but his salary was a very good one and she would have been quite content with their original position—she would have preferred it to seeing him with that anxious look.

As a matter of fact, this work had not been very profitable hitherto, but Dick was always telling her that it would be all right later on.

"Now, Kate," said Dick reproachfully.

"Yes, I know what you are going to say," interrupted Kate gently. "But we were more—well, quite as happy in the old days. And you know," she c ntinued hesitatingly, "this new venture, or partnership, or whatever you may call it, has not really brought in much money."

"Very few businesses are profitable in that sense at the commencement," Dick reminded her. "It is like laying up something for a rainy day; we shall reap the benefit later on."

"I hope so, Dick," said his wife with a sigh. "We are not laying up anything just now out of your salary; our expenses and the money you require for the development of this business are eating it all up. I sometimes wonder, when I see you looking so anxious, whether the future result will be worth the present cost."

Dick laughed. He tried to make it sound like a hearty laugh, but it was not a grand success.

"It's time I went to the office, Kate; you are unstrung this morning and you will make me feel dismal. Remember, I shall be home at six, not later, so try to get into a more cheerful frame of mind before that time and cease worrying about the future."

He kissed her lovingly, lifted the boy "up to the ceiling," stroked the little girl's curly hair and hurried away.

"It would break her heart, I really believe, if she knew what the 'extra work' was," was his self-comment as he strode to the railway station. "Yes, it would do that just as surely as it will drive me mad if I don't make a big haul directly! She speaks of our money all going; she little knows that I am up to my eyes in debt! I *must* win soon or——"

He bought a morning paper and opened it, intending to read it in the train, but though he stared at it during the whole of the journey, he never read a line of its contents. His mind was busy with another subject.

"What on earth made me go to that woman and have my fortune told by cards and palmistry and all that sort of stuff? I suppose it is all bosh, but she hit upon one or two things very correctly and that makes me nervous about her prediction. How should she know that I spend three or four evenings a week at the card table? Let me see—what did she say? 'The ace of clubs will be the trump card on three occasions; on the first two occasions it will bring you more or less bad luck, but the third time it will mean your ruin.'

"Will it come true? It has turned up once, when it swept away a fair amount of money that I had won. In spite of myself, I dread the next time. I watch that card whenever I see it on the table and try to follow it through all the shuffling and dealing. I fall out of the game whenever I think there is a chance that the dealer will turn it up as a trump card and something within me whispers 'leave off playing altogether,' but how can I?"

The question was unanswerable; the gambling spirit, which had taken possession of him some three years previously, had been constantly getting a tighter grip on its victim; he could no more tear himself away than the opium victim can free himself from his besetting habit. To make the severance more difficult, he was saddled with an incubus of debt.

He went home that evening and tried to make his wife happy by joining them in their childish games before the young ones went to bed. At dinner, and after, he threw off his anxiety by a great effort and did his best to make amends for his shortcoming. Kate looked relieved and began to hope that she might induce her husband to confine his enterprise to his usual daily vocation.

The next day was Saturday and, to her delight, Dick promised Kate that he would spend the afternoon at home, although he must run up to the city in the evening to meet his friend. He accompanied her for a stroll in the afternoon, and on their way back they met Dr. Webster.

He was a young medical man established in the neigh-

Digitized by Google

bourhood and a friend of the Bartons; rumour said that he had at one time hoped to win Kate, but there was no reliable evidence to confirm the rumour, although the persons who held that view pointed to the fact that Dr. Webster was still unmarried. He had a good practice and had earned reputation far beyond his own district for his skill in cases of insanity and nervous complaints generally.

"You are not looking well, Mr. Barton," said Webster after the usual greetings had been exchanged. "You are working too hard, but don't forget that Nature does not allow anyone to play tricks with her—she is bound to have revenge sooner or later in some form or other. I am afraid that your night work causes too great a mental strain."

Dick Barton shot a swift glance at the speaker and turned his eyes away, making some short rejoinder.

He felt uneasy. He had a suspicion that Webster knew something of his doings, and he trembled lest the doctor should say anything that might betray him. Kate was glad that Webster had emphasised her own assertion and hoped that this double reminder would have its effect.

But her hopes were quickly vanished; her husband's condition and appearance were far worse on Sunday morning.

She took the opportunity to implore him to give up the extra work, but he shook his head and answered her so abruptly that she went to her bedroom to relieve herself by a good cry.

Another portion of the fortune-teller's prophecy had been fulfilled on the Saturday evening; the ace of clubs had turned up most unexpectedly, and once again Dick Barton had left the room a heavy loser.

How he had watched and schemed to avoid this unlucky event. But all to no purpose; the fateful card had suddenly, and when least expected, presented itself to his astonished eyes, and he had lost the little pile of money which he had staked.

Dick Barton's mental condition and physical appearance were pitiful. He dreaded to resume his gambling—dreaded the coming of the evening all through the day, yet he could not keep away from the gaming table. Night after night he went there, staking his money and starting with fear every time the dealer turned up a card; he watched with feverish eyes for the ace of clubs, trying to follow it in all its journeyings, gauging the probabilities and abstaining from a game now and then when he thought that the chances were against him.

Every night for two weeks he went on in this way, becoming more and more nervous until he could scarcely hold his hands still, and the opening of a door near him frightened him as much as the report of a revolver, yet he could not give up. He dared not give up, for his creditors were pressing him and he must get money in some way.

Poor Kate was nearly distracted; her husband seemed to have lost all affection for her and the children, he was absorbed in his work—consumed by it as the miser is by his love of gold. She went in her despair to Dr. Webster for advice, and that gentleman promised to do his best to bring Dick to reason.

With a white, set face that indicated desperation, Dick Barton sat at the table playing for liberty. He had reached the end of his tether; unless he could retrieve his fortunes that evening, disaster could not be averted.

Luck was on his side to all appearance; again and again he won, until he threw aside the prudence with which he had begun and staked the larger and larger sums which his winnings permitted.

But in spite of his fortune he was ill at ease—haunted by the ever-present fear that the ace of clubs would be turned up.

With the usual feverish anxiety rendered more intense by the stress of circumstances, he tried to follow the dreaded card; he was trembling with fear like one stricken with ague, and he started and glared about him at every sound.

The other players noticed this and cast meaning glances at one another under the impression that Barton was not far from an attack of delirium tremens. Once, when a black card was turned up, he sprang to his feet with a groan, but he was recalled to himself by the dealer calling out what the card was.

"Thank Heaven!" he muttered, wiping the cold perspiration from his face. "Just a few pounds more—only a little more! Then I will leave off. I shall have enough to get out of the mess I am in, and I'll never touch another card! Oh, if that awful card will only keep in the background just a little longer!"

This fright served to increase his nervousness, and he presented a truly pitiable spectacle; it made him fearful of risking all his money and he reduced the value of his stakes. He lost twice in succession and then, rendered bold again by a sudden idea that his chance had come, he staked the whole of his money.

When he had done so, he began to repent. What if that card turned up? He gripped the edge of the table with both hands, and watched with parched lips and glassy eyes for the result. In his wretched state of mind, oppressed as he was by the prophecy, it did not occur to him that if he lost, it mattered not which card wrought his ruin.

The seconds seemed hours to the agonized man who was waiting to know his fate. With every second his fears increased. At the critical moment he half-raised himself from his chair and leant forward.

The ace of clubs!

Dick Barton stood bolt upright; he uttered no sound but the onlookers saw a reddish froth about his lips. Then he fell to the floor with a heavy thud.

* * * * *

Three months had passed away and Dick Barton was still in the madhouse. When he recovered consciousness after the seizure on the fatal evening, it was found that his reason had suffered and given way under the strain. He was a docile inmate, generally speaking, but subject to an occasional attack of an extreme character, when he was very violent and raved about the ace of clubs.

Mrs. Barton and her children were being taken care of by her father; they spent part of their time in the old home and the remainder with him. It had been decided to keep on the house for a time in the hope that Dick might recover.

The general opinion was that the chances were against recovery; there was hope, that was true, but it was so slender that it was not wise to calculate on it. Dr. Webster was a little more sanguine than his professional brethren, but he dared not raise hopes in Kate that might not be realised.

He had interested himself in the case of Dick Barton and had secured permission to see him at frequent intervals and study the progress of the malady. He made a point of reporting to Kate after every visit, and Kate herself saw her husband from time to time, sometimes

Digitized by Google

being recognised and at others unable to obtain the least sign of recognition from Dick.

This was the position at the end of three months, when Dr. Webster came to Kate with a proposition.

"My dear Mrs. Barton," he said gently and deferentially. "After having given considerable attention to the case I have arrived at the conclusion that probably the only chance of restoring your husband's reason is to try the experiment of treating him homeopathically. He lost his reason as the result of a shock following on great mental strain; we must try the effect of a similar shock as a method of restoring the equilibrium. We cannot reproduce all the conditions exactly, but we will get as near as we can. We all know of cases in which a person has lost his memory through a blow, or in some similar way, and has had it restored by an accident of the same character. But in this instance there is a risk; the shock may kill."

Dr. Webster had spoken impressively; he wished Kate to understand the full importance of his words.

It was a terrible question for a woman to decide—to let her husband remain in mental darkness or to risk his life on the the chance of bringing back the light. She could not make up her mind then and there, but promised to give a decision on the following day.

When Dr. Webster came for the reply, it was in the affirmative.

Webster had made his plans in the expectation that Kate would agree, and he now began the execution of his scheme in conjunction with the medical attendants of the asylum.

Kate had nothing to do, but he stipulated that she should be present when the experiment was made.

The plan was to endeavour to instil into the mind of Dick Barton the idea that he must play at cards; that he must continue to play and stake his winnings, because if he could only hold out until the ace of clubs was turned up his fortune would be made and the disaster of which he was constantly talking would be redeemed tenfold. This was no easy task.

At first, the suggestion was terrifying to Dick, but by dint of continual persuasion it became less and less objectionable and finally he expressed a desire to begin. It took a long time to arrive at this result, but having succeeded so far, the rest of the experiment would be carried out much more quickly, whatever the end might be.

After the first game, Dick showed signs of eagerness; this was a favourable indication, but it was impossible to forecast the effect of the final shock. Dick's eagerness increased as the time went on, and then he began to show some anxiety at the thought that the ace of clubs would never be turned up to bring him good luck.

"It brought me bad luck before and it was not slow in turning up them, but now that it is to bring me good luck it will not turn up."

He watched for that card as he had watched for it a few months previously, but with quite a change of feelings. He longed to see it and felt disappointed every time it failed to appear. As Dr. Webster contrived matters so that it was never the trump card, the patience of Barton began to get exhausted; he became fretful at the delay and the other medical men—for Webster kept well in the background—had to exercise all their powers of persuasion to induce him to continue and to bring about exactly that nervous condition which they desired.

At last the time came when it was deemed advisable to make the culminating experiment. It was evening, the room was arranged and lighted so as to resemble as nearly as possible the gambling saloon in which Barton had spent so many evenings, and proper precautions had been taken in connection with the cards. Kate was present behind a screen, not far from her husband and placed so that she could watch him; Webster was by her side.

Barton had been led to believe that this evening he might expect his fate. Kate could scarcely bear to look upon the excited countenance of her husband, with the lips twitching nervously and with the eyes fixed upon one spot.

More and more intense became the expression upon Dick's face; more and more intense did Kate's feelings become, until she could scarcely stand upright.

"Now!" whispered Webster to Kate, after having given the agreed signal to the other players.

"Now for the final card!" they cried in chorus. Dick sprang to his feet and waited, every limb trembling.

The ace of clubs!

There was a wild cry, more like the howl of a beast than the utterance of a human being. Dick's hands went to his forehead and he reeled.

"Dick, oh Dick!" screamed Kate. She thought the shock had killed him, and she rushed forward and threw her arms about him.

There was an awful silence for a few seconds, as Kate looked pleadingly into the wondering eyes of the man she loved.

Then there came a great sob from his throat, and he sank into the chair with a cry of "Kate! Kate!" covered his face with his hands and wept, while his wife knelt by his side and tried to comfort him.

"Saved!" exclaimed Dr. Webster in a husky voice. "I am glad that I have been able to assist in bringing back happiness to her!" Daisy George.

In the Christmas Double Number of

"SHORT STORIES"

will appear the first of a series of articles entitled

"BRITAIN'S WARS."

They are written in a very readable style, and the whole will form a complete history of the most important wars in which Britain has been engaged.

£25 IN PRIZES.

PEARSON'S TALKING PUZZLE.

Second Edition Now Ready.

Price 6d.; Post-Free from this Office. 7½d.

Digitized by Google

A DRAMATIC COINCIDENCE.

"No," he said, "I am decidedly of opinion that a woman,—the average, well-constituted woman—cannot possibly love twice; that is to say, she cannot consistently re-possess herself, for re-giving, of that which she has to all intents and purposes parted with previously, and for ever."

And she agreed with him. How could she help doing so?

She was young, and very much in love, and although a girl with ambitious ideas and dreams, the mere suggestion that her affection (in this instance) was evanescent, made her acquiesce unreservedly in her lover's absolute proposition.

Harold McIvor was a young man with a certain literary reputation. Although looking to story-spinning, and "outside" journalism as a principal source of income, he was emulous of dramatic success. Beyond, however, a couple of one-act pieces, provincially produced, the desire of his heart was as yet ungratified.

He was a man, too, with a fixed idea—a fad it might be called—an almost aggressive opinion. He was an absolute unbeliever in woman as a literary quantity. Lady playwrights were an abomination to him. No woman, he averred, could write a play worthy the name. Woman, he maintained, was created only and solely for man's help, solace, and domestic comfort; as his intellectual equal and competitor she had no place, or ought to have none.

Of course these views brought him, within his limited circle, into frequent collision with its feminine element. Ellaline Drake was certainly an exception, but then, she was in love, and, as love is, as we know, proverbially blind, (even to the obvious, oftentimes), the woman was merged in the partisan.

The young lady held a fairly good position as typist in the Editorial department of a well-known London publishing house.

Of a quick imaginative temperament, her lot was, therefore, cast amid just such surroundings as must almost inevitably lead to the fostering of her mental bent.

Stories had she written by the score—Poetry, pathetic little pictures, wonderfully true to a certain phase of life so difficult of adequate portrayal, the child-existence of the lower human strata.

It was this feature of her published work which had brought her into personal contact with Harold McIvor. He was keen to detect the woman's lovable nature, peeping out of, and bubbling up through the work of "Ella Drake."

I am inclined to believe that implicit mutual confidence existed between them, with, however, one notable reservation.

Harold cherished the dream of future dramatic fame. He made no secret of it, so far as his sweetheart was concerned, and freely discussed with her his hopes, his aspirations and his plans.

On the other hand Ellaline burned to distinguish herself as a playwright.

As yet she had been unsuccessful in obtaining even a managerial hearing, but being a plucky little woman she worked and hoped on.

But she carefully concealed from Harold her ambition and efforts in this direction.

How could she? she said to herself knowing, as she did, his sentiments with regard to female tillers of the dramatic soil.

So she quietly burnt the midnight oil, paling thereby her pretty cheeks, and spoiling, with disfiguring dark rims, those big eyes of hers.

It was the day of the conversation between them upon woman's ability to love twice. In her present frame of mind, nothing was to be expected of Ella save complete agreement with Harold's views.

"You, darling," he said tenderly, "you could never forget or forsake."

Her only answer was the laying of her hand upon his with a gentle pressure.

"You see, dear," he continued, "the world would be almost untenable as a living-place were there no guarantee, as it were, for woman's faith, and loyalty to her engagements."

"Of course, dear, it would," she returned, "I'm sure that I for one shouldn't want to live in it, for if all women were faithless and disloyal, all men would be——be——"

"What?" he asked laughingly.

"Well, I can't exactly explain, but, say—ugly—in their ways I mean."

"I suppose they would, but as you are what you are, and have made me all that I myself am, why, I am content not to worry myself about it, except—on paper."

This talk had for both these young people great issues.

Both saw the possibilities for dramatic treatment of the subject they had been discussing.

Both mentally dec ded to make these same possibilities an accomplished dramatic fact (so far, at least, as the writing of a play on these lines was concerned) and, most momentous of all, both resolved upon absolute secrecy with regard, that is, to each other.

Possibly, had mutual confidence swayed them, much heartburning embarrassment and consequent entanglement might have been spared them, but Harold, held back by a disinclination to impart the extreme views to which his work would undoubtedly commit him was silent; while Ella, naturally apprehensive of offending his literary prejudices, possessed her soul in reserved patience.

It was observable that from the moment each began to work out his and her idea, that a peculiar and at first hardly perceptible constraint sprang up between the pair.

Harold worked early and late. No walks; no visits in company to theatres; no sunny evening excursions to country nooks and corners. "Sported oak" with him was the order of the day.

So, too, with Ella. Her daily employment kept her busy durin. the day, so that the result in her case was night work, with its inevitable consequence—mental and physical exhaustion.

This state of things continued for nearly six months, until one morning, when the street lamps were struggling with the swiftly breaking dawn, Ella typed the last word of her play.

Digitized by Google

There was only one title for it, of course, "Her second love," and, as she made it up into a parcel, and addresed it to the Actor-Manager, Imperial Theatre, she did so with, it must be confessed, a half-guilty sense of something she knew not what.

* * * * *

The private room of Athol Fearis, lessee and manager of the Imperial Theatre, was occupied on the morning of the day succeeding that of the dispatch of Ella's MS. by that gentleman himself and his reader.

It is the custom, as many are aware, for most managers, especially those of the great West-End houses, to employ as their readers of submitted plays literary men of some reputation.

That Harold McIvor should fill this responsible position at the "Imperial," was assuredly a strange coincidence, if nothing more, although in itself, it was but the most natural result of a life-long friendship with the actor.

"Only one this morning," remarked Fearis, "I congratulate you. Who's the author, anybody we know?"

"A novice, I think," hurriedly, and somewhat confusedly answers the other, "a Miss—or Mrs. Ella Drake."

"'Um. I know your sentiments, my boy, where the ladies are concerned. But be merciful; be merciful, as you expect mercy. If there is any good in it, give it a chance. What's the subject?"

"So far as I can see at present, Woman's second love, its possibility or otherwise."

"Good! well, tell me all about it to-morrow; if you've digested it by then. I'm off now down to the stage, to rehearse that 3rd-Act scene again with my new leading lady."

It may be just mentioned that the fact of Harold's readership being unknown to Ella was quite understandable, he having strong conscientious scruples with regard to "cleanness of hands," and particularly with reference to such a delicate position.

Harold did not attempt to read the manuscript at the theatre. He placed it in his pocket, and took it home with him.

He was not by any means a man given to plots, conspiracies, or double dealing of any kind, but I am bound to record that his action, after reading Ella's play, might well have been unfavourably construed by many who did not understand him.

He saw the utter, irredeemable badness of Ella's work. Apart from its acting impossibility it was unreadable. Yet he read it; for they were his Ella's words; her thoughts, crude certainly and distorted, but still hers. There was only one judgment for him to pronounce, but it was with a heavy heart that he did so. Then he turned to his desk. Upon it lay a white-wrapped packet, addressed to a prominent London actor.

Deliberately did he break the seal and remove the typed MS. It was his own play, and the title ran "Her second love."

They lay upon the desk before him side by side, the two creations of two brains. Twin children outwardly, although there the likeness ended.

He knew, as every good craftsman knows, that his own work was well and truly done, and that, given favourable conditions, it would meet with fame, success, and reward.

The struggle within him was terrible. On the one hand was his love, the one and only possible love for him; on the other was sacrifice, greater than could be conceived by mortal man.

A fire burned brightly upon the hearth, for it was winter, and very cold.

Slowly he took up the other manuscript, the work of nights upon nights of toil for those slender little fingers. Slowly he moved over from his desk to the fireplace, and as slowly dropped into the flames "Her second love."

* * * * *

Imperial Theatre.

Dear Madam.

Upon the recommendation of my reader and, I may add, after a personal perusal of your play *Her Second Love*, I have, subject, of course, to future discussion between us as to terms, etc., decided to produce it.

I propose calling upon you, if you will be good enough to name early date, and hour.

Faithfully yours,
Athol Fearis.

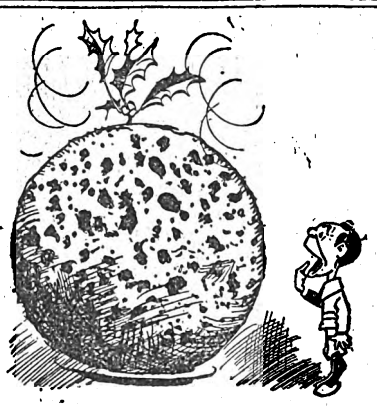
To Miss Ella Drake

* * * * *

"A great success," said the critics. "A great sucess," echoed the public, but Harold McIvor is still of the same opinion with regard to woman as a possible playwright, although the name of the one woman in the world for him is to-day upon every lip.

He had to tell her. His crime could not be concealed. And when she came to hear the truth, how that to glorify her name, and save her from the hurtings of rejection and bitter failure, he had sacrificed, by the substitution of his own work, for hers, the ambition and longings of a lifetime, it seemed to her that she had never truly known him, who had taught her to really know herself.

Ralph Enderby.



What would Christmas be without

A CHRISTMAS PUDDING

on the table? Why, it would be like Tuesday without SHORT STORIES! But this Christmas you can see a Plum Pudding nearly

AS BIG AS ST. PAUL'S!!!

Where can you see it? Why, in the Christmas Number of

THE ROYAL MAGAZINE.

NOW ON SALE. PRICE SIXPENCE.

This number also contains a Grand and Exciting Sea Story, entitled, "The Mystery of the *Esmeralda*."

Digitized by Google

A REVIVAL IN HOUSE PROPERTY.

THERE is a general impression that the house property business in London and its suburbs is exceedingly dull. In fact, it is said to be nearly impossible to obtain tenants for vacant houses. To own but one house which brings in no return for its cost, but upon which taxes must be paid and repairs made, is a severe strain upon any person; while the man who owns three or four houses is thereby reduced to abject beggary.

Such are the remarks which are constantly made every day concerning the real estate business, and yet it was the impression on Wednesday last among the inhabitants of Tooting that a sudden and spirited revival had taken place.

A month ago a house-agent of this rising suburb, whose name is suppressed in order to give him time to reach foreign parts, undertook to obtain a tenant for a house. To his surprise, he was one day called upon by a man who actually wanted the house, and was willing to pay as much rent as would be equal to three-fourths of the taxes on the place. The happy house-agent promptly landed his prey by making him sign the lease, and told him that the house would be ready for him on the first day of February.

Five days later another man appeared, and expressed a strong desire to take the Tooting house. Probably the house-agent had no intention at that time of indulging in illegal practices, but it was such a novelty to have persons applying for houses, that he delayed to mention that the house was already let, and permitted the applicant to think that it was still in the market.

When the new applicant asked what the rent would be, the agent named a price much larger than the owner required, and remarked that it must be paid in advance, thinking thereby to render it unnecessary for him to undeceive his customer. The new man unhesitatingly agreed to pay the sum asked, and, promising to call the next day to sign the lease, won his way.

Before he fell asleep that night the agent had decided that he would let the house for the second time, pocket the first quarter's rent, and visit Argentina. It was a wicked resolution and the agent was a wicked man; but it must be remembered that there are few house-agents whose brains would not reel at finding two successive tenants within two successive days.

When the second applicant appeared the next day at the agent's office, he found a lease waiting for him, bearing a signature which he supposed was that of the house owner. He paid his quarter's rent in advance, pocketed the lease, and promised to occupy the house on February 1st. After he had left the office the house-agent closed his blinds, locked his door, and disappeared, and by this time he is probably on his way to a refuge where no extradition treaty can reach him.

It was about noon on February 1st that two large waggons, loaded with furniture, and escorted by two local four-wheelers, each containing a separate family, drew up at the door of the Tooting house. The two families were those of the two tenants, and the two waggons contained the first instalments of their separate furniture.

Mr. Smith, the earliest tenant, was an irascible man, and lost no time in asking what Mr. Brown, the other tenant, wanted. In a short time the conversation between the two became very lively. Each shook his lease in the face of the other, and denounced him as a swindler. Meanwhile, the vanmen demanded to know what they were to do with the furniture, and the neighbours, hearing of the dispute, turned out in great force and lined the pavement.

Foreseeing that the matter would never be settled by argument, Mr. Smith finally ordered his furniture to be carried into the house. Mr. Brown instantly issued a similar order as to his furniture, and both enlisted strong contingents of on-lookers to assist in the operation.

Each tenant felt the necessity of being the first to occupy the house.

The two heavy furniture vans were unloaded with unexampled rapidity. Mr. Smith's gang stormed the front parlour with the piano, upsetting the Brown piano on the front steps. The Brown party threw a cloud of skirmishers with chairs, bedsteads, and crockery, into the bedrooms on the second floor, locking the door of each room as fast as it was filled.

Their rivals, however, reached the third story by way of the back stairs in advance of them, and also occupied the cellar with a strong force of books and rolls of carpets. The back parlour was the scene of a severe contest, but Mr. Smith hurled iron pots through the windows, and then, mounting the breach, locked the doors from the inside and garrisoned the room with boxes and mattresses.

Of course, these successes were not gained without heavy losses, and there was scarcely an article of furniture which was not wounded. When hostilities were suspended until reinforcements of furniture should arrive on the following day, the position of the rival tenants was as follows.

Mr. Smith occupied the cellar, the front and back parlours, and the third story.

Mr. Brown occupied the whole of the second storey and the remains of his piano occupied nearly all the front yard and a part of the adjacent street.

These positions are still held, and each side has enlisted half-a-dozen lawyers, who are busily applying for injunctions, writs of dispossessions, orders for arrest, and other legal delicacies.

P. E. ARSON.

Digitized by Google

BY THE HEAD OF A MANDARIN.

In Three Parts.

BY SADI GRANT.

PART I.

FROM the window of a feudal Castle in the North of China, a young man was looking out on the tumbled grey stormy waters of the China Sea. He was tall and well made, with the yellow complexion of his race. His line of ancestors was unbroken for five hundred years and more, and from his many grandfathers of the purest blood in China he had inherited the slanting almond eyes, flat nose, and prominent cheek-bones that all well-bred Chinese admire. His name was Li Ki Foo, and he was the eldest son of a Mandarin.

This Castle of Amoy belonged to his father, who came there in the hot months of summer from Pekin. It was battlemented and fortified in a very old-fashioned way; a couple of guns and an enemy's man-o'-war half-a-mile out to sea would have completely dismantled it in two or three hours. Flowering shrubs grew here and there on the rough ground below the Castle, but there was no attempt at a real garden here that lay behind, where two acres of most flourishing land was under the care of Chin Lung, the head gardener—an imposing individual, who trampled on his six under-gardeners as thoroughly as any Scotch fellow-artiste in England could have done.

Li Ki Foo was dressed in a loose jacket and trousers of purple silk; he wore no collar—it is not the custom in China—his jacket only just reached his throat, which was left bare. His trousers fitted tightly below the knee, and finished at his ankles, showing fine socks of silk and black polished shoes. Li Ki Foo had been an *attaché* at the Embassy in London, and was well acquainted with European dress and ways; sometimes he wished that in Europe he were allowed by his religion and the unwritten laws of his country to dress like other people, and so avoid being conspicuous, though still he thought that in beauty and convenience the dress and customs of his own country were superior to anything he had seen in Europe.

He was waiting now, with what patience he could command, for the entrance of his father, the most excellent and honourable Li Lang Hi, one of Her Majesty the Queen Empress's most favoured Councillors. The midday meal was ready and the old butler only waited the entrance of his Master to bring it in. On a small low table of inlaid ivory lay the post bag, brought over by a courier on horseback from the neighbouring town, and Li Ki Foo, being but mortal, wished to see if there were any letters for him in it. How were his famous trotting ponies getting on? Had a rival Chinese dandy put him out in the race for the Tientsin Plate? It was hard to be buried here in Amoy, while the world went its fashionable way without him. Not a sign of this impatience, however, was to be seen on Li Ki Foo's impassible face as he stood looking out on the stormy sea like an image of stone.

A movement in the room behind at last made him look round. Three or four Chinamen were coming in. The first was the Mandarin himself, a dried up, parchment-like old man, dressed in a grey silk petticoat and the yellow jacket that showed his rank. Of the other men, one was his secretary, another the chief steward of the house, and another his private priest. Li Ki Foo bowed low three times, a salutation his father answered by a curt nod; then he sat down on a low, comfortably-cushioned arm chair and drew the post bag towards him.

"What news from Pekin?" he said, as he unlocked it with a little key hung at his girdle, "goes all well at the Summer Palace, my leave of absence can be prolonged. Many letters for you, my son, four, five, six, verily the youth of the present day has more time to waste on scribbling than in my young days."

Li Ki Foo advanced and took his letters.

The old man continued: "Ha! I see letters from Canton from the Mandarin Kiu Lan; that will be about the marriage feast of his daughter, O Li Ki Foo. This concerns you most, but I cannot trouble to look at any of these letters before tiffin. Send the dishes in," he said to the chief steward, with a wave of his long, thin hand.

Li Ki Foo sat down on another low chair near his father, and laughed.

"I, too, am hungry, O my father; I have ridden many miles this morning without breaking my fast."

"And wherefore?" said the old Mandarin, rather crossly. "Are these the ways learnt in the land of the Barbarians? I have heard they do naught but try feats of strength to wear out their bodies before their time, and bathe at all hours of the day to exhaust themselves still further."

"It succeeds well with them, my father," said Li Ki Foo, "where see you finer developed limbs and muscles than among these Englishmen? In China the education of the brain is only studied, not the education of the body."

The old Mandarin looked at his son's stalwart frame and chuckled.

"Yet am I not ill-pleased with thee, O Li Ki Foo; thou art no weakling, that I should fear the degeneration of our race. But see, here comes Akkim with the eggs and the tea; at least admit, oh, my son, that in this dark island of theirs, thou sawest no tea to compare with what thou hast in my house. It were impossible, for I share of the Imperial first leaf-picking, of which none is exported to foreign lands."

Li Ki Foo sipped his strong, scented Orange Pekoe with appreciation.

"Your Excellency speaks but the truth," he said, "there is no tea worthy of the name in England, save at the Embassy, where the Ambassador can take care of himself. These barbarians drink a black decoction of old and inferior leaves, that often stands with water on it for fully half-an-hour; to this they add milk or cream to disguise the flavour. Tea in its real state they do not know."

"And eggs, too," continued the old Mandarin, who was never tired of finding out from his son the curious ways of Europe. "I am told they eat eggs as the common Chinamen do—fresh, at most but two days old, thereby losing the true flavour."

Digitized by Google

"It is so, your Excellency," said Li Ki Foo. "The black egg of two years old, with its curious, yet delicate, odour, is unknown in Europe, thereby they miss much," and Li Ki Foo commenced his third black egg.

"Two years—no less and no more—is the right age," said the Mandarin solemnly. "Each year a sufficient number of eggs for my use are preserved in trays, carefully dated. Is it not so, Akkim?"

"It is so, most honoured one," said Akkim.

"It is said," continued the old noble pensively, "that Her Majesty the Queen Empress has so fine a palate that, when her chief steward caused to be served to her an egg of but eighteen months' keeping, she detected the imposture at once."

"Ha!" said Li Ki Foo, "and what chanced to the chief steward?"

"He died the death of many criminals," said the Mandarin peacefully, "fastened in a cage wherein he could neither sit nor rest, nor even stand save on his toes, placed on the great bridge of Pekin without food or drink, save from the charity of the passer-by. I saw him oft; he lasted ten long days and nights."

"Ah," said Li Ki Foo in an uninterested manner, "and yet, perchance, Her Imperial Majesty was mistaken."

"It may be, it may be," said the old Mandarin; "the criminal asserted it to his last moments, but of what avail was that? The deep reasonings of Her Majesty could not be denied. The Celestial intellect could not admit mistake. It was after all but of slight consequence, the death of one man."

"Of slight consequence, save to himself," said Li Ki Foo.

"To himself!" said the Mandarin, "and what was he? The dust of the earth only. I fear me this sojourn of thine in England has bred foolish ideas in thee, O my son. What is the life of one man in the sight of Her Majesty? Naught."

"Naught, indeed," said Li Ki Foo bitterly, thinking of the hundreds the Queen Empress had caused to be slaughtered in her day.

The old Mandarin shook his head sadly.

"Thou wilt make no courtier, O Li Ki Foo," he said, "if thou canst speak of Her Imperial Majesty with aught but adoration."

Then his thoughts were diverted from the egg and steward question by the entry of some new and tasty dish, of which he was pleased to approve.

"I see there a packet," said Li Ki Foo, after a pause, "among the letters at thy right hand."

The Mandarin looked at it suspiciously and called his secretary.

"Take that and see whence it comes," he said, sharply; "but take it to the other end of the room, for in these days of anarchy and lawlessness it might contain an explosive."

The secretary, a thin, pale young man with spectacles, took the packet; evidently it was of no consequence if he were blown up by chance or design.

"The parcel is from Tartary, may it please your Excellency," he said, after a short examination of the outside.

"From Tartary!" repeated the Mandarin. "I know of no official who writes to me from that province. Open the packet, Ah Keu."

The secretary cut the string that bound it with a small knife, and then unrolled the thick paper of which the outside wrapper was composed. Inside there was a sheet of very grubby writing paper, and a small oblong object wrapped in a piece of blood-stained linen. This he undid carefully, and exposed to view a finger severed at the second joint—a man's little finger, with a deep scar like a burn on the left side. This and the sheet of paper, on which were some vertical lines of Chinese writing, Ah Keu placed on the inlaid table by the side of the Mandarin.

"See to this, O Li Ki Foo," said the old man crossly.

The first was the mandarin himself.

"Why is this sent to me? Am I not troubled enough by the vacillations of Court intrigue that my life should be further darkened by idle threats? For I conceive this is a threat—of some criminal, possibly—to induce me to interfere in his behalf."

Li Ki Foo quietly took the ghastly package from the table, and the letter with it.

"This is the finger of your Excellency's son, Li Ham," he said coldly, "the writer says it can be recognised by the scar on the left side."

Li Lang Hi took the finger and examined it, but without excitement. He had eighteen sons, and really could not be expected to have very vivid feelings of affection for them all.

"The finger is that of Li Ham, no doubt," he said, "the scar was caused by oil from a burning torch falling on his hand at a festival in the Great Temple. Rather than disturb the sacred rites Li Ham suffered the oil to remain on the flesh, thereby causing an indelible scar. What mischief is he engaged in now?" continued the Mandarin angrily, "and what business

Digitized by Google

has he in Tartary? He was sent to a Mongolian monastery to study a folio of the great Confucius, and to perfect himself in knowledge of the ancient laws. But he was ever unruly and wishful for unknown dangers."

"In danger he seems now, at any rate, O Li Lang Hi," said Li Ki Foo blandly; "this paper is from a robber chief in Tartary, from the head of a wandering tribe, into whose hands Li Ham has fallen. Shall I read it to your Excellency?"

The Mandarin nodded, and Li Ki Foo read out:

"To the Mandarin Li Lang Hi—Greeting.

"Thy son, O, Mandarin, lies helpless in my hands. In token I send thee his finger, marked as thou wilt recognise, from a burn three years past. Send ten thousand taels of silver for his ransom by the fourteenth day of the next moon, or I swear by thy head, O Mandarin, I will kill him by the Heavy Death and scatter his bones to the winds of Heaven. An agent at Kin Sin, on the Great Wall of China, will receive the silver, and will make himself known on the arrival of the messenger.—Signed, Ku, Chief of the Lusan Tribe."

"Ten thousand taels of silver!" gasped the old Mandarin, "does this vermin think I am made of money? Li Ham is not worth a tenth part of such a sum."

"Yet he is thy son, O Mandarin," said Li Ki Foo; "should he die by the hands of a robber and his bones not be preserved in the family tomb, it were a disgrace to our ancient line."

Li Ki Foo was not at all excited on the subject, he had scarcely ever seen Li Ham, but still he felt the honour of the family required some sacrifice.

Li Ki Foo read out: "To the Mandarin Li Lang Hi—Greeting."

"Why should he wander on the Steppes of Tartary?" groaned the old man, "Why could he could not keep to his own business? Are my hard-earned taels to be squandered on robber tribes? Nay, O Li Ki Foo, I will not send the money. I am old, and I will not be reduced to poverty in the evening of my days."

Li Ki Foo knew there was little chance of this, whatever happened. Did not the great coal mines on the Yangtse Kiang belong to them, not to speak of hundreds of miles of fertile land and sea frontage? Still, there was no doubt ten thousand taels was a nice, compact sum to see vanish from the family coffers.

Li Ham was rather an advanced young Chinaman, brought up for the study of the law; but he showed much more inclination for hunting and racing and sport of all kinds than an earnest student should do. Even in dress he was frivolous; he did not dare to discard the coat and petticoat of his profession, but he had caused quite a scandal in Pekin by appearing on the public drive with a very rakish grey Terai hat set sideways on his head, and driving a very smart pony in an English ralli cart. A very fat old Chinese judge had nearly had a fit of apoplexy on recognising him that afternoon, and it had been delicately conveyed to the delinquent's family that a short absence from Pekin might be advisable. Hence his journey to Mongolia, and then there was no doubt further lightness of character had conducted him to shoot llamas in Tartary.

"'Tis the decadence of the age," groaned the old Mandarin, "'tis the example of these miserable barbarians, who go hundreds of miles to shoot and hunt, and whose attire is sufficient to disgust a well-bred Chinaman. Are they not hideous enough as Nature makes them, with their short hair and round eyes and beak-like noses, that they should seek to wear such garments that the very birds of the air are scared at the sight? They ruin the Celestial Empire and deprave our noble families by their pernicious example."

"Yet are there no Englishmen in Tartary at present," said Li Ki Foo, "this misadventure cannot be laid to their charge, O Mandarin."

"How knowest thou that?" said Li Lang Hi sharply; "where mischief is, there are the English. Mark my words, O Li Ki Foo, the boy went not to Tartary alone, and what sane Chinaman would risk his skin on those wild steppes for naught? Yet a barbarian will, to catch a new beetle, forsooth, or to drive hammer into rocks of granite, nay, for no reason whatsoever, save to see what they can see new and strange, these English will go anywhere, to the end of the Great Wall, to the Gates of Hell—and thy brother Li Ham is fool enough to go with them."

"'Tis possible he is with some of the Embassy," said Li Ki Foo doubtfully, "but had it been so, the Ambassador would have also communicated with you."

The Mandarin grunted disgustedly.

"This robber Ku," he said, taking up the paper again, "means what he says; he swears it by my head, the head of a Mandarin, a solemn oath. What do you counsel, O Li Ki Foo?"

"I have a plan, O my Father," said Li Ki Foo, "which I trust may meet with your approval; it is this—that I myself should take the ransom to Tartary, and that I should first try to deliver Li Ham from the robber before paying it."

The Mandarin hesitated.

"Thou art my eldest and favoured son," he said, "I like it not that thou shouldst place thyself in a position of danger."

Digitized by Google

"I will be careful and prudent, O my father," said Li Ki Foo coldly, "the danger will be small. I see no other way to save Li Ham and, at the same time, avoid the loss of so large a sum."

"Still, I like it not," said the old Mandarin; "thy mother was dear to me in days gone by, O Li Ki Foo."

Li Ki Foo was very much astonished at this evidence of affection for him, or his mother either; he did not remember her; she had died suddenly when he was about two years old, and he had even heard a rumour that she had been helped to her death by means of a sack and a midnight boating excursion, arranged by her loving husband. However, one cannot believe everything, and he was quite willing to let bygones be bygones.

"Your affection honours me, O Mandarin," he said, "yet would I still go forth. None other can do this mission as I would have it done; if I fail, it is the will of Allah, but I think not I shall fail."

"I like it not," repeated the old man, "I like it not. Are there not many men in China who will risk their lives for a moderate sum, without that thy life be put in question?"

Li Ki Foo got up impatiently.

"Without your Excellency's leave I cannot go," he said; "yet, believe me or not as thou wilt, it is the only way to arrange the matter."

"Wherefore?" said the Mandarin, "has no man brains but thou? Thou art conceited, O my son."

"Say, then, I am a liar and a fool," said Li Ki Foo impatiently; "I cannot manage the business."

"Nay," said his father, "be not too hasty! I say not thou shalt not go, but there are many things to arrange, and I must have the counsel of wiser men."

Li Ki Foo continued his meal in rather a sulky manner. He had never been to Tartary, and the adventures promised to be rather interestingly risky. However, no doubt, by patience and obstinacy, he would gain his point.

For one thing, he felt sure his respected father would leave no stone unturned to save the ten thousand taels, if he could do so, and save his son's life at the same time.

After tiffin was over, Li Ki Foo withdrew to his own apartments in the Castle, and flung himself in his favourite arm-chair in front of a window looking on to the garden, which was blazing with peonies and sweet with arum lilies. Li Ki Foo rang a hand-bell sharply, placed on a ledge near him. The embroidered hangings in one corner were lifted, and his private servant, Ah Cheh, came in.

"My lord rang," said he.

"My cigars, Ah Cheh," said Li Ki Foo lazily, "and a glass of green chartreuse, and, stay—have I not heard that you have been in Tartary, beyond the Great Wall?"

"I have, my lord," said Ah Cheh. "Six years ago I went there as valet to Lord William Gore, of the English Embassy. He went to Tartary on a shooting expedition and stayed there two months."

"Ha!" said his master, "that is well. It is possible I may require you to go beyond the Great Wall also."

He sat and smoked silently while Ah Cheh brought the Chartreuse and placed it on a small silver tray on a corner of the writing-table.

"My cigars, Ah Cheh," said Li Ki Foo lazily.

"Stay," said Li Ki Foo, as Ah Cheh was leaving the room. "Come here, Ah Cheh, and listen to me. I want you to draw up on paper, and submit to me in an hour, the number of men and horses in Lord William Gore's expedition and the stores necessary to take for two months' travel. Report to me as fully as your memory guides you, and, above all, say naught on the subject to any servants of his Excellency my father."

Ah Cheh bowed solemnly; it was no business of his to make remarks. In his inmost soul he was not pleased at the prospect of an expedition to Tartary, for very few Chinamen have any spirit of adventure, and Ah Cheh was remarkably comfortable just then in the castle of Amoy. However, in an hour's time he had drawn up a very complete list of what composed Lord William's expedition—of the servants, horses, and stores—and brought it to his master. Li Ki Foo glanced over it hastily.

"In how many days' time could you furnish forth a similar equipment, Ah Cheh?" he said.

"My lord thinks, then, of taking this journey?" said Ah Cheh. "To do it with comfort and in good order, six weeks' time of preparation should be sufficient; the horses must be carefully chosen for hard work, ammunition and food collected, all these things cannot be got together under that time."

"Then I must set forth without them," said Li Ki Foo carelessly; "in two days, at latest, do I start for Leh on the Great Wall, and thou wilt go with me. From now till t en do thy best—I give thee a free hand in money matters."

Ah Cheh bowed low, he never thought of objecting.

"My poor best is at your lordship's service," he said slowly; "in two days I will have a troop of horse, be it but a small one, at your lordship's disposal."

(To be continued.)

Digitized by Google

SHORT STORIES ABOUT SNAKES.

We devote, every week, two pages of *Short Stories* to pithy, humorous anecdotes similar to those which appear in these columns. A prize of £1 1s. will be sent to the reader who submits the best storyette this week, and a copy of "The Duke and the Damsel," by Richard Marsh, to each of those whose attempts are used. The anecdotes may be either original or selected; in the latter case the source *must* be stated. The prize of One Guinea offered for the best Storyette in this competition has been won this week by Mr. W. J. Bristow, 119 Stratford Road, Plaistow, E. Attempts this week must deal with Stories about GIRAFFES, and must reach the Storyette Editor, *Short Stories* Office, Henrietta Street, Strand, London, W.C., by Monday, December 3rd. Post-cards only, please.

Harmless, After All.

NEW-COMERS from England to the Island of Borneo are, as a rule, very much afraid of being bitten by snakes.

A story is told of a young fellow who, very soon after his arrival, stepped on a snake, and felt the dreaded fang puncture his calf.

Having heard that powerful doses of alcohol, and the external application of liquid ammonia, were the only antidotes to a painful death in such cases, he applied himself to a bottle of brandy, with the recklessness of despair, and saturated his fang-punctured flesh with liquid ammonia till he roared with agony.

When he had got thus far in his fierce struggle with death, he found time to look at and examine the snake that had bitten him, and then discovered that it was one of the most harmless of its species.

Very sick, and, thanks to the ammonia, bellowing and groaning alternately, he staggered off, and tied himself up in knots in his attempts to kick himself.

W. J. B.

Where were the Other Two.

THE wife of a professor was one morning putting on her boots. A little scream attracted the professor's attention. Not having risen, he leant forward anxiously on his elbow and inquired what was the matter.

"Why, a little snake has just crawled out of my boot!" cried she.

"Only one, my dear?" interrogated the professor, calmly lying down again. "There should have been three."

He had put them there to keep them warm.

R. T.

The Duty on Snakes.

THE Custom House officer was going through his baggage.

"What's this?" he asked, pointing to a suspicious-looking box.

"You'll open that at your own risk," said the traveller.

"What does it contain?"

"Rattlesnakes."

The Custom House officer coughed dubiously.

"How many?" he asked.

"Five," said the other.

"Ah, well. That's all right. Rattlesnakes, if you have less than half-a-dozon of them, are free of duty."

And the box was never opened after all. W. T. M.

Once Bitten—Not Twice Shy.

A NEGRO on a Virginian plantation got bitten by a snake whilst wandering in the brushwood. His master gave him a good supply of whisky, and eventually he recovered.

A few weeks after his master saw him wandering about in the bush as if in search of something.

"What are you looking for, Sambo?" he asked.

"Looking for more snakes, massa!" answered the nigger.

J. S.

The Reason of His Love.

A SUNDAY-SCHOOL teacher, addressing her class the other day, wound up her remarks by impressing on her pupils that they ought to love all animals, and by asking one boy:

"Do you love animals?"

Boy: "Yes'm."

Sunday-school Teacher: "That's right. I'm glad you do. What animals do you like best?"

Boy: "Snakes."

Sunday-school Teacher: "Goodness! Why do you like snakes best?"

Boy: "'Cause it ain't wicked to kill 'em."

M. H.

"Snakes" in Guiana.

A BOA-CONSTRICTOR woke up thin and hungry after a three months' nap, and set off to look for his breakfast.

He was soon rewarded by the capture of an agouti, which he crushed and bolted whole, after the manner of his kind. His appetite being not yet appeased, he went farther afield in quest of prey, and presently coming to a fence, and essaying to pass through between the stakes, he was stopped midway by the lump in his body which was the outward and visible sign of the defunct but undigested agouti.

As he lay in this position, another agouti happened to wander incautiously near his nose, and was seized, constricted and swallowed in like manner.

Agouti number two passes down the serpent's body to join its predecessor, but was stopped on the other side of the fence; and the state of affairs now was that the boa could neither go ahead nor astern, being jammed by his fore-and-aft inside passengers; and in that situation was found, caught, killed, and made into a "snake story." Salt, please!

G. H.

Digitized by Google

Thought They Were Eels.

At one of the London halls a short ago, a lady snake charmer was performing with her huge snakes, twining them round her body, neck, and arms.

Just as the performance was at its height, a voice from the gallery yelled out in a rich Irish brogue:

"Oi say, missus, 'ow much a pound do yer want fer them there eels?"

W. L.

The Snake Gave In.

A Lancashire farmer who kept a large stock of fowls was one day prevailed upon by a travelling showman to purchase a fine snake, which he was assured was so cleverly trained that it would not only perform a number of tricks, but would keep watch as well as any dog.

As the farmer had lately missed some of his chickens, he placed the snake on guard near the fowl-house. Finding, however, that he was losing his birds more rapidly than before, he one day, in a fit of passion, struck the reptile a heavy blow on the head with his stick, at the same time exclaiming:

"A pretty guardian you are, indeed! Who's been stealing my fowls, eh?"

What was his astonishment when the dying snake, with its last effort, twisted itself into a capital "I!"

E. L.

Toughish—but True.

Near Fort Snelling, in America, an officer who was standing on the edge of a ravine saw a curious-looking snake running rapidly through the grass. He drew his sabre and cut it in two. The forward part kept right on. He cut another piece and then another, but that did not stop the front part of the snake making good time along through the grass.

At first sight this snake story seems a very tough one. But it is really not at all hard to believe if a person resolutely sets his mind at it? especially with the aid of the officer's explanation.

When that gentleman followed the snake to the edge of the ravine, he found that it was a thin rope attached to one of the horses which was walking along out of sight in the ravine.

He had been cutting the horse's lariat in pieces!

W. I.

Most Un-feline.

One night I was seated alone in the "haunted room" of my house reading one of Poe's blood-curdling tales. The room overlooked a dark and secluded back yard, and I sat with my back to the window.

The midnight hour had just struck, when, oh, horrors! I heard a tap against the glass behind me, followed by a crash which froze the very marrow in my bones.

Dashing down my book and hastily turning out the gas, I fled to my bedroom, expecting every moment to feel a ghostly hand gripping me in its chilly embrace.

Nothing further took place, however, but it was a long time before I got to sleep that night.

Next morning the secret was revealed and I thirsted for the gore of a certain midnight prowler.

In the back yard lay a broken flower-pot which some wretched cat, alighting from an adjacent low roof, had knocked off the window ledge, causing me groundless terror.

W. C.

Instead of a Bell.

At a Turkish bath in Paris a visitor patiently submitted to the various operations of rubbing, kneading, and pommelling comprised in the treatment.

When the shampoo was over the attendant dried him with a towel, after which he dealt the patient three heavy sounding blows with the flat of his hand.

"Good gracious!" the victim ejaculated, "what did you strike me for?"

"Ah, monsieur, don't let that trouble you," was the reply; "it was only to let the other man know I had finished with you and that he is to send me the next customer. You see, we haven't a bell in this room."

W. T. E.

THE GREAT

TWENTY TEAZER MYSTERY.

IT TURNS OUT TO BE A PROVOKING LITTLE DEMON OF THE

PIGS in CLOVER & 15 PUZZLE TYPE

WAS DISCOVERED IN "PEARSON'S WEEKLY" OFFICE,

Was Adopted by the Editor,

AND WILL NOW BE TURNED LOOSE ON A

LONG-SUFFERING BRITISH PUBLIC,

TO SEND SOME CRAZY,

TO AMUSE OTHERS,

And GENERALLY MAKE A NUISANCE OF ITSELF.

During the past twelve months the British public have been kept in an uneasy state of mind. First there was the war in South Africa, then the China Peril, then the General Election. Business has been in a state of stagnation, and men have grown old very quickly. Now a new trouble has arisen. The proprietors of *Pearson's Weekly* have discovered a puzzle more demoniacal, more perplexing, more fascinating, more calculated to waste valuable time and send people distracted than either Pigs in Clover or the Fifteen Puzzle.

It's a simple, inoffensive little thing, too—to look at. The sort of thing you approach with calm confidence one day and give up six months later because your friends have put you under restraint.

It consists of four square blocks of wood in a box. On the six sides of each square there is a number. You have to make four of these sides total up to twenty each all at once. Strong men have given the thing up in despair, and weak men have wept bitter tears of humiliation over wasted efforts to get it right. This little box of concentrated fiendishness only costs SIXPENCE, and will be on sale at Messrs. Smith's bookstalls, all newsagents, and fancy shops next Thursday.

TRY IT.

Digitized by Google

THE CAPTAIN'S WIFE.

A Tale of the American Civil War.

"I AIN'T minding other folks' business, nor never was," said the third-sergeant as he placed a rasher of bacon on the winter-hut fireplace, "but I'll go as far as to say that it don't look right."

"Of course it don't," said the second-sergeant as he put his coffee to boil, "and I guess there'll be a row about it before long. It don't look right, and it ain't military discipline."

"What are you fellows gassing about?" asked the orderly-sergeant as he came in for fire to light his pipe.

"You couldn't guess in four years' time, and I won't keep you tremblin' and shiverin'. The Captain's wife has come."

"You don't say so."

"Yes, she has. Come down to stay the winter in quarters with him, and Company D is just talking itself hoarse about it. Did you ever hear of such a thing?"

"I'll be hanged if I did. A funny thing he never said anything to me about it. Well, well."

"And we was saying," said the second-sergeant as he lifted his eyes from the coffee-cup—"we was saying that it wasn't discipline and didn't look right. Just think of a woman down here! And I'll tell you what's going to happen. She's going to poke about and talk and interfere and break up this Company. They say she used to twist her husband round her thumb when she was at home, and why wouldn't she do it here? If she happens to get down on you or me or Jim what's goin' to save us from bein' broken up?"

"Great snakes!" whispered the orderly as he sat down to his smoke.

"Well, what are you goin' to do about it?" asked the third-sergeant after a pause.

"Dunno."

"Better find out pretty quick, I guess, if you don't want to see trouble. Can't no woman be down here without wanting to run the show and Captain Shattuck? You might go and tell him how we all feel about it."

"Yes, perhaps I ought to speak to the Captain," mused the orderly, "but I'll wait and think it over. I ain't for havin' women down here, but I'm in no hurry to lose my stripes and go back into the ranks. I guess we'd better keep quiet, and wait and see what happens."

That closed the talk in the sergeants' quarters, but there was talk among the corporals and among the privates. There was the army in winter quarters, sure of a rest for three or four months, and there was the Captain of Company D with a fine large hut to himself. His colonel and his brigadier had given him permission to send for his wife, but from orderly-sergeant to the last private the men were down on the scheme. As for the lieutenants, one was away on furlough and the other on detail.

There was soon a great change in the men of Company D, but the Captain did not notice it. It was the orderly-sergeant, who was virtually in command, who noticed the glum looks and heard the mutterings. He had made up his mind to stand neutral, and neither encourage nor discourage. Once in a while, when the talk became too strong, he felt it his duty to his superior officer to say:

"Now, then, shut up! P'raps the Captain's wife is goin' to upset the apple-cart, and p'raps she ain't. It's our business to wait and see. She ain't tried to run things so far."

A month had passed and no calamities had occurred. Some of the men began to breathe easier, and to wonder if they hadn't misjudged the kind-faced and smiling little woman who was sacrificing a good deal to be with her husband a few weeks, but others were firm in their first ideas, and soberly shook their heads and replied:

"You just wait. Women ain't fools to show their hands all at once. She's lyin' low, and when she's ready there'll be a sudden and awful bust up."

It was a cavalry command, and every pleasant winter's day the Captain and his wife had a gallop over the highroads. One day an engineer was dispatched to see about repairs to a bridge spanning a creek flowing through the neutral ground between the two armies, and the orderly-sergeant of Company D was detailed with ten men as an escort. The bridge was reached and inspected, and the engineer and his escort were ready for their ride back when there came a sudden alarm.

Half-a-mile down the road, where Captain Shattuck and his wife had debouched from a cross-road while taking an afternoon gallop, they had run full tilt against a Confederate cavalry scout. The enemy had shouted to the Captain to surrender, and as he wheeled his horse to get away a bullet brought him out of the saddle. His wife would have pulled up her steed, but he took the bit in his mouth and was beyond control. As she went flying up the road the scouting party followed. They knew of the small detachment of Federals at the bridge, and were hoping to make a surprise.

"It's the Captain's wife, and the Johnnies are close

Digitized by Google

behind her!" shouted the sergeant as the woman came into view with a great clatter. "Open ranks and let her through, and then close up and give 'em hail Columbia."

With a rush and a clatter the horse of the fugitive passed the blue-clad troopers, but came to a dead halt a few rods beyond and turned about. A volley from the carbines checked the pursuers for the moment, but it was seen that they were strong enough to break through, and the sergeant gave the order to fall back to an abandoned log-house a quarter of a mile in the rear.

"Men," exclaimed the woman as she looked from man to man, "do you know that your Captain is back there, wounded and a prisoner? Are you going to leave him there?"

"It's too bad, ma'am, but they are three to one," replied the sergeant. "We'll be lucky if we ain't killed or gobbled up before help comes."

"But I'm going to ride back!" she cried, as her pale face flashed and her voice had a thrill to it. "If you won't go with me to rescue your Captain I'll let them take me prisoner and go to Richmond with him."

"My goodness, but she's a brave one!" whispered man to man.

"Heavens, ma'am," hoarsely whispered the sergeant with admiration in his eyes, "but we'll have the Captain or die! How far down the road was it?"

"Not over half-a-mile."

"And how many rebels in the party?"

"Not over fifty."

"Fifty rebels and ten of us! We'll never do it, but we'll die for the Captain. Into the saddles, boys. Ye'll ride on towards camp with the engineer, ma'am?"

"Not a foot. I'm going with you. Someone give me a revolver."

"By twos—right wheel!" shouted the sergeant as he handed her his revolver and drew his sabre. "Now, then, ride through or over them and don't stop this side of the Captain or destruction."

It was a curious spectacle the grey-clad soldiers witnessed—a woman riding at the head of the charging squadron—a woman with white face and glittering eyes, who held her reins in one hand and used the pistol with deadly effect with the other. Through the thick of them she went, and through the thick of them followed the ten, and fearing that the alarm might have already reached the Federal camps the Confederates disappeared into the woods instead of pursuing.

Down there beyond the bridge the Captain was lying on the ground with a bullet in his shoulder and three men guarding him. The cavalcade swept up to them and surrounded them, and there were three prisoners instead of three guards.

"Excuse me, sir, but it was the Captain's wife who did it all," said the sergeant as he reported to the Colonel. "She not only saved her husband from Libby Prison, but we might all have been wiped out if we'd made a fight for it at the old house."

That evening, as the second and third sergeants ate their evening meals, the third-sergeant looked up and said:

"Well, I ain't mindin' other folk's bizness, nor never was, but I'll go as far as to say——"

"Say, now," interrupted the second-sergeant, "if it hadn't been for your gab the boys wouldn't have made fools of themselves about the Captain's wife comin' down."

"You said as much as I did."

"You're a liar!"

"What're ye mad about? Didn't we all say——"

"Didn't we all say what?" asked the orderly-sergeant as he came into the hut.

"Didn't we all say that a woman had no bizness down here, and that the Captain's wife would bust the Company all to smash?"

"Look here, you fellers," replied the sergeant in menacing tones, "you want to stop your gabbin' and see that all others do the same. This mornin' there was ninety-one fools in Company D. This evenin' there ain't more than one, and I'm looking round to get my paws on him and break his neck."

"Goodness, but I allus knowed the Captain's wife was a daisy," gasped the third-sergeant.

"You bet your bottom dollar," added the second-sergeant.

"Then you finish your grub and rout out the boys, for we're going up to swing our hats and give three cheers for her."

C. B. Lewis.

37 TEN-POUND MEN AND 1 TEN-POUND LADY CAPTURED.

Since last week three more Sealed Envelopes have been claimed, the lucky captors being:

Mr. Thos. Tyzack, 16 Belmont View, Belmont Road, Liverpool,
who captured No. 65 at a Football Match.

Mr. J. Mamelok, 33 and 37 Oxford Street, Manchester,
who captured No. 60 in his shop.

Mr. W. Kirk, 129 Hill Street, Sheffield,
who captured No. 64 at a Football Match.

£380 HAS NOW BEEN PAID AWAY,

and there are still a number of Sealed Envelopes awaiting claimants.

There are also ten Ten-Pound Ladies travelling about the country who are only allowed to deliver their Envelopes to ladies.

The celebrated song

"HAVE YOU GOT THAT £10 NOTE?"

is now on sale, and can be obtained from all newsagents for 1s. 4d., or direct from the Song Department, Pearson's Buildings, Henrietta Street, London, W.C., for 1s. 6d. Postal Order (not stamps) post free.

PLAYED ON THE STAGE.

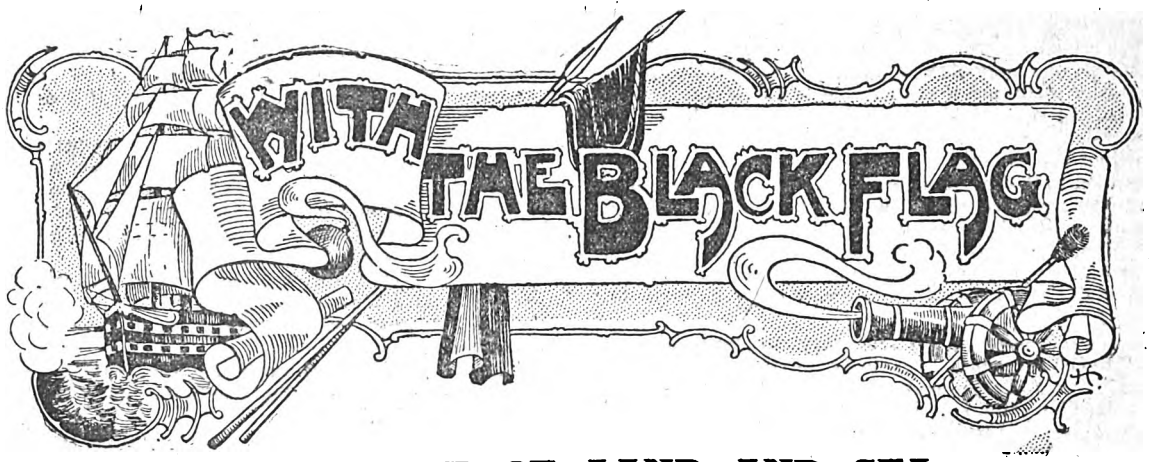
Two sketches have been written on the subject of the Ten-Pound Note Scheme, one lasting about half-an-hour and one fifteen minutes.

In No. 1 Sketch the cast consists of four actors and two actresses. In No. 2 Sketch the cast consists of two actors and one actress.

Any organisers of entertainments for Christmas, such as church bazaars or Christmas parties, or private theatricals, who wish to include either of these sketches in their attractions, should write to the Ten-Pound Sketch Department, Pearson's Buildings, Henrietta Street, London, W.C.

Full particulars of the Scheme will be sent on application to Room 36, Pearson's Buildings, Henrietta Street, London, W.C.

Digitized by Google



A ROMANCE OF LAND AND SEA.

By WILLIAM WESTALL.

Author of "With the Red Eagle," "The Phantom City," "Nigel Fortescue," etc., etc.

CHAPTER XXII. (*concluded*).

So we resumed our journey, not very cheerfully perhaps, yet with easy minds.

The country was open, our course north, and the trend of the ground upward, so that we were soon above the lower part of the plain and the level of the river, which was unusually high.

Rosalind and I rode together. We said little, for our hearts were full. She was leaving her home and her kindred, I a place endeared to me by the pleasant memories of several happy months, and the chances were a hundred to one that we should never see it again.

Every now and then we paused and looked backward. I had never seen Manoa more beautiful or Mount Lofty more majestic. It was a lovely morning, too, with a cloudless sky and a brisk air, the sun not being yet so high as to make it unpleasantly warm.

"It is very hard for you, dear," I said taking Rosalind's hand.

"Yes, and my heart is heavy, yet am I glad withal. It had been still harder to see you lying dead as I saw my dear father; and had we tarried that would have been. We are leaving Manoa, but we are going home, for your home will be my home. I have no other now and want no other."

"And it shall be a happy home, darling. I will try to make up to you—hallo, what has happened?"

As though moved by a common impulse all the mules had come to a dead stop, stiffening and stretching out their legs, as sailors do on a rolling ship.

"Heaven help us! An earthquake!" I exclaimed, and slipping out of my saddle I helped Rosalind from hers.

The ground was oscillating so violently that we could scarce keep our feet, the mountains rocked, and there came, as from the bowels of the earth, a moan of muffled thunder, the most appalling sound I had ever heard. Then, with a roar that shook the air, Mount Lofty sent forth a shower of ashes that darkened the sun, followed, in a few seconds, by a dense cloud of steam and smoke above which flamed a great pillar of fire, half as high as itself.

Manoa crumpled up like a piece of paper. The supporting pillars had given way, the mountain fell with a mighty crash, and from its ruins rose a vast cloud of dust.

We were too stupefied either to speak or move, almost to breathe. Rosalind clung to me shuddering, the animals bent their heads and groaned in terror.

When the dust subsided a huge volume of water could be seen pouring down from the foot of Mount Lofty. The lake had burst its banks and the course of the river being blocked, the flood came on apace, dashing the heap of *débris*, which was once Manoa, in great waves and rolling wildly over the plain.

The shocks still continued, though at longer intervals and less violently.

"Mount, we must hurry on," cried Santley. "If the quebrada should be blocked we are lost. There is no other way out."

The quebrada was the defile where the Manoeros had destroyed the Spanish invaders. So we pushed on, and none too soon, for the flood, fed by the fast melting snow and loosened springs, was following us as with the velocity of a tidal wave.

In three hours we reached the quebrada. It was still open, yet before we got through the shocks recommenced and we were in great danger from falling stones, but as to halt might have been fatal we went on as swiftly as our mules could be made to go, and presently gained open ground when, the shocks having ceased, we were able to take a rest.

But for one of our party it came too late. As we lifted Mistress Wyvenhoe from her mule she swooned away, and within an hour died of exhaustion and grief.

This, albeit a great misfortune, was less felt, even by her daughters, than in other circumstances it would have been. We had undergone so many emotions and supped so full of horrors as to be almost past feeling either sorrow or surprise, and all knew that it had been hardly possible for the poor lady to survive the hardships and dangers that still lay before us. Moreover, we dared not linger. We were on a wind swept height, many thousand feet above the sea level. After sunset the cold would be piercing, and unless before dark we reached some place where shelter might be obtained, neither Rosalind nor Diana, perhaps none of us, could outlive the night.

The poor lady's body was laid in a shallow grave, dug with difficulty, over which we placed a heavy stone. Then, silent and depressed, we continued our flight, and after two short halts for refreshment and rest came to an Indian hamlet, where we found lodgings, as Tamanac had said we should.

We set out early the next morning for the Paramos, following a track that wound among wild mountains, covered with forests that overhung the road and almost excluded the light of day. The trees were the largest I had yet seen, being continually watered by the clouds they attract, from

Digitized by Google

which falls an incessant rain. Late in the day we arrived, thoroughly drenched, at another hamlet known to the Cazique, where we dried our clothes and passed the night. Left to ourselves, or with a less efficient guide, we should of a surety have perished in those terrible wilds.

The next day was the most trying of all. We had to cross a "paramo," which signifies a strait pass, sunless at high noon, and often swept by icy blasts so violent as to prove fatal, both to man and beast. The way was strewn with the bones of unfortunates who had attempted the passage in bad weather; and its terrors were further enhanced by its loneliness and gloom.

Not a living creature did we meet; the silence was broken only by the screams of unseen condors and the murmurs of the distant waterfalls. Twice we had to dismount and lie down to avoid the force of the blast, which at times was fierce enough to stop a strong man. One of the mules died.

Fortunately for us the paramo chosen by Tamanac was not long and the weather was not bad, and in the end we won through without disaster, though Rosalind and her sisters were only just alive. But the sunshine into which we presently emerged and a rest before a fire in an Indian's hut restored their strength, and the thought that we had overcome our chief difficulties, and that there was a fair prospect of our gaining the coast gave them courage and hope.

From this point our journey, though tedious and slow, was neither eventful nor hard. We descended into more genial climes, and ere long were marching through verdant valleys, under a burning sun.

But though the elements were propitious the whole of Spanish South America was in revolt against Spain, and for the sake of our fair companions we had to travel with great circumspection, often making long halts, while Tamanac went ahead to scout and gather information.

Every route to the sea was more or less dangerous, but that to Guayaquil being, as we heard, less so than any other, we shaped our course in that direction and arrived thither five weeks after leaving Manoa.

A little while previously the place had been taken by the patriots, from whom—Bolivar and Urdenetta being out of the way—we had nothing to fear.

Guayaquil is situated on a plain, watered by a noble river and begirt with plantations and orange groves, but the dirtiest town I ever saw. Its only scavengers are vultures and masterless dogs, and the posada, where we put up, was if possible, less cleanly than an Indian pulperia.

However, there were shops at which we could replenish our kits and obtain the garments of civilisation, and so soon as I had made myself presentable I sought information as to whether it was possible to obtain passages to England, either at Guayaquil or any other place on the coast.

Hearing, in the course of my inquiries, that a Chilian cruiser, commanded by an Englishman, had just come into port, I thought I could not do better than see him, and so took a boat and went on board.

To my unspeakable surprise the first man I saw as I stepped on deck was Cautley.

"Wyvenhoe! Good gracious! Where do you come from?" he exclaimed, taking both my hands.

"From the other side of the Andes; and you, old friend?" I answered and asked.

"From the other side of the continent; but come into my cabin and I will tell you all about it. By jove! The idea of our meeting here! I feared you were dead."

"Not yet, thank goodness. How is Mrs. Barnish?"

"There is no Mrs. Barnish. She is my wife and I left her at Valparaiso. You are as single as ever, I suppose?"

"No, sir, I am as much married as a Christian gentleman can be, and I left my wife at the posada."

"Hurrah! We are both in the same boat then, and not for the first time, either. Yet you always pretended to be dead set against matrimony. How did it happen?"

The first man I saw on deck was Cautley.

On this, I related briefly what had befallen me since we parted, reserving a fuller account for a more convenient opportunity, and inquired how Cautley had fared.

"On the whole not badly," he answered. "I did good work with those flecheras, took a lot of prizes, but do what I might, my Zambos would cut their prisoners' throats, and as I could not get a penny either of prize money or pay, and had to serve under an admiral who was both a lubber and a coward, I chucked it up and got a ship in the Chilian navy, which, as you may have heard, is now commanded by Admiral Lord Cochrane. You will be pleased to hear that before I left the Venezuelan service I had the satisfaction of hanging that scoundrel, Conroy. I have heard nothing more of Molyneux, but I think he must have got his quietus. Mrs. Barnish and I were married at Port-of-Spain. We spent our honeymoon on the sea, on the passage to Valparaiso, where we have a house. That, shortly told, is my tale."

I need hardly say that Cautley was presently introduced to my wife and her relatives, or that an offer which he made to convey us all to Valparaiso, was gladly accepted. Thither, after a painful parting with Tamanac, we sailed and arrived in due course.

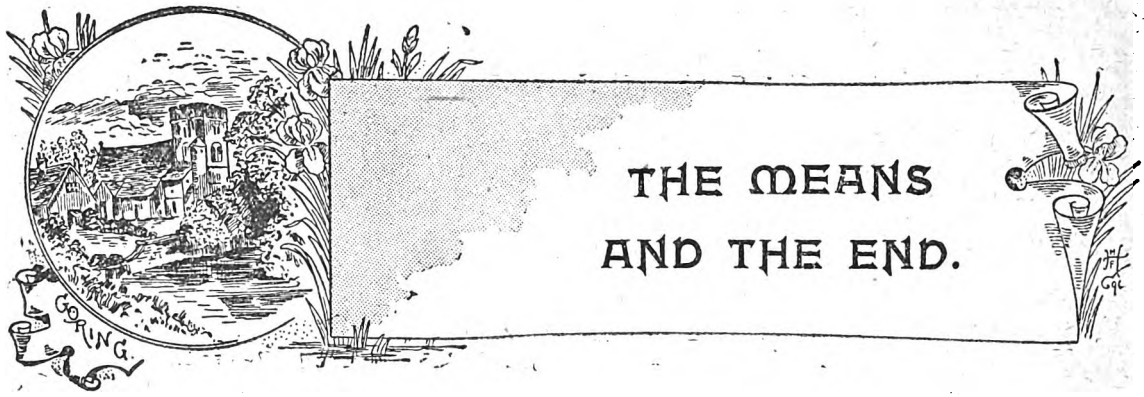
A while afterwards there were other partings—with the Cautleys as well as with Santley and Diana, for Don Iago having obtained an appointment under the Chilian government decided to settle in Chili.

Rosalind, with my full consent, divided between her sisters the golden dower which she had received from her father.

Beatrice accompanied us to England, and stayed as our guest at Wyvenhoe Court until Providence and a gentleman provided her with a home of her own.

THE END.

Digitized by Google



THE MEANS AND THE END.

THE old problem about doing wrong that good may come of it has been the subject of many discussions, so it is not surprising that my wife and I should have had some difference of opinion on that very point. She is a good woman, upright in all her dealings, but she stands firm to the opinion that it may, in certain exceptional cases, be justifiable to do a thing that is wrong in order that good may result from it.

Mind you, she does not say that it is justifiable anyhow, but only in exceptional cases, when you are convinced that your wrong doing will be the means of having justice done to somebody. She is strong on this point, because of an incident with which she was connected in a slight degree, and she always brings forward that experience in support of her argument whenever this subject is talked about. You will understand me better if you imagine that you are sitting with us in our cosy parlour, and listening to my wife as she tells the story:

"It was while I was in the service of Sir William Ashburton at the Lindens, acting as companion to Miss Eva, his daughter.

"Sir William was rather a peppery old gentleman—we called him 'old,' but he was only a little over fifty—and he was accustomed to have his own way. Everybody yielded to his wishes, and when he set his mind upon a thing, that thing had to be done or there was trouble. Lady Ashburton had died while the two children were young, and they had been brought up in the belief that whatever their father said was to be done, must be done.

"Things went on all right until Mr. Frederick was twenty-five, and then Sir William took it into his head that his son ought to marry."

"That was sensible enough!" I broke in.

"Don't you interrupt!" said my wife severely.

So, like an obedient husband, I kept silent until she finished the story.

"Frederick Ashburton had no objection to marrying when he met a woman who, in his opinion, would make him a good wife and whom he could love as a husband should love the partner of his joys and sorrows. But that was just the point where the father and son were at variance.

"Sir William was connected with a Mr. Hoare, a gentleman who owned property about five miles from the Lindens. The baronet and Mr. Hoare had had some business or some financial transactions together. I don't know quite what it was, but they were pretty friendly. Mr. Hoare had an only child, a daughter named Mabel, who was about two years younger than Frederick, and Sir William conceived the idea that his son should marry Mr. Hoare's daughter.

"The baronet called his son into the library one morning quite unexpectedly, and told him that he wished him to marry Mabel Hoare. Frederick protested; he said that he had not an atom of love for that young lady, that she was not the kind of girl to whom he could ally himself for life, and that he must refuse to obey his father's injunction that he would go that morning and arrange the engagement.

"'Nonsense!' raved Sir William, getting into a fury at the idea of having his wish thwarted. 'The girl's as good as any other, and she is quite willing.'

"'I have nothing to say against Miss Hoare,' replied Frederick quite calmly. 'I am not a piece of merchandise to be disposed of no matter what my feelings may be, and I cannot marry her.'

"'But you must!' cried the baronet. 'I have set my heart upon it.'

"'I am sorry to disappoint you, sir, but if Miss Hoare is willing to be disposed of like a piece of merchandise, I have not the slightest intention of marrying her!'

"'I suppose you have got yourself entangled with some low-born actress or adventuress who is anxious to become Lady Ashburton,' sneered the baronet.

"'I have done nothing of the kind, sir.'

"'Very well, then you will either marry Mabel or go your own way. To-morrow you will either be engaged to her or I shall send for my lawyer to draw up a fresh will, leaving everything to your cousin Percy. You will remember the property is not entailed.'

"The upshot of the whole business was that Frederick left home the following morning and before the week was out a new will was made. He was too much his father's son to be coerced into marriage, and as he had an income from his mother, which was sufficient for his requirements, there was no danger of him starving. With reference to the other party to the contract, Mabel Hoare had been so used to being ruled by her father, that she would have acquiesced in his arrangements without any demur.

"The only one to display any grief at the turn things had taken was Miss Eva, who deeply loved her brother, and who strongly resented the idea of her cousin reigning in the place which should have been his. Once, and once only, she tried to soften the old baronet's heart with her intreaties, but she only

Digitized by Google

raised a storm and was forbidden to mention the subject again.

"Thus matters stood until a paralytic seizure carried off the old baronet. The night before this took place he had mentioned his son's name for the first time since his veto on the subject, and producing the will, had told Miss Eva its contents. Next morning his valet had knocked at the baronet's door several times without receiving any reply and eventually, becoming alarmed, he entered the room, to find his master unconscious. A physician was hastily summoned, but on his arrival the only hope he could give was that Sir William might possibly regain consciousness but recovery was out of the question.

"Miss Eva telegraphed to her brother, with whom she had kept in communication, but before he arrived the old baronet was dead.

"'It was after his death that we made a discovery that astounded us,' said Sir Frederick. 'No will could be found. His lawyer and I searched his papers for the document which had been drawn up and witnessed six weeks before, but it could not be found. My sister was asked to assist us in the search, but instead of doing so she looked at me with a curious smile and quietly informed us that she knew there was no will.'

"'But I drew one up only a few weeks ago,' said the solicitor, 'though I can assure you it was with extreme regret, but I could only do as instructed.'

"'I know all about that will,' replied my sister. 'The night previous to my father's seizure he called me into the library, and there in his presence, and at his request, I destroyed the will which left everything to Percy. My father expressed his intention of sending for his lawyer next day, but as you know, next morning he was powerless and he died without ever regaining his speech, though he recovered consciousness just at the last.'

"'That being the case,' said the solicitor, 'I shall have the pleasure of congratulating you, Sir Frederick, and I am heartily glad to do so.'

"This then was the explanation of my mistress's ramblings. The question now was whether the will had been destroyed or had Miss Eva hidden it. On one point Sir Frederick was firm. Upon no consideration would he retain possession of what was legally, if not justly, the property of his cousin.

"After a long discussion we decided upon the course to take.

"As long as Miss Eva bore the burden of her sin—though I am not sure that is the right word for it—so long would our efforts be in vain.

"The disclosure would no doubt be painful to her, argued the doctor, but after the first shock there would be a relaxing of the tension which would bring relief to the troubled mind.

"Immediately we had come to a decision Dr. Sumners and I went up to Miss Eva's room, where she was lying in bed in a thoroughly exhausted condition. She was awake and accordingly I slipped out again to fetch Sir Frederick, while the doctor endeavoured to prepare her for the interview with her brother.

"When we returned she was quietly weeping on her pillow.

"Sir Frederick went straight to her bedside and quietly kissed her.

"'Now, darling,' he said, 'we have not come to scold you, so dry those tears.'

"Turning to Dr. Sumners he quietly asked if he had told her of the disclosures of the night, and upon

THE

"WHITE MAN'S BURDEN."

Facts About Corpulence.

The burden of adipose tissue under which so many men and women suffer, with more or less patience and resignation, is one which none need bear who will listen to the teachings of science as set forth in a little book entitled "Corpulency and its Cure," by Mr. F. Cecil Russell, a well-known specialist, who has devoted many years of study to the subject—for however alarming it may sound to those who have a tendency to fatness, obesity *is* an undesirable encumbrance, and must be treated accordingly. It is singular indeed, that the medical profession should have given so little attention to the causes and the cure of this distressing malady, especially when it is known that an abnormal weight of fat accumulating around the internal organs leads not unfrequently to what is called fatty degeneration of the heart and liver. In Mr. Russell's treatise, which has recently reached its eighteenth edition (a significant proof of its popularity), the subject is treated with great thoroughness and lucidity. Eschewing the usual obscurities of scientific terminology, the author explains in good homespun English the origin of fat, the causes and the dangers of its undue accumulation, and the symptoms of the various ailments engendered thereby. Furthermore, Mr. Russell goes exhaustively into his unique method of treatment, and gives the ingredients (which are purely vegetable and absolutely harmless) of the preparation with which his name is associated. "Doing Russell" is a not uncommon phrase, and certainly one which has no terrors for those who have gone through this really agreeable treatment. The system is, in fact, as admirably simple as it is marvellously efficacious. It entails but slight interference with one's ordinary dietary, there are no arbitrary restrictions of any sort, and the preparation Mr. Russell prescribes is of so pleasant a kind that many persons take it, diluted with water, as a table beverage. This is no starvation *régime*; on the contrary, whilst the reduction of adipose matter is being effected, safely and surely, at the rate of no less than from 3lb. to 4lb. per week (sometimes considerably more), the appetite is improved, the system is gradually toned up, and strength, energy, and vitality are increased. The dainty little book under notice can be obtained by any of our readers who will send two penny stamps to Mr. F. C. Russell, Woburn House, Store Street, Bedford Square, London. Hundreds of grateful and enthusiastic letters from "ex-corpulents" are printed in this interesting work.

Digitized by Google

receiving an affirmative nod he again turned to his sister, who was trembling like a leaf.

"'Now, little girl,' he said, 'I know it was your love for me that prompted your action, but you know, Eva, I cannot retain what is not legally mine. My mother's legacy is sufficient for my needs, so I shall not be reduced to begging my bread, or even seeking a situation as a clerk in a merchant's office. I don't want you to excite yourself and do harm, but just tell me quietly what became of the will which my father made.'

"'Shall I be prosecuted for fraud,' she asked pitifully.

"'No, little goose,' replied Sir Frederick. 'Trust me to arrange everything. The outside world will never know anything about it.'

"Then we got the story, slowly and painfully told.

"When the doctor's pronouncement had been made and she knew that there was no hope of her father's recovery, her heart rose in rebellion at the thought of her cousin reigning in her brother's stead, and when her father eventually died without regaining the power of speech, she decided upon the act which was to insure Sir Frederick getting what she considered to be rightfully his.

"When she left the death-chamber to go to her room she had obtained possession of her father's keys, and hastily rushing to the library, she secured the will which she had seen him place in his desk the previous night, and in the security of her own room, she tore it into fragments and then reduced it to ashes. From that moment she knew no peace, but in her conscious moments she would have died rather than have divulged the secret of the missing will.

"When the story was told Sir Frederick spoke to her with added tenderness. He was deeply moved by this evidence of his sister's devotion, but he was too honourable to wish to avail himself of it. Miss Eva was quite exhausted when she had finished, and administering an opiate we left her.

"Sir Frederick's first act was to dispatch an urgent wire, reply paid, to his cousin, who was in London, summoning him to the Grange, and in a short time the reply came, informing us that he was starting at once. During the period of waiting Sir Frederick busied himself in the library, Dr. Sumners went off to visit his other patients, having first promised to return in the evening, and I retired to obtain some rest, but so great was my interest that sleep was out of the question.

"Percy Ashburton arrived about eight that evening. He was a fine fellow, with an athletic form and frank open countenance, and when I was introduced to him I thought there was not much fear of him causing any unpleasantness, and the subsequent proceedings showed that I had judged him correctly.

"When Dr. Sumners arrived we adjourned to the library and there Percy Ashburton was enlightened as to the nature of the business upon which he had been called to the Grange. I felt quite sorry for Sir Frederick, for it was very evident that the story of his sister's sin—I can't reconcile myself to that word, by the way—was an extremely painful one for him to tell.

"The man whom she would have deprived of his legacy listened in silence until Sir Frederick had finished, and then he burst out:

"'What a brick your sister must be, old fellow.'

"'I'm afraid that is hardly the question,' replied Sir Frederick.

"'Well, let us get the business settled at once,' went on his cousin. 'You don't imagine I am going to turn you out, do you? If your father was unjust I am not going to take advantage of his injustice, so that's settled without the assistance of any lawyers. But I wish I had a sister like yours.'

"To say that Sir Frederick was astonished quite fails to express the situation.

"Then commenced an argument. Both insisted on the other taking possession, but Percy absolutely refused to have anything to do with the estate.

"'You may argue till doomsday, old fellow, but you won't shake my resolution. I'm as obstinate as any mule that ever kicked,' he said, 'and so there's an end of the matter.'

"And so it was. Sir Frederick had to give way in the end, for you know you can't force a man into taking possession.

"He stayed on for a few days at the Grange, but he absolutely refused to discuss the subject again.

"'Look here, old man,' he said one day when Sir Frederick wanted to introduce the subject, 'it appears to me I have more respect for your sister than you have. If I bundled you out, there would have to be some explanation. As it is, nobody beyond those who already know—and I am sure they will treat the subject confidentially—need know anything about it, and so will you oblige me by shutting up.'

"So Percy Ashburton returned to his briefs and Sir Frederick retained possession.

"Percy had refused to see Miss Eva, as he was afraid it would be painful to her to meet him, but when she had regained her strength, which she began to do soon after getting rid of her burden, she insisted upon him being invited to the Grange, so that she might express her regret and her gratitude at the same time.

"His admiration of the 'brick of a sister' had by no means diminished in the interval, for about six months after I left the Grange I received an invitation to a wedding there, the contracting parties being, to put it in the language of newspaper men, Percy Ashburton, Esq., barrister, Lincoln's Inn Fields, London, and Miss Eva Ashburton, only daughter of the late Sir William Ashburton, of the Grange, Templestowe.

"The happy man took the opportunity of privately informing me that he thought he had done better than he would have done by taking the Grange, and the Lindens got a tenant after all, as Sir Frederick handed the place over as a wedding present.

"Now, John, was Miss Eva justified in her act?" asked my wife in conclusion.

"Well," replied I, "as events turned out so happily it hardly seems worth while discussing it now, but I am afraid if Percy Ashburton had been a different sort of chap, there might have been a very disagreeable sequel to the business."

"Oh! don't be so matter-of-fact, John, in your remarks. Eva Ashburton was and is one of the dearest girls that ever breathed," replied my wife, and to avoid further discussion I assented, briefly remarking that I had the honour of very close acquaintance with another equally dear girl, to which the only reply I got was "You silly old flatterer," and the discussion was allowed to drop, as the reporters say.

But what is your opinion, my worthy readers? Was it a justifiable sin?

Percy Ashburton, who is a barrister, says it was, and being a barrister, his opinion should have some weight, but then he is prejudiced in the fair sinner's favour.

J. H. Peat and G. Day.

Digitized by Google

BIG PRIZE SCHEME

For MARCH, 1901.

25,602 PRIZES, value £10,000

LIST OF PRIZES:

1 Cash Prize £50	£50 0
1 Cash Prize £40	40 0
10 Handsome Pianos, in walnut, £40 each	400 0
5 Cash Prizes, £25 each ...	125 0
10 Gents' Bicycles, Freewheels, £17 17s.	178 10
10 Ladies' Bicycles, Free-wheels, £17 17s.	178 10
10 Cash Prizes, £10 each ...	100 0
20 Jones's Sewing Machines, £3 each	160 0
20 Cash Prizes, £5 each ...	100 0
50 Rolled Gold Lever Watches, £2 10s. each	125 0
100 Cash Prizes, £2 each ...	200 0
50 Dinner Services (56 pieces), £2 each	100 0
50 Folding Bed Chairs, £2 each	100 0
50 Ladies' Travelling Trunks, £2 each	100 0
200 Cash Prizes, £1 each ...	200 0
200 Ladies' Leather Hatboxes, £1 each	200 0
100 Basket Arm Chairs, upholstered, £1	100 0
400 pairs Blankets, 15s. per pair	300 0
200 ½-doz Electro-plated Forks, large, 15s. per ½ doz. ...	150 0
200 ½-doz. Electro-plated Forks, small, 15s. per ½-doz. ...	£150 0
500 Ladies' Umbrellas, 15/- ea.	375 0
500 Gents' Umbrellas, 15s. each	375 0
400 Best Electro-plated Teapots, 15s. each	300 0
400 Handsome Meat Carvers, with Steel in Case, 15s. set	300 0
1000 Cash Prizes, 10s. each ...	500 0
1000 pairs Bed Sheets 10s. each	500 0
1000 White Linen Table Cloths, 10s. each	500 0
1000 Ladies' Umbrellas, 7/6 each	375 0
1000 Ladies' Leather Purses, 7/6 each	375 0
200 ½-doz. Table Knives, 7/6 per ½-doz.	75 0
200 ½-doz. Dessert do., 7/6 per ½-doz.	75 0
2000 Ladies' Dress Lengths, Navy Blue Serge, 7/6 each...	750 0
2000 Cash Prizes of 5s each ...	500 0
4715 Ladies' Leather Handbags, 4s. each	943 0
4000 ½-doz. Fine Linen Cambric Handkerchiefs, 2/6 per ½-doz.	500 0
4000 Handsome Work-boxes, 2/6 each	500 0
25,602	**£10,000 0**

CONDITIONS OF COMPETITION.

Every tablet of **Watson's Matchless Cleanser** is enclosed in a Wrapper, with signature up the centre of same. Save the WHOLE Wrapper (tops of Wrappers will be disqualified), and send, postage or carriage paid, to **Joseph Watson & Sons Limited, Whitehall Soap Works, Leeds,** not later than MARCH 31ST, 1901. Each package will be counted as one lot; separate entries must be sent under separate covers. If any parcel arrives, postage or carriage not being fully paid, such parcel will be refused. Be careful to see that the full postage is paid. Each parcel sent in must contain the full name and address of sender, and number of Wrappers sent in must be marked on the same paper. On outside of parcel write legibly "**Prize Competition.**" The prizes will be awarded in the above order to the senders of the highest numbers of Wrappers. A list, giving result of the Competition, will be sent with each prize when it is sent out. Every wrapper must have first contained soap. No employee of Joseph Watson & Sons Limited will be eligible. All prizes will be despatched about April 25th.

WATSON'S MATCHLESS CLEANSER

The Best Soap for all purposes, still holds the lead. Quality perfect. Is the Housewife's Friend. It saves her health, her strength, her wealth; washes her clothes with ease and leaves them sweet and pure, and will not injure the most delicate fabric. **It has the largest sale of 1-lb. tablets in the world.** Sold by all Grocers, Oilmen, &c., throughout the United Kingdom. Buy it. Prove it and secure a Prize.

"WORTH A GUINEA A BOX."

BEECHAM'S PILLS

FOR ALL

BILIOUS & NERVOUS DISORDERS,

Sick Headache, Constipation, Wind and Pains in Stomach, Impaired Digestion, Disordered Liver, and Female Ailments.

SALE OVER SIX MILLION BOXES YEARLY.

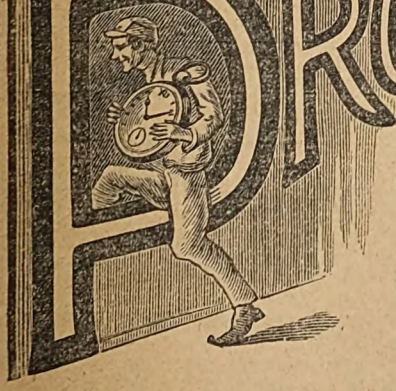
In Boxes, 1s. 1½d. and 2s. 9d. each, with full directions.

Prepared only by the Proprietor,

THOMAS BEECHAM, St. Helens, Lancashire.

Sold by all Druggists and Patent Medicine Dealers everywhere.

PROCRASTINATION



TIME'S THIEF

is ever at work affecting our opportunities. You have a chance of saving nearly fifty per cent. on your outlay on the

CHRISTMAS PRESENTS

you intend bestowing on your relatives and friends.

Don't Waste Time Thinking, but Write To-day

FOR H. SAMUEL'S BARGAIN BOOK.

By return of post you will receive

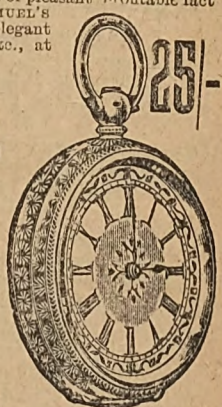
A HANDSOME ALBUM

ABSOLUTELY FREE OF ALL CHARGE TO YOU.

The pages of this unique work glow with an intertaining succession of pleasant profitable facts and fancies, in the shape of 3,000 pictures, and descriptions of H. SAMUEL'S Bargains in Gold and Silver Watches, Diamonds, and a vast array of Elegant New Jewellery of extraordinary value, Clocks, Cutlery, Plate, &c., at Remarkably Low Prices, and forming an endless array of

Suggestions for

CHRISTMAS GIFTS



Each Catalogue contains full particulars of

H. SAMUEL'S SYSTEM OF BONUS REWARDS

for Purchasers, ten Lists of Presents being enclosed to select from.

You are invited to practically test the wonderful value H. SAMUEL gives. A Post Office Order for **25/-** will bring you H. SAMUEL'S **MARVEL LADY'S "ACME" WATCH** (as illustrated) in **SOLID STERLING SILVER ENGRAVED CASE,** fine ¾-Plate Movement, extra jewelled, richly decorated dial (plain, if preferred), and fitted with H. SAMUEL'S Special Improvements protected by **HER MAJESTY'S ROYAL LETTERS PATENT.** Compare these with those sold at THREE GUINEAS elsewhere. **FIVE YEARS' WARRANTY.**

A MONTH'S FREE TRIAL

with every article, and will refund money in full, or exchange goods if there is any dissatisfaction.

H. SAMUEL (Dept. 29), **95, 97, 99, 101, 33, 89,** and **121 MARKET STREET, MANCHESTER.**

Digitized by Google

FOOTBALL SKILL COMPETITION

£100 PRIZE AWARDED EVERY WEEK.

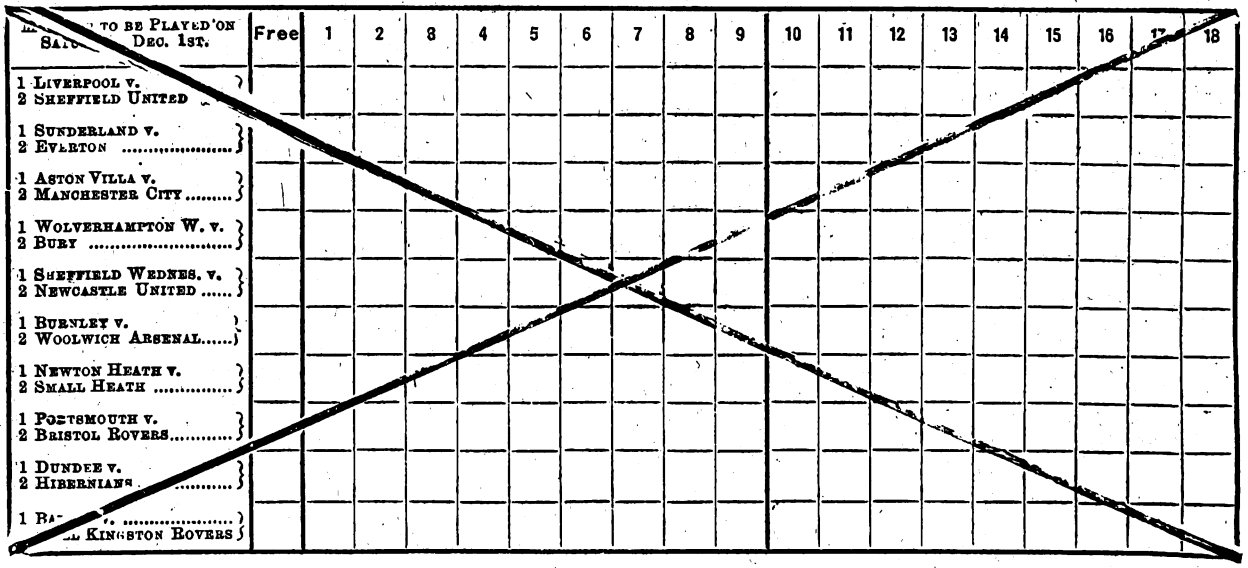
Result of Competition No. 5.

The following three competitors sent in the correct forecast of all the matches, and the £100 has consequently been divided between them, each receiving £33 6s. 8d.: F. GIRLING, Aldringham, near Saxmundham, Suffolk; S. A. SMITH, Campbell Villa, Campbell Road, Salisbury; D. W. MADGE, 27 Sutherland Avenue, London, W.

Notts Forest, Liverpool, Sunderland, Manchester City, Walsall, Woolwich Arsenal, and Southampton won their matches; the remainder were drawn games.

The football matches named below will be played on Saturday, December 1st. To the competitor from whom we receive the correct result of all these matches we will pay the sum of ONE HUNDRED POUNDS. If no competitor gives all the results correctly, the HUNDRED POUNDS will be awarded to the person or persons most nearly correct.

FOOTBALL COUPON No. 8. Matches to be played on Saturday, December 1st.



The clubs engaged in each match are numbered 1 and 2. To fill in the above coupon, insert in the space provided the number of the club selected to win. To predict a draw, put X. THE FIRST COUPON IS FREE. A penny stamp must be inclosed for each coupon used in addition to the free one. Nine extra coupons may be used for Sixpence, and eighteen extra coupons for One Shilling.

I send in this coupon as a competitor for the prize advertised in this paper, and subject to the conditions printed on this page.

Name and address.....

THINGS TO REMEMBER.

1. Coupons may be sent either from "Pearson's Weekly" or "Short Stories."
2. All coupons must reach us not later than Friday, November 30th, first post.
3. Competitors should cut out the whole coupon, score it as directed, put their name and address in the space provided, and send to "COUPON No. 8," Pearson's Buildings, Henrietta Street, London, W.C.
4. All coupons are at senders' risk, and if they go astray, from whatever cause, we do not accept responsibility.
5. Competitors must attach their private address to their attempts. No prize will be sent to any post-office, refreshment rooms, or other places at which letters are called for. Attempts bearing such addresses will be disqualified.
6. In the event of a tie the prize will be divided.
7. Competitors may send in any number of attempts.
8. It must be taken as a condition of the competition that anybody competing therein agrees to abide by the Editor's final decision.

Intending competitors in the above would do well to procure a copy of "The Football Who's Who," which contains valuable information and statistics showing the previous records of the various clubs, and the particulars of the points of about a thousand of the best known players. This book will be found of great service in determining the chances of the teams engaged. It only costs a shilling, and may be obtained of all booksellers, and post free for 1s. 3d. from the Publisher, 17 Henrietta Street, London, W.C.

Digitized by Google

CURES GOITRE.

Remarkable Discovery That Cures This Dangerous and Disfiguring Disease Without Pain, Operation or Inconvenience.

TRIAL PACKAGE SENT FREE.

Dr. John P. Haig, a well known Cincinnati physician has had marvellous success with a remedy that cures Goitre or Thick Neck. And owing to the fact that most sufferers believe

Mrs. Lillian Brown, who was entirely cured of Goitre after suffering 22 years.

Goitre is incurable Dr. Haig sends a free trial package of his discovery so that patients may try and know positively that Goitre can be cured at home without pain, danger, operation or any inconvenience. Send your name and address to Dr. John P. Haig, 333 Glenn Building, Cincinnati, Ohio, U.S.A., and he will forward the treatment postage prepaid. Do not fail to get this wonderful remedy. In Rio Janeiro, Brazil, S. A., 60,000 patients in that infected district were cured with this same remedy, and wherever used its success has been marvellous.

Write at once, send name and address to-day, and Dr. Haig will be glad to send you a trial package of the remedy free. Do not delay.

Remember a letter to us from Great Britain requires 2½d postage. Write your name very plain and be sure to give your full address so there can be no mistake in delivery.

HAVE YOU TRIED KEATING'S LOZENGES FOR YOUR COUGH?

ANY DOCTOR WILL TELL YOU "there is no better Cough Medicine."—One gives relief if you suffer from cough try them but once they *will* cure, and they *will not* injure your health; an increasing sale of over 80 years is a certain test of their value. Sold in 1s½d. tins.

THE MOST NUTRITIOUS.

EPPS'S

GRATEFUL—COMFORTING.

COCOA

BREAKFAST—SUPPER.

SULPHOLINE LOTION,

For clearing the skin from Spots, Blemishes, Redness, Roughness, giving a Beautiful Complexion and pleasing appearance.

SHILLING BOTTLES.

DRUNKENNESS

CURED. This can be done with or without patient's knowledge. Send me a stamp and I will tell you how. (Send no money.) Address, in confidence, Mrs. C. H. (Room 8), 195 Oxford Street London, W.

VARICOCELE.

Every man suffering from Varicocele and the allied troubles, should send for treatise, describing their Causes, Symptoms, Results, and Successful and Painless Treatment without surgical operation or the use of cumbersome trusses and electrical appliances. Will be sent sealed, post free, three stamps.

S. S. MURRAY,
7 Southampton Row, London, W.C.

ATLAS LOCKSTITCH MACHINE.

Works by hand or treadle. Guaranteed 4 years. Equal in quality and size to any machine To ensure satisfaction, we will send machine on receipt of 5/- P.O. for ONE MONTH'S TRIAL. Balance can be paid 5/- Monthly. Call or write for designs and Samples of work. **39/-**

THE ATLAS SEWING MACHINE CO.
184s High St., Camden Town, London, N.W.,
63 Seven Sisters Rd., N.; 14 High Rd., Kilburn.

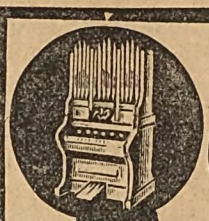
1,000 CYCLES.

1/6 1/6

FREE. FREE.

Our Ladies' or Gents' Link will be sent free of any charge for delivery on receipt of 1s. 6d. These are not American or foreign trash, but are made in England. This is our first advertisement, and by it we are determined to bring our name before the public, so this offer will only hold good to the readers of this paper for the next fourteen days. We will send with the bicycle a nickel silver lamp and pump, and the whole will be packed in a wood crate and sent to your address free, immediately you take advantage of this advertisement and the offer we will send. A written guarantee given with each bicycle. We give these machines away to encourage you to become agents for us If the bicycles are all given away your 1s. 6d. will be returned. Send 1s. 6d. and stamped addressed envelope for receipt. Address, the

London Direct Supply Company,
4 Duke St., Strand, London, W.C.
Mention this paper.



An Organ in Miniature!

WITH 2 FULL SETS OF REEDS, AND 3 BEAUTIFUL CONTROLLING STOPS.

All that the most finished musician can produce upon a 50 Guinea Piano or Organ may be produced upon the

'Orchestral.'

It is a marvel of ingenuity and construction and is an ideal musical instrument for the home. It requires no teaching,—

A CHILD . . CAN PLAY IT.

Perfectly simple, and cannot get out of order. Money returned if not satisfactory.

Also supplied on Easy Terms.

FREE

To all applicants our new and handsomely-illustrated catalogue of Watches, Cutlery, Plate, Jewellery, etc., contains a wealth of useful and interesting information.

J. M. DRAPER
DEPT., 366,
Organette Works, **BLACKBURN**

J.M. DRAPER'S ORCHESTRAL ORGANETTE

THE MUSICAL MARVEL OF THE AGE,

35/-

Equal in value to a **£4 4s.** Instrument.

ALL FAT PEOPLE

can safely **Reduce Weight and cure Corpulency permanently** by taking **TRILENE TABLETS** (Regd.) for a few weeks. They are small, agreeable, harmless, and never fail to IMPROVE both HEALTH and FIGURE without Change of Diet. An English Countess writes: "*Your Trilene Tablets act admirably.*"

Send 2s. 6d. to **THE TRILENE CO.**, Sole Proprietors, **66 Finsbury Pavement, London.**

SAMPLES OF TESTIMONIALS.

Princess Liechtenstein writes from Landsberg, Austria: "Pray send your excellent tablets directly." Mr. Canham, 87 Alexandra Road, Norwich: "Tablets cured my wife of extreme stoutness; it has never returned." Mrs. H. Cox, 28 Walnall Road, Hucknall Torkard, writes: "The Tablets reduced me 1½ stone." Mrs. S. Alexander, 102 Dixon Street, New Swindon, says: "They reduced me 2lb., and I am cured." Mrs. Barnley-Smith, of Landscove Vicarage, Ashburton, says: "Tablets have reduced me very much." Mrs. Crossley, of Rose Hill, Torver, Comston, says: "I weigh much less and can breathe so much easier; I am delighted."

Digitized by Google

The Brain Gymnasium.

In these competitions a prize of £2 will be awarded each week to the competitor whose attempt we receive giving the correct solutions of all the puzzles. If more than one is absolutely correct the prize of £2 will be given to the first correct attempt dealt with.

If no lists of absolutely correct solutions are sent in, the first prize will be awarded to the competitor whose attempt is first dealt with showing the fewest mistakes.

Each week we shall award, in addition to the above, either ten of our gold-plated pencil-cases or ten popular novels, to be distributed amongst the competitors whose attempts are absolutely correct and have failed to win the first prize, or, if no complete lists of correct solutions are received, to those whose attempts show the fewest mistakes.

Write all your solutions on one sheet of paper, putting the number against each. Post the batch in an envelope marked "Brain Gymnasium," to reach the Editor, Short Stories, 18 Henrietta Street, Covent Garden, W.C., by first post on Monday, December 10th, 1900.

Readers are invited to submit puzzles, acrostics, conundrums, word-squares, etc., for publication on this page. A gold-plated pencil-case will be given to each reader whose attempts are used. All attempts must be vouched for as original, and, of course, it is distinctly understood that the sender of a puzzle must neither compete in the competition nor divulge to anyone the solution. Any reader found infringing this rule will be severely dealt with.

No. 253.

Re-arrange the following letters so as to form a well-known proverb:

AAA BB DDD C H III LLL NNNN OOOOO SS TTT WW YY.

No. 254.

When re-arranged,

A full two-thirds of reckon; plus half of leek; three-fifths of Dewey; a half of mine; a sixth of Hughie,

will give a town in Yorkshire.

No. 255.

The initials and finals of equivalents of the following will give the names of two well-known Generals:

A measure; a fruit; a messenger of death; a period; a term in music and poetry; business; the answer.

No. 256.

My FIRST is myself,
An egotist quite;
My SECOND'S a wood
That is usually white.
My WHOLE is a state,
That most would admit;
My FIRST should make haste
And live up to it.

No. 257.

What word is that which, read forward, is a conveyance; backward, not the whole; and, beheaded, a sharp blow?

No. 258.

Form a word-square from equivalents of the following:

Part of a teapot; a gardening operation; a well-known novelist; beneath; indicative of grief.

Next week, an entirely new sort of Picture Competition will begin.

FOOTBALL WHO'S WHO.

Cloth, price 1s. net.

Post Free 1s. 3d.

Contains the biographies of nearly 1,000 of the best-known players, together with statistics and much general information relating to all the prominent Association Clubs. It gives information as to the various leagues, cups, and other trophies, rules, fixtures, etc., etc., and will be found invaluable to all followers of football.

Copies may be had from any Bookseller or from the Publisher,

17 HENRIETTA STREET, W.C.

SHORT STORIES ADVERTISEMENT RATES.

Single column, per inch, per insertion	£0 10 0
Double " " "	1 0 0
Full page inside, facing page of matter, either white paper or 2nd or 3rd page of cover, or back page, per insertion	10 0 0
Half-page " " "	5 0 0
Quarter-page " "	2 10 0
Eighth-page " "	1 5 0
Front page, whole " "	12 10 0
" half " "	6 5 0

All spaces above one-eighth of a page are charged at per page rate.

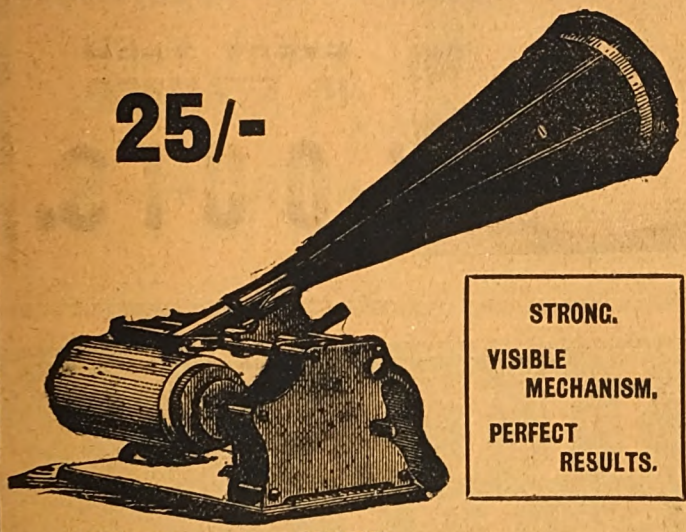
Series discount: 5 per cent. for 13, 10 per cent. for 26, 15 per cent. for 52 insertions.

Black blocks are charged 25 per cent. extra. All advertisements are subject to approval. All copy must be sent in by Noon on Tuesday, Dec. 4th, if intended for the issue on sale Dec. 18th, and dated December 22nd. The Proprietors reserve the right to hold over or suspend the insertion of any advertisement without prejudice to other insertions on order. All communications should be addressed to the Advertisement Manager, "Pearson's Weekly" Offices, Henrietta Street, London, W.C.

Printed and published by C. Arthur Pearson Limited, Pearson's Buildings, Henrietta Street, London, W.C.

Digitized by Google

A GRAPHOPHONE FOR 25/-



25/-

Reproduces Same Records as all Small Cylinder Talking Machines.

Makes Music in the Home, and is an Inexhaustible Source of Amusement and Pleasure.

STRONG.
VISIBLE MECHANISM.
PERFECT RESULTS.

The pleasure in owning a Graphophone is largely increased by being able to make and reproduce your own records. The Graphophone will record your own voice as well as reproduce specially prepared records.

Graphophones are sold from 25s. upwards.

The Toy Graphophone for Children, 8s.

GRAND PRIX, PARIS EXPOSITION.

Send for Catalogue C. to

COLUMBIA PHONOGRAPH COMPANY, Genl., 122 Oxford Street, London, W.

GUN. 12-bore double barrelled breech-loader, top lever, central fire, rebounding locks, extension rib, walnut pistol stock, new; 38/- approval.—G. V. James, 48 Devonshire Street, Bloomsbury, London.

A SUM of from 12s. to 25s. per week can be earned in spare hours or evenings by either sex everywhere.—Send addressed envelope for particulars to Box 24, Eclipse Works, 89 Aldersgate Street, E.C.

POST FREE THREE STAMPS
A Treatise on the Modern and Successful Treatment of Nervous Diseases and Exhaustion, by local absorption.
Fully up to the advanced ideas on the subject.
THE MARSTON CO.,
59 and 60 Chancery Lane, London, W.C.

2/9 CHALLENCE TO THE WORLD—OUR WARRANTED TIMEKEEPER, **2/9**

With a guarantee to keep correct time for three years, will be sent to any address on receipt of P.O. or stamps value 2/9 and three stamps extra for postage. To every purchaser during this month we give with it ABSOLUTELY FREE a strong Mexican SILVER CHAIN. All we ask of you is to show them to your friends, as by doing so you advertise our business.
GENEVA WATCH IMPORTERS,
148 Old Street, London, E.C.

RUPTURE

Gentleman (cured himself) will send Free Particulars of inexpensive self-curative treatment. Stamped address.—(Box 49), 10 Castle Street, Carlisle.

THE DAILY EXPRESS.
HALFPENNY.

THE ONLY EFFICACIOUS SUBSTITUTE FOR COD LIVER OIL.
DEVONSHIRE CREAM.
REALLY GENUINE.
In Patent Air-tight Tins. ½lb., 1s. 4d.; 1lb., 2s. 4d.; 2lb., 4s.; including tin and postage.
MRS. CONYERS,
MORCHARD BISHOP, DEVON.

THE "GEO. R. SIMS"
HAIR RENEWER
"TATCHO"

"While you wait"

LARGE TRIAL BOTTLES TO-DAY.
1s. 6d.
Sent Post Free in plain package, twenty one stamps.

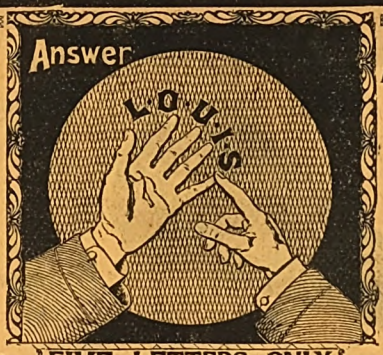
MRS. BROWN POTTER, whose beautiful hair is the envy of her sex, writes:
"I Use only 'TATCHO.'"
If your hair is falling or failing, you have your remedy. Don't hesitate. Use "TATCHO." The result will surprise you and will be intensely gratifying. It is sold in bottles by Chemists and Hairdressers allover the world, 2/9 and 5/-, or may be had direct in plain sealed package, post free, 2/11 and 5/3. Address:
The Geo. R. Sims Co., 81 cGreat Queen St., London, W.C.

Advertisements should be sent to "Short Stories" Advertisement Department, Henrietta Street, London, W.C.

Digitized by Google

HOW DO YOU SPELL

VELVETEEN?



Don't Forget this when you buy.

EVERY YARD IS STAMPED

L-O-U-I-S.

Reckitt's PARIS Blue.

The Best is the Cheapest.

Height 12in. Width 7in. Depth 5in.

ALARUM CLOCK, 18/-

A FREE TRIAL FOR 2/6

Any reader of *Short Stories* can have one of these Alarum Clocks on monthly payments as follows:

YOU send us **2s. 6d.** with your name and address, and we will send you one on approbation.

IF you approve of it you send us **3s. 6d.** on receipt, and **2s. 6d.** each month for 5 months, making the full **18s.** But

OUR-NETT-CASH-PRICE-WITH-ORDER IS 16/- ONLY.

IF you do not approve of it we will refund cash sent if the Clock is returned within seven days.

SPECIAL XMAS BOOKLET

This Presentation Booklet is now ready; it contains many pages of interesting matter, including illustrations of hundred of the latest and most suitable Christmas and New Year presents. It gives you full particulars of J. N. MASTERS Ltd. Cash Present to each customer, and Free distribution of 150,000 valuable pencil cases. May we send you a copy? If so, **your name and address** please. We send it post free.

J. N. MASTERS Ltd., WATCHMAKERS, JEWELLERS, &c., **RYE**, SUSSEX.

Advertisements should be sent to "Short Stories" Advertisement Department, Henrietta Street, London, W.C.

Digitized by Google

NEW £100 FOOTBALL COMPETITION.

SHORT STORIES

A WEEKLY MAGAZINE FOR HOME AND TRAIN

No. 623. FOR WEEK ENDING DECEMBER 8TH, 1900. [ONE PENNY.

GIGANTIC BANKRUPTCY SALE CATALOGUE.

Re BRITISH CARPET WEAVING CO., late of Old St., London.

F. HODGSON & SONS, of LEEDS, have purchased for Cash the whole of the business' goodwill, and effects from Official Trustee in Bankruptcy. Illustrated Sale Catalogue of Brussels, Axminster, Velvet, and Foreign Carpets and Hearthrugs can be had Post Free, if mentioning SHORT STORIES, 8/12/1900.

4/6

To readers of SHORT STORIES, 8/12/1900. On receipt of Postal Order or stamps value (Regd.) we will send you the **Largest Genuine Reversible Carpet in Brussels Finish, with Rug,** ever sold at the Price, direct from the Looms to any address on receipt of amount. Suitable for drawing-room, dining-room, bedroom, &c., bordered and woven in Brussels Patterns, as an advertisement for our goods, thus saving any middle profit. Remember, these are woven and are made of a material almost equal to wool.

Thousands of these Carpets have been already sold at double these prices.

SPECIAL OFFER.—2 Carpets and 2 Rugs, 8/-.

Prodigious sale of the "PRUDENTIAL"

BRUSSELETTE CARPETS

Admittedly The Marvel of the Age.

Woven and Reversible, rich Brussels and Turkey Patterns and Colourings, superior quality, with handsome Border to match. A Marvel of Excellence and Beauty. These Carpets are superb imitations of real Brussels, and except by the closest scrutiny, the difference cannot be detected.

	REDUCED SALE PRICE.	
6 ft. by 6 ft. 2/11		6 ft. by 7½ft. 3/11
6 ft. by 9 ft. 4/9	7½ft. by 9 ft. 5/11	9 ft. by 10½ft. 8/6
9 ft. by 12 ft. 9/6	9 ft. by 9 ft. 7/6	12 ft. by 12 ft. 12/9
12 ft. by 13½ft. 14/6	10½ft. by 12 ft. 11/6	12 ft. by 21 ft. 22/6
	12 ft. by 15 ft. 15/9	
	9 ft. by 15 ft. 12/6	
	12 ft. by 18 ft. 19/6	

When ordering, please mention if for Bed, Dining, Drawing, or Sitting Room, and any particular colour preferred.

A Reversible Hearthrug (Reg.) to match, **sent for 1/6 extra, size 2yd. 1yd.**

The Readers of SHORT STORIES, 8/12/1900,

OFFERED

10,000 PATENT WADDED QUILTS,

Toraliums, or Bed Covers (as illustration), at an enormous reduction, to clear out.

SALE PRICE,

3/6 each.

Postage, 6d. extra.

Covered with beautiful soft Oriental Sateen Chintz, and on reverse side another beautiful art colour, size 50 by 60 inches. Special offer—3 Quilts for **10s.**, or 6 for **19s. 6d.**, or 12 for **38s.** Cut this out. Illustrated Bargain Catalogues of Carpets, Hearthrugs, Table Linen, Curtains, etc., post free (if mentioning SHORT STORIES while writing).

These Quilts are offered below anything in the Wholesale Trade, and cause the greatest consternation to the buyer, wondering how they can be produced for the money.

Cheques and P.O.'s payable to—

F. HODGSON & SONS, WOODSLEY ROAD, LEEDS.

Allen Foster & Co.

THE LONDON MANUFACTURERS

Buy Direct at First Cost from the Leading Firm of London Manufacturers.

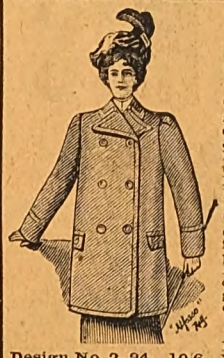
DESIGN No. 2130.

TEN-AND-SIXPENCE.

The Famous Sacque Back Coat and Skirt Costume can be ordered with the coat made double or single-breasted, produced in the **Specialite Serge** or **Venetian Cloth.** In Black, Navy, Brown, Myrtle, Fawn, Royal, Grey, Red, &c. It has a velvet collar, and the skirt is cut full with the box-pleated back—grand value for **Half-a-Guinea.** Testimonials from all parts. Securely packed, and sent carriage paid 6d. extra. This Coat and Skirt also makes up exceedingly well in the **Pretoria Tweed** or **Melton Coating.** Price only **17/6**; carriage paid, 6d. extra.

Design No. 2130. **10/6.**

PATTERNS FREE.



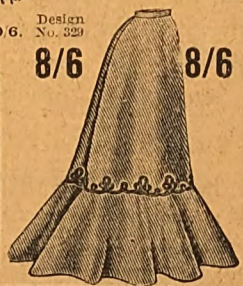
Design No. 2194. 10/6.

Design No. 2194.

HALF-A-GUINEA.

The Fashionable three-quarter Sacque Jacket, 39-in. long. Made in the renowned 'Alfosco' Beaver Cloth in Black, Fawn, Brown, and Royal. This Jacket has a double-breasted front with smoked pearl buttons. Price only **10/6**; carriage, 6d. **The greatest value on the Market.**

Design No. 329 **8/6**



8/6

Design No. 329. 8/6 Braided Skirt, made in an excellent Black and Navy Serge. This Skirt is cut in the latest shape, and has the fashionable 16in. flounce round bottom, which is lined linenette. Trimmed braid at top of flounce. Satisfaction guaranteed. Price only **8/6**; carriage paid, 6d. extra. **SEND FOR ONE**

Write for

NEW WINTER SKETCH BOOK

AND

CATALOGUE OF BARGAINS.

PATTERNS & ORDER FORMS POST FREE.

Ladies are invited to call and inspect goods at our new Showrooms **47 Golden Lane, E.C.** Business hours 9 a.m. to 7 p.m. Saturdays 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

ALLEN FOSTER & CO.,

THE LONDON MANUFACTURERS,

47 Golden Lane, Barbican, London, E.C.

Advertisements should be sent to "Short Stories" Advertisement Department, Henrietta Street, London, W.C.

Digitized by Google

PROCRASTINATION

TIME'S THIEF

is ever at work affecting our opportunities. You have a chance of saving nearly fifty per cent. on your outlay on the

CHRISTMAS PRESENTS

you intend bestowing on your relatives and friends.

Don't Waste Time Thinking, but Write To-day for

H. SAMUEL'S BARGAIN BOOK.

By return of post you will receive

A HANDSOME ALBUM

ABSOLUTELY FREE OF ALL CHARGE TO YOU.

The pages of this unique work glow with an intertaining succession of pleasant, profitable fact and fancies, in the shape of 3,000 pictures, and descriptions of H. SAMUEL'S Bargains in Gold and Silver Watches, Diamonds, and a vast array of Elegant New Jewellery of extraordinary value, Clocks, Cutlery, Plate, &c., at Remarkably Low Prices, and forming an endless array of

Suggestions for

CHRISTMAS GIFTS

Each Catalogue contains full particulars of

H. SAMUEL'S SYSTEM OF BONUS REWARDS

for Purchasers, ten Lists of Presents being enclosed to select from.

You are invited to practically test the wonderful value H. SAMUEL gives. A Post Office Order for **25/-** will bring you H. SAMUEL'S **MARVEL LADY'S "ACME" WATCH** (as illustrated) in **SOLID STERLING SILVER ENGRAVED CASE**, fine ¾-Plate Movement, extra jewelled, richly decorated dial (plain, if preferred), and fitted with H. SAMUEL'S Special Improvements protected by **HER MAJESTY'S ROYAL LETTERS PATENT.** Compare these with those sold at THREE GUINEAS elsewhere. **FIVE YEARS' WARRANTY.**

A MONTH'S FREE TRIAL

with every article, and will refund money in full, or exchange goods if there is any dissatisfaction.

H. SAMUEL (Dept. 29), **95, 97, 99, 101, 33, 89,** and **121 MARKET STREET, MANCHESTER.**

"WORTH A GUINEA A BOX."

BEECHAM'S PILLS

FOR ALL

BILIOUS & NERVOUS DISORDERS,
Sick Headache, Constipation, Wind and Pains in Stomach, Impaired Digestion, Disordered Liver, and Female Ailments.

SALE OVER SIX MILLION BOXES YEARLY.

In Boxes, 1s. 1½d. and 2s. 9d. each, with full directions.

Prepared only by the Proprietor,

THOMAS BEECHAM, St. Helens, Lancashire.

Sold by all Druggists and Patent Medicine Dealers everywhere.

THE "GEO. R. SIMS"

HAIR RENEWER "TATCHO"

LARGE TRIAL BOTTLES TO-DAY.
1s. 6d.
Sent Post Free in plain package, twenty one stamps.

MRS. BROWN POTTER, whose beautiful hair is the envy of her sex, writes:
"I Use only 'TATCHO.'"

If your hair is falling or failing, you have your remedy. Don't hesitate. Use "TATCHO." The result will surprise you and will be intensely gratifying. It is sold in bottles by Chemists and Hair-dressers allover the world, 2/9 and 5/-, or may be had direct in plain sealed package, post free, 2/11 and 5/3. Address:

The Geo. R. Sims Co., 31c Great Queen St., London, W.C.

Digitized by Google

No. 623.] [ONE PENNY.

For the Week Ending December 8th, 1900.

RUINED BY RICHES.

JULIAN CASTLEMAN was the only son of a younger son. There was a title and wealth enough in the family, but as there were three lives between him and that title, he considered it of no account. He had therefore gathered all that he had together and was on the eve of his departure to a far country, viz., South Africa.

Before embarking on his journey he made a "duty call" upon his uncle, the present holder of the family title, Lord Clifton, and it is there we find him taking leave of his lordship.

"And so you hope to make a fortune out in South Africa, Julian?"

"Yes! it certainly seems an easier matter to amass wealth there than in England. The homeland is the place to live in when your fortune is made and you have nothing to do but spend it. In the diamond fields of South Africa a man may make more in a year than he could in a life-time here, and so I am off to try my luck."

"Well, my boy, far be it from me to throw cold water on your hopes, but I cannot help thinking of the many who in digging for diamonds have only dug the grave of their own hopes, and finally have themselves been buried in the same grave."

Julian laughed at his uncle's gloomy picture. He had all the sanguineness of youth and health, and, in addition, he was not afraid of hard work, provided there was some prospect of his labour being rewarded.

A few days after this interview, Castleman stepped on board ship at Southampton and was conveyed to the land of promise—but of scant fulfilment.

On arrival at Capetown he lost no time in procuring the necessary outfit, and proceeded up country in his quest for the diamonds which had in imagination dazzled his view.

It is not necessary to the purpose of this story to describe the various adventures which befell him in the next two years. Suffice it to say that things steadily went from bad to worse with him, until his hopes completely died out, and his only wish was to get back to the coast with a view to working his passage home again. With this object he turned his back on the diggings and commenced his lonely journey.

For several days he wandered on, but the unaccustomed hardships and privations had told upon him and finally, utterly weary and dispirited he sank down by the wayside.

Had not a good Samaritan passed that way in the person of an old Dutch farmer, Carl Jansen by name, this would probably have been the end of Julian Castleman.

When the old farmer came upon him, Castleman was raving in delirium. Carl Jansen's farm lay a few miles ahead, and in obedience to the promptings of his kindly nature Carl lifted the fever-stricken stranger into his waggon and conveyed him to his home. There the farmer's wife and daughter took charge of him and nursed him back to health and strength.

Some weeks had elapsed since Julian Castleman had entered those hospitable doors and he was now beginning to think of taking his departure. He and his host sat by the homely fireside, puffing at their pipes.

"What do you intend doing now?" asked the farmer.

"Oh! I shall resume my journey and get home as quickly as I can, though it goes very much against the grain to return home to admit myself beaten."

"Then why go at all. I can do with a strong arm like yours on the farm, and if you care to stay I can offer you a comfortable home and a fair wage. Come now make up your mind to stay with us."

Julian thought over the offer and finally decided to accept it. During his illness a warmer feeling than

All rights reserved.]

Digitized by Google

When the old farmer came upon him Castleman was raving in delirium.

gratitude towards his host's daughter had taken possession of him.

Anna Jansen was a plump, rosy, vivacious specimen of budding womanhood, and there had been just sufficient romance in the meeting of the two young people to excite more than a passing interest. In fact, it was the old story over again. The nurse and the patient had fallen in love.

Turning to his host, Castleman told him of his decision and also of his affection for Anna.

"Well," said the old man, "if in course of a year or two—for the girl is but young—you are in the same mind, and are satisfied with your life here, I shall have no objection to giving my little girl to you."

Thus Julian Castleman became a modern Jacob with Anna Jansen for his Rachel. Not seven years, however, did he wait. Only two and a half years had elapsed since he became an inmate of that home when she became his wife.

Six months had elapsed since that event, when something occurred that changed the whole current of Julian Castleman's life. He had gone down to Capetown to transact some business there. While idling about in a hotel, he chanced to pick up an old English newspaper. As he carelessly turned it over, the following paragraph caught his eye:

Some strange fatality seems to pursue the representatives of the Clifton family. As our readers will remember, some months ago, the eldest son of Lord Clifton met with a fatal accident in the hunting field. Only a few weeks had elapsed when news reached England of the death of the youngest son, who had been mountaineering in Switzerland, and had fallen a victim to his own daring and love of adventure. The loss of his two sons in such rapid succession, proved too heavy a blow for Lord Clifton, and in a short time his remains were placed in the family vault, and the title descended to the only surviving son. Not long, however, has he been permitted to hold it. Shortly after his accession to the title his lordship started for a cruise in the Mediterranean. Fate still seems to pursue the family, however, as from advices just to hand, it appears that while out rowing, by some means the boat was capsized and the new Lord Clifton and one of the crew were drowned. We understand that the body has been recovered, and will be brought to England for interment. The heir to the title and estates is, we are informed, the only son of the elder Lord Clifton's brother and cousin of the last holder of the title. This gentleman left England some years ago and has not since been heard of, but we suppose every effort will be made to trace his whereabouts.

Julian Castleman's feelings on reading this were indescribable. He, from whom the title had seemed so far removed, was now Lord Clifton.

"I must go to England at once and prove my claim," he thought, and here he stopped as the thought of his wife flashed across his mind.

He rapidly reviewed the situation, and his resolve was soon taken. He had never told his wife of his aristocratic connections. Not that he had any motive for concealment, but simply because he had not considered it worth mentioning.

"To take Anna to England to mix with English society is impossible," he said to himself. "Why, I should be an object of commiseration and she a laughing stock."

"If you cannot take your wife to England, then stay in Africa yourself," prompted his better nature.

"What! Give up all which I left England to gain, and which has now fallen into my grasp so unexpectedly. It is too much to be expected."

Thus arguing the matter with himself, Julian Castleman allowed the devil to gain complete ascendancy over him. He decided to cut himself adrift from the old life completely, and in pursuance of this resolution, he made his way to the steamship office, where he ascertained there was a boat leaving for England on the following day.

Accordingly, as he had sufficient means with him, he booked his passage, and the next day he left the shores of Africa—left his young wife, left his benefactor—and sailed for England.

As the days sped by and he did not return, Carl Jansen became uneasy, and eventually journeyed to Capetown to make inquiries, but his efforts met with no success.

As the days lengthened into weeks and the weeks into months, the conviction forced itself upon Carl Jansen that Julian Castleman had deserted his young wife, and he swore a bitter oath of vengeance should they ever again meet.

The young wife was loth to believe her husband could be so base and still hoped on, but the uncertainty and anxiety undermined her strength until she became a mere wreck of her former self.

* * * * *

"We heartily congratulate your lordship, and trust you will be long spared to enjoy your wealth."

Thus spoke the family solicitors when Julian Castleman had proved his claim to the title and estates.

Lord Clifton, for such we must now call him, had landed in England about a fortnight ago, and had at once proceeded to the office of Messrs. Steel and Sharp, the family solicitors, where we now find him.

"Perhaps your lordship will do us the honour of dining with us this evening," said the senior-partner,

Digitized by Google

when the business was concluded. "We shall have one or two friends to meet you, but it will only be a quiet party."

Lord Clifton readily accepted the invitation. He spent the intervening period in looking up some of his old friends at the club where they had been in the habit of congregating, returning to his host's in time for dinner.

Among the guests that evening were Sir Wilfred Armitage and his daughter Evelyn. The worthy baronet had made his money in trade and having amassed a considerable fortune had retired, and his chief ambition now was to become allied to a title.

There was a tendency in certain circles to keep the remembrance of his trading days dangling before his eyes and he thought that if he could only marry his daughter to one of the nobility possibly he might suffer less from this cause.

Consequently he was most attentive to Lord Clifton, concerning whom he had been posted by their host.

As the gentlemen sat over their wine before joining the ladies after dinner, Sir Wilfred engaged Lord Clifton in conversation.

"I suppose your lordship intends to settle in England now, or are you going to become one of those truant landlords, who leave their affairs in the hands of agents while they roam the earth?"

"Yes! I have been an absentee from my native shores long enough to appreciate the opportunity of settling at home."

"We must get you interested in local affairs. For instance, now, there is a dearth of officers in our volunteer corps. You might join that. I am a member and shall be glad to introduce you to my brother officers as a prospective colleague."

"I shall be delighted to meet the officers of your corps, but I am not sure about becoming an officer myself."

"Well then, as I am entertaining them at dinner to-morrow I shall be glad if you will join us, and we will endeavour to arouse your patriotic feelings."

Lord Clifton assented and the conversation ended. On the following evening he adjourned to Templemore, the residence of the worthy baronet and there met the officers. He also renewed his acquaintance with Evelyn Armitage, whose fresh young beauty had attracted him on the previous evening. She also had been attracted.

Lord Clifton was a fair specimen of English manhood. He had a well-knit athletic frame and a handsome face. Moreover he was perfect in all matters of courtesy and gentlemanliness, not withstanding his rough life on the veld.

The upshot of that dinner party was that Lord Clifton became an officer of the corps, and as a brother officer a frequent visitor at Templemore, until it became whispered among observers that Evelyn Armitage was destined to become Lady Clifton.

In the early days of their acquaintance the face of his deserted bride often rose before Lord Clifton's eyes, but as time wore on the image became dimmed and he began to give some consideration to the idea of marrying the baronet's daughter.

Had he been free he would have proposed ere this, but his conscience had not been effectually silenced.

After much thought he decided to take the plunge. It appeared most improbable that the history of those early days would ever become known, consequently he proposed to, and was accepted by Evelyn Armitage.

In a few months the baronet bestowed her upon Lord Clifton with his paternal blessing and much self-congratulation.

At the time of this marriage, however, the real Lady Clifton lay dying in her South African home, as was subsequently ascertained.

No shadow had as yet fallen across the path of the young couple. Evelyn idolised her husband and would sometimes say as she leant fondly against him:

"Julian, dear, if ever anything should come between us I should want to die."

At these times he would inwardly shudder and hope that the ghost of the past would never rise.

It was about this time that the storm broke in South Africa, and we were hurrying troops out to the seat of war.

Ere long the call came for England's citizen soldiers to take up arms for their country.

Lord Clifton strolled into his club one evening and there found several of his brother officers discussing the news.

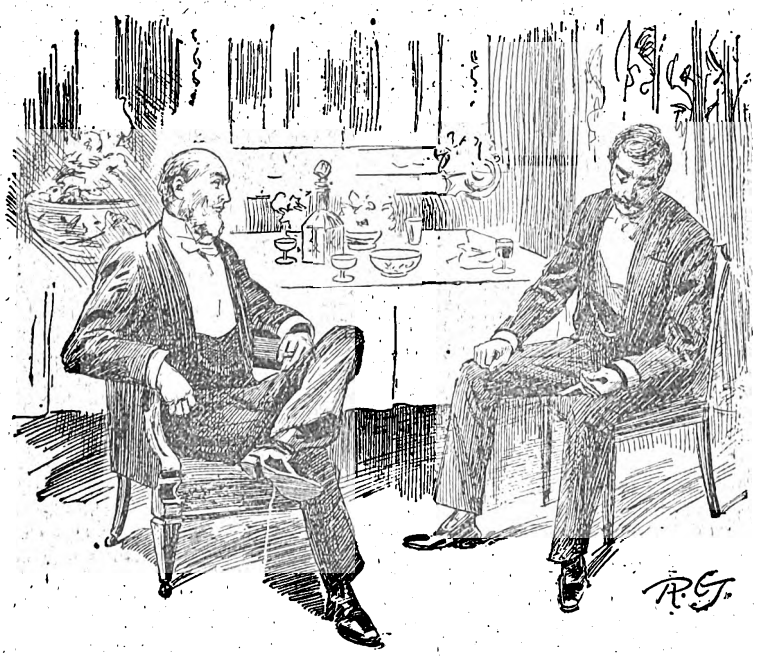
"Hello! Clifton, have you heard the news?" asked one of the group.

"What news do you mean?"

"Why, that the much sneered at volunteer, the Saturday night soldier, is going to have his chance. Now we'll show them what kind of stuff we are made of. Of course, you will offer to lead your company?"

Lord Clifton paused a moment.

Dare he go out to South Africa again? No, he could not go there, the risks were too great. The sight of that



After dinner Sir Wilfred engaged Lord Clifton in conversation.

Digitized by Google

wronged father's face would unnerve him and strike his arm powerless by his side.

"Come, Clifton, surely you are not hesitating. Your men will look to you to lead them."

"I am very sorry, but it will be impossible for me to leave England."

General astonishment was depicted on the faces of all present and he was pressed for his reasons.

Clifton endeavoured to laugh them off, but as they were persistent in their inquiries, he at last burst out impatiently.

"Oh, hang it all, You fellows are worse than the Hebrews. By their laws a man was not expected to go to war within a year of his marriage, and here you fellows want to bundle me off in less than half the time," and with this he left the room.

Shortly after his departure, Sir Wilfred Armitage came in and was immediately tackled by some of the more boisterous spirits.

"Here, Sir Wilfred, you had better go home and lecture your daughter on her duty. She has actually turned Clifton into a stay-at-home and a coward."

"What do you mean?" warmly answered the baronet.

"Why, your noble son-in-law intends to stay at home when there is a glorious chance of leading his men to victory in South Africa. Go and tell Lady Clifton his country claims his services."

"What! Do you mean to tell me Clifton is not going out?"

"Certainly. He has just left us, pleading the recency of his marriage as his excuse for not volunteering for the front."

"Well, I'm off after him to get that decision altered," and so saying the baronet followed his son-in-law.

On arrival at The Towers, Sir Wilfred burst into the drawing-room where he found Lord Clifton and Evelyn.

"Here, Evelyn, what do you mean by keeping Clifton back when his country is asking for his services?"

"Father, what are you talking about?"

"Why, the fellows at the club are saying you have turned Clifton into a stay-at-home and a coward."

Turning to her husband, Lady Clifton said:

"What does all this mean, Julian?"

"Oh! I have refused to volunteer for service in South Africa, and those ill-mannered beggars at the club persist in saying that you have tied me to your side."

Evelyn flushed and paled alternately. It was evident that a mental struggle was going on. Eventually she said with an effort:

"Julian, dear, if your men are going none but you must lead them. It shall not be said that I made a coward of my husband. I would rather have kept you by my side, but not under such conditions, so I shall send you from me and pray for your safe return."

Clifton protested at first, but eventually ended by offering his services which were accepted.

In due time orders were received and Lord Clifton proceeded to Southampton with his men. Lady Clifton accompanied her husband to the docks and there took leave of him.

The voyage was uneventful. On arrival at Capetown Lord Clifton and his men were drafted off at once to join the main body of Lord Roberts' army at Kroonstadt. How strangely Fate was leading him will appear in the subsequent narrative.

Just after the date on which Lord Clifton led Evelyn Armitage to the altar, the farmer's daughter died and Carl Jansen moved to a farm situated some ten miles from Kroonstadt.

He was a peaceful man, and though compelled to take up arms in the earlier stages of the war, he had since given up his arms and returned to his farm. He had not that intense hatred of the "verdommde rooineks" which characterised some of his compatriots and only wished to end his days in peace.

The old farmer's revolver rang out.

Clifton and his men duly arrived at Kroonstadt where they were to remain for some time. Several days after their arrival Lord Clifton and five men set out on a foraging expedition, and after a ride of two or three hours, calling at several farms on the way, they came to a lonely farm from which the accepted token of submission—the white flag—was flying.

Turning to one of his men, Lord Clifton said:

"Robinson, ride forward to that farm and see if you can procure us some refreshment."

Riding off in the direction indicated, while the remainder of the party halted, Robinson came within hail, and in response to his call the farmer appeared. As he gazed he became strangely agitated, and before Robinson could speak the farmer addressed him.

"Who is the officer in charge of your party?"

"Captain Lord Clifton," replied the soldier.

At this the farmer seemed disappointed and listened while the soldier made known his errand.

He ordered one of his men to get what was required. Whilst they were waiting a thought seemed to strike the farmer.

"What was your officer's name before he got his title?" he asked.

Digitized by Google

"He was Mr. Julian Castleman before he became Lord Clifton," answered the soldier. "But you seem very curious, old man. What are you driving at?"

"Oh! I thought I had seen the officer before, but I must have been mistaken as I don't know that name," replied the farmer, and as the refreshments appeared at this moment the conversation ended.

As the soldier turned his horse to rejoin his comrades the farmer again spoke.

"Present my compliments to your officer and tell him I shall be honoured if he will come in and rest while his men refresh themselves," he said.

The soldier rode off and conveyed the message to Lord Clifton, which the officer readily accepted. Riding nearer he handed his horse to one of his men and was shown into an inner room by one of the hands, who informed him that his master would join him immediately.

The man had only recently been taken into Jansen's service and therefore knew nothing of what had transpired in those earlier days. Lord Clifton flung himself into a chair and divested himself of his arms with a view to making himself comfortable.

No sooner had he done this than he heard himself addressed by his old name and on looking up he found himself confronted by the man he had wronged.

Framed in the doorway the old Farmer coolly pointed a revolver in Clifton's face and warned him that any attempt to seize his arms would only precipitate his death. Unnerved and conscience-stricken Lord Clifton sat speechless.

Never taking his finger from the trigger Carl Jansen thus addressed the guilty wretch before him:

"And so, Julian Castleman, Lord Clifton, Fate has brought you back to me. You, who destroyed my peace and broke my girl's heart, have come here, unsuspectingly to your doom. When I buried my girl in the lonely grave on the veld I vowed that if ever you crossed my path again I would shoot you like a dog, and now my opportunity has come. I shall give you just two minutes and then I shall fire. No doubt your men will shoot me, but if I have sent your soul to account first I shall be satisfied."

Goaded to frenzy Clifton snatched for his pistol, but ere he could reach it, the old farmer's revolver rang out and the leaden messenger was buried in Clifton's heart. He sank lifeless on the floor, just as his men rushed in.

The farmer was immediately put under arrest and conveyed back to the camp. On arrival the men reported the incident and another case of Boer treachery was wired home to their respective papers by their correspondents.

The old man was tried and condemned to imprisonment, while efforts were made to hush the matter up.

The news of Lord Clifton's death, as recorded at the War Office and reported in the newspapers, came as a terrible shock to Lady Clifton, and for some weeks her life was despaired of.

"Why did I send him from me?" she moaned over and over again.

Eventually she began to regain strength and had just reached that stage of convalescence which permitted of her taking carriage exercise, when the final blow came with crushing force.

Lady Clifton, as we shall continue to call her, for who has more right to the title, the first wife being dead, was seated in a closed carriage which had been drawn up under the trees in the Park.

Leaning over the rails were two young officers recently invalided home from South Africa.

"Oh! I say, Fitzgerald, what was that yarn in connection with the murder of Lord Clifton?" asked one of them.

"Well, it was generally reported as a case of Boer treachery—another case of the abuse of the white flag—but the real facts of the case placed Clifton in a very black light."

"What are the real facts then?" queried the other.

In response to this inquiry, Lieut. Fitzgerald told the story as narrated by the old farmer at his trial. During this narration Lady Clifton had been listening to every word, her attention having been attracted by hearing Lord Clifton's name.

The words sank like hot iron into her very soul, yet she heard it all through. Then her over-wrought feelings gave way, and with one piercing shriek she fainted.

She was conveyed home with all speed and a physician summoned, but it was found that reason had forsaken her throne.

Thus two lives were sacrificed, one woman was driven to madness and the peace of several homes wrecked. In short, all these lives were ruined by riches.

J. H. Peat.

£400 HAS NOW BEEN PAID.

The latest capture in connection with the Ten-Pound Note Scheme has been made by

Mr. George Wardle,
55 Laburnum Road, Fulwell,
Sunderland.

who captured No. 78 at a football match at Sunderland.

CHRISTMAS CARDS GIVEN AWAY.

The Editor of *Pearson's Weekly* has prepared a charming little Christmas Card, suitable for readers to send to their friends. The picture is a reproduction of a photograph, and contains a seasonable inscription.

A huge number of copies is being printed, and the first batch is now ready. In return for a postcard, giving your name and address, sent to the Christmas Card Department, Pearson's Buildings, Henrietta Street, London, W.C., we will post you a few cards free of all cost. Applications will be dealt with in rotation. The Christmas Card is quite charming, and is in no way an aggressive advertisement of *Pearson's Weekly* or the Ten-Pound Scheme.

The Sketch

"HAVE YOU GOT THAT £10 NOTE?"

suitable for two gentlemen and one lady, has now been put into type, and is to be obtained in book form, at sixpence per copy, from Messrs. Samuel French Limited, Theatrical Publishers, 89 Strand, London, W.C.

NO FEE WILL BE CHARGED AMATEURS FOR PLAYING IT.

The scene is one that can easily be arranged, and the costumes are quite ordinary ones.

Digitized by Google

THE FINDING OF LEO PHAYRE.

ULTIMA DREW was visibly perplexed, not vitally so, but quite sufficiently to insure momentary vexation at any rate.

As a rule she was a stay-at-home sort of young person, rather, however, from force of circumstances than as a matter of inclination.

Quick-witted, full of life and energy, she could be content anywhere, but the larger the field the greater her happiness and sense of personal enjoyment.

Living as she did a comparatively retired life with a widowed aunt in a quiet western suburb, her surroundings at mid-day, on a certain summer's morning about four years ago, were calculated to bewilder her a little. Fenchurch Street at that hour is trying to most people save and except your born "City Man."

Ultima's mission on this occasion was to find a particular Shipping Office, and there to make inquiries concerning one Ephraim Hoyt, the only son of her aunt, Prudence Hoyt, whose ship, upon which he served as third-officer, was long overdue.

Up and down the crowded thoroughfare toiled Ultima. Numbers seemed to dance before her eyes, while the legion of names upon the door-posts and window blinds fairly mixed themselves up for her into one kaleidoscopic whole.

Into a dark building well down towards Aldgate, she ventured at last, seeing within a long list of tenants.

"Beg pardon, miss, are you looking for anything or anybody? Perhaps I can help you?"

Ultima turned sharply round to see a tall, thin, grizzled man of middle age, unmistakeably a seaman.

"No thanks! I shall soon find what I want. Ah! here it is! Kirby, Danes and Co., Second Floor."

"That's odd!" said the man again. "Why, they're my owners! I'm going up there now. 'Scuse me, but my name's Lobb, Captain Lobb, of the barque *Pearl*, at your service."

Although Ultima did not by any means appreciate the appearance and manners of the captain, still his connection with the owners of the *Cairngorm*, her cousin Fred's ship, tended somewhat to disarm prejudice.

Her business concluded, and, curiously co-incident, the captain's also, Ultima started homeward.

It appeared that he was also bound for Notting Hill (not exactly a co-incident, for he had glanced at her return half-ticket, dropped by her and restored by him) and, in spite of Ultima's badly-disguised disapproval, he accompanied her to Cannon Street Station.

"May as well see you safe, as I'm going your way, Miss——"

Here the girl diplomatically made a half-slip, as if by accident, so cleverly evading giving the desired information.

In the train the Captain was discursive on the subject of his travels, until, Notting Hill reached, Ultima discovered to both her alarm and annoyance that her ankle was really sprained. She could scarcely put her foot to the ground. This of course necessitated the assistance of the gallant skipper in the ascent of the station stairs and a subsequent putting her into a cab.

"Hullo! Phayre! What are you doing in this part of the world?"

This to a young fellow in nautical attire, swinging round to enter the station.

"Just looking round a bit," answered the other, "ship's all right; I've left the bos'n in charge."

Leo Phayre, first officer of the *Pearl* could not help looking with some amusement at the Captain and Ultima.

Lobb's ways were not, according to Leo's experience, the ways likely to suit the average young lady.

But then he remembered that young ladies now-a-days are given oftentimes to strange methods and fancies.

"My chief officer Leo Phayre,—Miss—"

"Drew," said Ultima, though not so reluctantly, as she was prompted to do earlier in the Captain's case.

Quite of the Norse type both in build and feature, the fair-haired, stalwart young sailor irresistibly attracted Ultima.

He looked honest too, and true, a direct contrast, the girl thought, to her self-constituted escort.

"'Scuse me, Phayre, but Miss Drew has hurt her foot, and must get home at once!" (she had been sitting in the cab all this time) "see you on the *Pearl* in the morning."

There was nothing for it but for him to accept his dismissal, and the big sailor dived down into the "underground," full of the sweet vision vouchsafed him a moment before on the earth above.

Thus began the dramatic episode in three lives, although that the main issue and situation may be made quite clear and understandable, it is necessary that a very brief account should be given of these same three persons' actions during the six weeks immediately following David Lobb's self-introduction to Ultima Drew.

During the next few weeks, then, Captain Lobb contrived, on the pretext of sympathetic inquiry, to make many a call at the little Bayswater house.

Ultima disliked him, and I am afraid scare concealed her real feelings, but the captain was of the pachydermatous sort, and took no notice.

It may have been three weeks after the incident of the sprained ankle (which after all had turned out to be anything but serious) that, walking one day in the Bayswater Road, Ultima met Leo Phayre face to face.

A few words of courteous interchange; half-an-hour's stroll between Kensington Palace and the Marble Arch and the thing was done for all time.

The captain soon discovered the state of affairs, more than once finding his Chief Officer in Angus Place before him. He soon saw, however, that in competition with his younger rival he had no chance whatsoever for Ultima's favour.

Digitized by Google

Bound to one another a fortnight before the sailing of the *Pearl* for the South Seas, Ultima yielded to Leo's earnest petition for a hasty marriage two days prior to that event.

He wanted, he said, to be sure of her, not, as he hastened to explain to her, because he in any way doubted her faith and fealty, but just because of an indefinite, perhaps a foolish feeling of coming insecurity and danger. She could remain with her aunt until the *Pearl* came home again.

Married, therefore, they were, and the ship sailed away to the "Golden" Pacific, leaving behind her a girl-wife, who would wait, Penelope-wise, the return of her Ulysses.

* * * * *

Ten months afterwards the barque *Pearl*, David Lobb, master, arrived in the London docks. Her Captain reported to his owners the death, off one of the smaller islands of the South Sea group, of his Chief Officer, Leo Phayre, from fever.

On the evening of the same day Captain Lobb sought an interview with Ultima, and then communicated to her the news of her husband's death.

Strange to say she did not cry or "take on," as a certain type of women do, or as in fact most women would have done under the circumstances.

Had you asked her she would have said that she did not believe it, that nothing would induce her to believe it except the sight of her dead husband's face. As this was manifestly impossible she appeared, callously so, her aunt and the Captain thought, indifferent, calm and self-possessed.

"Darned odd!" said Lobb to himself as he left the house. "It's downright unnatural!"

The *Pearl*, owing to being laid up for overhauling and repairs, remained in port for nearly five months.

During the whole of the time Captain Lobb was not idle. His persistent endeavours to ingratiate himself with Ultima, appeared at first to be absolutely unsuccessful. For weeks she would have nothing to say to him. She denied herself to him when he called, pleaded illness, and adopted any and every ruse in order to avoid his presence.

Mrs. Hoyt expostulated but vainly with her niece, she having a rather better opinion of David Lobb than had Ultima Phayre.

Suddenly, and without any warning the domestic wind changed, so far, at least as Ultima was concerned.

To outsiders there was no apparent reason for this, but it may be stated that it was undoubtedly due to the receipt by Ultima of a certain letter signed Peter Rollinson, boatswain of the *Pearl*.

The letter was to this effect:

HOND. MADAM,—

'Don't trust our skipper. He's a villain. Mister Fare's not dead. He never wer'. Cap'n Lobb and me (he made me do it) carried him in the dingy to an i'land a few miles to the s'uth'ard of Tahiti, South Seas. If he's alive, which I think he could keep himself on roots and such-like, he's there now. Pleas keep this to yourself, ma'am, he's treated me shameful, and I'm telling you so as you can do something.

A letter sent to P. Rollinson, at the "Prince Arthur," St. Georges Road, E. will find me, and I'll tell you more.

Ultima, when she had read the letter, just smiled to herself, and went upstairs to her room.

Upon the Captain's next visit she was friendly to a degree. Some men, over-shrewd and keen-sighted, might have had their suspicions as to the sincerity of the lady's manner; but Lobb was, in spite of his years, very much in love, and, in consequence, blind to everything save his determination to make Ultima Mrs. Lobb.

If her aunt was mildly vexed before, she was angry now at Ultima's barefaced, (so she called it) encouragement of the Captain, and when, four months after the *Pearl's* homecoming the girl announced to her horrified relative her engagement to its enterprising commander, there was no more strength left in her.

"Ultima!" she said, trying to speak as indignantly as her affection would allow her, "I've done with you—quite done with you. You must do as you please; but mark my words that a marriage with this man before poor Leo is cold in his grave is not even decent, and will lead to sorrow for you and perhaps worse."

"Auntie! don't be angry!" replied Ultima seeking to stroke her aunt's hand. "Some day you'll understand and acknowledge that I'm right in what I'm doing."

"Never!—my dear!—never!" said the old lady emphatically, "right can never come out of wrong, and that this is wrong I am more than persuaded I am sure."

Shortly then, when the Captain pressed for an early wedding-day he was told that it would be granted only on three conditions. First that the ceremony should take place the morning of the day of sailing; secondly, that she, Ultima, should accompany the ship as a passenger, occupying her own cabin, with her aunt as companion; and lastly, that this latter arrangement should continue until so long as Tahiti, the destination of the *Pearl*, should be reached.

He was obliged to consent, although unwillingly, knowing as he did by this time something of Ultima's strength of will and temper.

And so for the second time in her life, did a young girl upon the eve of the same vessel's sailing for the same sea, take upon herself grave responsibilities which, as compared with those of the first occasion, were strangely terrible in their significance.

* * * * *

The barque *Pearl* was steadily forging ahead before a ten-knot breeze, and every evidence existed of a speedy and favourable termination to her voyage.

She had entered now into the wonderful region, known generically as the South Seas.

Ultima, ever since the departure from England, had rigidly kept her cabin, poring over and studying intently the various charts and maps. Did she take a breath or two of fresh air, it was during Lobb's "watch below" (for he took watch about with his new mate) and in company with Aunt Prudence.

Rollinson, the boatswain, made no signs as to his acquaintance with her, up to the day, that is to say, the events of which, and the night that followed, are now to be related.

For the first time Ultima had spoken to Lobb as he descended the companion from the poop to enter the saloon.

She asked him, in a matter-of-fact way, the probable date of arrival at Tahiti, and on receiving his reply that it would probably be some time during the afternoon of the following day, she said no more but retired to her cabin.

"Ah! my lady!" he said half-aloud as she disappeared, "when I *do* have you all to myself, you shall pay for this, take it from me!"

He felt instinctively that she was concealing something from him; that there was game afoot, but as to the meaning or the manner of it he was completely in the dark.

Digitized by Google

More study of one particular chart, and then somewhere about the end of the second "dog-watch" she took out of a chest a man's reefer jacket and donned it. Next, she put a small revolver in one of the side pockets, and, leaning over to assure herself that her aunt was asleep she sat down and waited.

"Two bells! Three bells!"

Quietly she opened the cabin door, and crept up the companion. It was quite dark, but she could see the "mate" lying fast asleep upon a hencoop to windward of the poop.

Passing him with a curious smile, she made her way to the wheel.

The oil-skin-clad figure there whispered her as she touched his arm. It was the boatswain.

"Ay!—ay! missie—it's all right," jerking his thumb over towards the sleeping, stertorously-breathing "chief." "It was a big dose; but it won't hurt him."

"Peter! alter the course to west and by south, and keep it at that until I come up again in an hour."

"Ay! ay! missie."

Ultima glided back along the poop deck to the companion, and so down to her cabin.

In an hour's time she came up again.

"Give me the wheel," she said, "you go forward and see the carpenter, and find out if he has done as you and he agreed with regard to the men."

The boatswain put the spokes into her hand and hastened forward.

Soon he returned, announcing that all was well.

She would not give up the wheel to him, but handing him the revolver, she bid him quietly stand by her, and keep a good look out.

"Seven bells" sounded, and simultaneously with their striking, Rollinson, who had, ten minutes before, gone "forrad" again, came hurriedly to Ultima's side.

"There's land ahead!" he said, excitedly, "off the starboard bow, and about ten miles I'm thinking."

"Well, I'll give you the wheel directly," she answered quite calmly, though could one have read her heart, there would certainly have been seen an agitation almost beyond bearing.

"My Leo! My Leo!" she kept singing to herself, and the song was as of heaven to her.

It was then that a movement in the saloon beneath was discernible, and before the two on the poop deck could realise the situation, Lobb's head and shoulders appeared coming up the port-companion.

At a glance he saw that the course had been changed.

"Hi! You!" he roared, making a rush for the wheel. "Who told you to alter the course?—Who is it at the wheel?—By Heavens! it's a woman!"

He would have torn the spokes out of Ultima's hand, had not the boatswain thrown himself between her and the captain.

Gripping the latter by the throat, he tried all he knew to throw him, and at last by a dexterous Cornish wrestling trick brought him heavily to the deck on his back.

It was but the work of a moment to make fast the prostrate captain's hands and ankles, with a coil of the signal half-yards.

"Give me the wheel now," cried Rollinson to Ultima. "And you, missie, you run to Chips, and tell him I want him—want him directly."

They were now within easy distance of the coral reef which inclosed the lagoon surrounding the little atoll.

It was daylight now, and straight ahead could be distinguished the gap in the reef through which the boatswain was making to steer the *Pearl*. The aperture was very narrow, and it needed all the old man's skill to avoid mishap.

But it was deftly done, and with a mighty wash and spray-cloud of white-capped water, and with an arrow-like speed, the barque, quivering for just a second on the top of a gigantic wave, shot through the gap to bring up safely in the calm, clear lake inside.

Events marched rapidly now.

Lowering with the aid of Chips and one or two of the "hands" the starboard-quarter boat, the boatswain first letting Ultima down into it, followed quickly himself, leaving Chips in command of the ship. It was but a little distance to the sandy beach of the atoll.

At first they could detect no sign of life, then (it was Ultima first) they saw distinctly a strange, weird figure sitting, head bowed upon his hands, upon a blackened tree stump close to the water's edge.

"Leo!——Leo!" she cried, and the figure looked up.

"Quick! Peter! quick!" and the old man nerved by her excitement, bent to the heavy oars with the energy and strength of youth.

As the boat grounded in the soft, wet sand, Ultima with a little cry sprang out and ran, her hair streaming behind her in the early morning wind, toward the tree stump.

His hair and beard were long and streaked with grey; his eyes sunken and dark rimmed; his clothes, such as they were, ragged and dirty, and yet there was for her no doubt.

He did not rise at her approach, but sat on, looking up at her in a dazed way; and then she pillowed his poor head upon her bosom, and crooned over him, as doth a mother over the child of her love.

* * * * *

There is little more to tell.

How, gently persuaded, he entered the boat, and was taken on board the *Pearl*; how, recovered from his "dose," the mate was induced to let "by-gones be by-gones," and to sail the ship to the nearest British Port; how Captain David Lobb paid eventually the full penalty for "marooning" his "first-officer," all this may well be imagined.

That Peter, the old boatswain was not forgotten may also readily be believed; and to-day as he dandles Ultima's youngest son upon his knee he tells over again to the fine little chap of six at his side the story of the finding of his father by the wit and devotion of his father's wife.

RALPH ENDERBY.

DO YOU WISH TO MAKE SOME CHRISTMAS PRESENTS?

Something simple, and that requires little outlay.
Something that will give pleasure to your friends.
Something that will be useful as well as ornamental.

WE CAN TELL YOU EXACTLY WHAT TO MAKE.

Go to the nearest newsagent's and ask for

Isobel's Needlework,

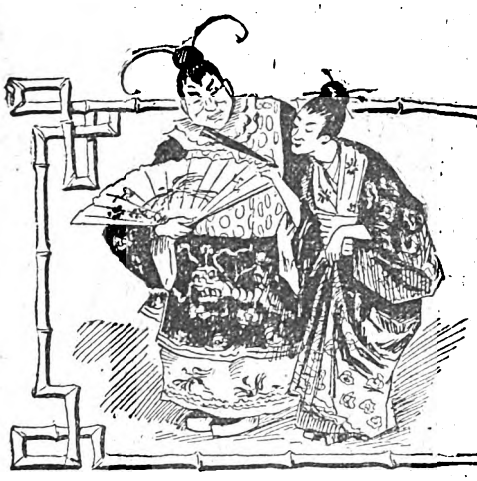
PRICE TWOPENCE.

It is now on Sale. It contains sketches and directions for making many pretty trifles for Christmas Presents and Bazaars, such as

Dainty Table Centres (three designs), A Crochet Chemise Top, Pretty Smocking, A Child's Openwork Sock and Vest, Home-made Serviette Rings, Embroidered Initials, etc.

"ISOBEL'S NEEDLEWORK" may also be obtained direct from 17 and 18 Henrietta St., W.C., post free, 3½d.

Digitized by Google



Mr. Bowser's Tribulations.

XXIX.—THINGS WERE ALL WRONG, BUT HE RIGHTED THEM.

WHEN Mr. Bowser reached home the other evening, dinner was ten minutes late.

This was such an unprecedented thing that he looked at Mrs. Bowser for an explanation, and she proceeded to say:

"You see, the butcher was a little late in sending the steak, but it may not happen again for years."

"Late, was he?" growled Mr. Bowser as the blood flew to his face. "What time did you order that steak?"

"At three o'clock."

"And, having three hours in which to execute your order, the butcher was ten minutes late! This is a matter to be inquired into. If that butcher thinks he can play fast and loose with me, I'll show him that he's greatly mistaken. He was probably off at a football match or a horse race, and he didn't care whether his customers had dinner or not."

"I don't think it will happen again," said Mrs. Bowser in a voice calculated to soothe, and just then dinner was announced.

During the meal she sought to divert Mr. Bowser's mind from the butcher's slip, but the more he thought of it the wilder he got.

It was also unfortunate that the baker's boy had been late with the bread and that they had to economise with the butter because the dairyman hadn't got round.

"In other words," said Mr. Bowser as he rose up before his dinner was half finished, "you let these people run your house instead of running it yourself. Do you suppose they would dare dilly-dally round if I gave them an order? What they need is waking up, and I'll go out and wake them!"

She followed him to the hat-stand and suggested that he let her make a complaint on the morrow, but he clapped on his hat with a bang and replied:

"I'll do nothing of the kind. I want them to understand who they are dealing with. Because you are a woman who'll put up with anything and everything it doesn't follow that folks can sit on my coat tails. You listen for a row."

The cat had followed them and he humped his back and gurgled at the thought of the fun ahead. Mr. Bowser had only to go along one street to find the butcher. He was received with a smile, but the smile faded as he shouted:

"And so my dinner must wait an hour and a half because you didn't get home from the races? Do you think I will stand such tomfoolery as this?"

"My delivery boy fell and broke his arm, and I had to deliver the orders myself," explained the butcher. "I was about ten minutes late at your house, but under the circumstances I hope you will overlook it."

"I'll overlook nothing! I want my house run on a system. If you can't run your shop on a system and a better system than this you'd better get out."

Then the butcher lost his temper and said he knew his business and all about systems, and Mr. Bowser got wild and said he doubted it, and they had a war of words which so scared an old woman after twopenny worth of sheep's liver that she had a bad attack of palpitation. Mr. Bowser was in good trim for the dairyman, and he went to him with eyes flashing and ears working and demanded:

"Are you in business to accommodate the public or yourself? A nice state of affairs that you should spoil my dinner for the want of butter!"

"You listen for a row."

Digitized by Google

"I'm awfully sorry," explained the dairyman, "but we had a fire in the back room which upset things and made us a little late to-day."

"But what has a fire in your back room to do with me? Did I cause that fire? Am I responsible because your dough-headed servant set fire to your place? You spoilt my dinner, and I want to know what you are going to do about it?"

"Can't you excuse such an accident as a fire?" asked the dairyman in surprise.

"No, sir; no, sir! It is your business to have a fire-proof building. Even with a fire raging, an ambitious dairyman would not have neglected his customers. I don't like it, sir, and you are a lymphatic man, sir, and if you can't promise to do better in future you'll get no more orders from me."

Then the dairyman called Mr. Bowser an old kicker, and in return Mr. Bowser made some unkind remarks, and in their excited movements they upset two cans of milk and made such a row that a policeman came in and said it was a burning shame.

The baker's face wore a smile of contempt, and he was softly humming to himself, when Mr. Bowser came in to him and thundered:

"If you don't know enough to run a bakery, why don't you sell out and try a coal yard?"

"But what is wrong?" asked the baker.

"My bread — for dinner! Did you have that bread at my house at half-past five o'clock?"

"I am sorry to say I didn't. I was seven or eight minutes late, but that was because a wheel came off my cart. I can't make out how it happened, but——"

"What are the wheels of your cart to me?" shouted Mr. Bowser as he banged on the counter. "Do I run your wheels? Do I run your old white horse and red-headed driver? Do I even know that you've got wheels to your cart? You were late, sir, and by being late you spoilt my dinner, and what are you going to do about it?"

"That's too bad, and I'm sure it won't happen again. How on earth that wheel—"

"That wheel be hanged, sir! When that wheel came off, you should have hurried yourself all the more. It is evident that you have no head on you."

Then the baker, who felt himself blameless, began to talk back and Mr. Bowser to use stronger language, and they finally shook their fists under each other's nose and got a boy so excited that he ran out and called up the ambulance. Mr. Bowser reached home boiling over, but remembered that some shirts were to come up by seven o'clock. It was now after eight, and they hadn't arrived.

"They will never come," he roared as he banged open the door, "because I will go out and hunt that false shirtmaker to his doom."

"It is early yet, and they will be here by nine," pleaded Mrs. Bowser, as he gasped for breath and jumped up and down. If he heard her, he paid no attention, but rushed off down the steps and out of the gate. At the corner he met the shirtmaker, who had come to deliver the goods himself, but had stopped for a few minutes to chat with a friend. There was an instantaneous explosion, followed by a grapple, and the crowd which speedily gathered saw two men rolling over and over on the pavement and punching away at each other, while the three new shirts went flying hither and thither until somebody picked them up and sneaked off with them.

Mr. Bowser had limped home and taken a seat on the step.

By-and-bye Mrs. Bowser and the cat looked out of the front door. Mr. Bowser had limped home and taken a seat on the steps. His hat was gone, his hair all ruffled, his coat split up the back, and he was looking into vacancy across the street.

The cat went down and rubbed against his back and purred to him, but he made no move. Mrs. Bowser quietly asked him if he had waked up the delinquents, but he never turned his head. He was thinking of systems and wondering why they did not pan out as he had told Mrs. Bowser they should. The shirtmaker had also got the best of their scrap, and the crowd had said they were glad of it. M. Quad.

[Next week: "He starts a Temperance Crusade, but gets all mixed up."]

In the Christmas Double Number of

"SHORT STORIES"

will appear the first of a series of articles entitled

"THE LION'S WARS."

They are written in a very readable style, and the whole will form a complete history of the most important wars in which Britain has been engaged.

Digitized by Google

A Forfeited Honour.

PEOPLE always run away with a wrong idea when they see that Victoria Cross standing under its little glass case, in a prominent position in my drawing-room. They think that my father, Captain Langham, won it during the Indian Mutiny, but, as a matter of fact, the distinction was earned by a private for saving my father's life.

Yes, I think I'll keep it locked up in future, as I invariably have to enter into an explanation, and the story shows up a rather dark side in the life of the man who won it; yet it may serve some good purpose to tell it, as it may wake up our Government to do something for the heroes who have fought for the Enpire. More is done now than formally, but there is still much to be done—and this is a story of years ago.

Private John Rushton was an agricultural labourer who, finding the times rather hard owing to the fact that he had incurred the displeasure of the squire and the tenant farmers in consequence of his independence and the suspicion of being concerned in poaching, had enlisted and donned the Queen's uniform.

Rushton was a devil-may-care kind of fellow, thoroughly good hearted, but fond of fun, ready to take a part in any diversion, and quick to resent a slight or an injustice—one of those men who become moody and bitter when they feel that man or fate has not treated them fairly.

He was sent out to India and took an active part in the doings of the army of relief and punishment. It was during a fight outside Cawnpore that Rushton won his V.C.

My father had been wounded in a hot corner; the little party had to retire and my father was left on the field. He had done a good turn of some kind to Rushton, who showed his gratitude by returning, lifting my father on to his back—he was a strong man—and bringing him away under a heavy fire. It's the sort of thing that has been done many times since, but that does not detract from its heroism.

My father was invalided home and Rushton went through the campaign to the end, but almost in the last fight he was so badly wounded in the arm that he was disabled.

When Rushton returned to this country, my father obtained employment for him, but after a time it appears that Rushton found considerable difficulty in obtaining work. The "Captain"—as my father was usually styled—helped him into several situations, but a one-armed man, as Rushton was practically, found himself at a discount, and as soon as the firms decently could, so as not to appear discourteous to my father, they got rid of Rushton.

I think we must admit that the man contributed in some measure to his own downfall by occasional lapses into intemperance, but I am inclined to think that these were brought on partly by the bitter feeling caused by his own ill-luck. There are very many people who, when luck seems to be against them, give way to drink or some other vice.

Then my father died and in the grief and trouble that followed, I lost sight of the man who had saved him from the Sepoys. It was many months afterwards before I recollected him and made inquiries, only to find that he had been convicted of theft and that his name had been struck off the V.C. list.

His sentence had expired before I became aware of the facts, so Rushton was an outcast, had lost his annuity and must get a living as best he could. I was sad at heart at this thought, but I could do nothing; he had vanished.

Time passed on and I married; my name was changed and there was no clue to the outside world that I was the daughter of Captain Langham.

I had some of my dear father's things in my house, and in gratitude to Private John Rushton I had cut from the *Gazette* the notice about the Victoria Cross having been conferred on Private John Rushton for saving the life of Captain Langham and had had it framed; it hung in my room and under it was the black edged card respecting my father's death.

At first, I used to look at the framed cutting every day and ask myself what had become of Jack Rushton; but one gets accustomed to everything and in course of time I had a good many other things to think about and only indulged in such reveries at long intervals. So seven years passed.

One night we had been out late, my husband and I, and it was quite midnight before we returned. I had told the servants not to sit up for us, so when we reached home we found the place in darkness, even the hall light having been turned out.

A letter which had arrived by the last post had engaged my husband's attention, so I left him downstairs and went straight to my bedroom.

The handle of my door always turned very easily and with scarcely any noise, so that the occupant of the room, whether a servant or myself, would scarcely detect the entrance of another person by sound.

I turned the handle and pushed the door back, thinking of what had passed during the evening, but I started in surprise as my eyes fell upon a gleam of light from the dressing-table. I knew by the position and by the kind of light that it came from a lantern.

Digitized by Google

Without thinking of possible consequences, I stepped into the room and demanded: "Who's there?"

Before I had time to utter another sound I felt my throat clutched in a tight grip and I was forced backwards in such a way as to shut the door.

"If you make another sound I'll choke you!"

The words came in a hoarse whisper and I knew that the threat would be carried out. There was no mistaking the determination of the burglar.

"Come and sit down in that chair," commanded the man, and as he drew me towards the seat by the hand which still held my throat, albeit more gently, I was bound to obey. "That's right! Mind what I told you or——"

He had by this time released his hold and now held a revolver in his hand—he held it within the radius of the light from the lantern, that there might be no doubt in my mind concerning what he would do if I gave the alarm.

I was in an agony of fear on my husband's account. If he came into the room, the man would probably shoot at him, and at such short range there would be very little chance that Richard would escape injury, at least.

"Now I want all your jewellery and any money you've got," said the burglar. "Make haste, now! I ain't got no time to waste and you've spoilt me for getting the plate. I was just trying to open the drawer, but now you've come in you can save me the trouble. Where is the key? Don't speak more'n a whisper!"

I took the key from my pocket, together with my purse, and began to slip off my bracelets and rings; I did it all in silence, for I was anxious to satisfy the man and get him away lest harm should come to my husband. I watched the house-breaker and the door alternately, and in spite of my pre-occupation my curiosity was aroused by the way the man went to work.

He did nothing with his left hand; the arm seemed to hang helplessly by his side except now and then when he made use of it much as I imagined a man would use a wooden arm. He had the drawer open and took from it some trinkets which he thrust into a pocket in his coat.

I fell to wondering how he would have carried away the plate, and I concluded that he was anticipating being able to walk out of the front door with it; he could not climb from my window with a heavy bundle, unless he swung it round his neck, and to drop it to the ground beneath would probably attract attention. Then I grew nervous again about my husband's safety, for I fancied I heard a noise on the stairs.

Having pocketed all he could find in the way of portable valuables, the house-breaker picked up his lantern and began to look about the room in search of something more. I noticed that he attached the lantern to a hook on the front of his coat, while he held his weapon in his available hand.

I watched him as he moved about the room; my heart was throbbing violently and I determined to make a dash for the door, or even to try and take him unawares.

I am a soldier's daughter and have inherited some of my father's courage, but up to the present I had had absolutely no chance against the intruder, and one must not forget that prudence is said to be the better part of valour.

Suddenly the light of the lantern shone upon the framed cutting from the *Gazette* and the card under it; the house-breaker stared at it for a few seconds and then turned to me with his revolver lowered, and said in a voice that sounded like a gasp:

"Dead! Dead! What do you know of Captain Langham?"

"I am his daughter," I replied.

Then, as the awful truth flashed upon me, I continued: "And you are Jack Rushton!"

No sound came from the man. I stood up, struck a match and in a second I had the gas alight. All my fear was gone; I felt that the man would never attempt to harm me.

"I have tried to find you many times," I went on gently. "I was sorry—oh, so sorry!—to hear that you had been sent to prison and had forfeited the distinction which you had earned so nobly. I have always kept that framed cutting in my room out of gratitude to the man who saved my father's life at the risk of his own. I was grieved that the man should have fallen into evil ways, but I was still grateful to him."

Rushton, for it was he, sank slowly into a chair near him, laid down his revolver, covered his eyes with his hand and began to weep. As he told me afterwards, all the past came back to him and aroused the better part of the man; then there came to him the recollection that his name had been struck off the list of heroes, and he sprang to his feet with a vehement exclamation that was clearly a cry of defence. Just at that moment my husband entered, but Rushton did not see him.

"I have gone to the bad, Miss Langham," he cried, addressing me by my maiden name, "but I did not take the first step myself, I swear it! What chance did a man like me, with a useless arm, have of fighting for his living, even if he did have £10 a year? Such as me are not wanted; we are left to starve by the country we've fought for! I was one of the lucky ones, with what I had got out of the V.C.—one of the lucky ones!

"Your father—heaven bless him—helped me time after time, but a man with any go in him wants to be independent, wants to earn his own living. And when he died I tried to shift for myself. But fate was against me, and one day I got dead drunk, and when I came round I found I was in a police-station cell and charged with stealing money from a man who had had a drink with me, and getting drunk on it. There wasn't enough evidence to rob a dog of its liberty, but they convicted me and I went to prison for three months. I swear I didn't do it! And when I came out, I was soured and I gave way. I have been to prison since then, and I have deserved it! I had to steal, for everybody was against me. And now I've come to rob the daughter of the man who helped me!"

And once more, overcome by emotion, he sank into the chair and wept. My husband came up to me and we held a conversation in whispers; then we both went to Rushton and spoke kindly to him.

My husband took Jack Rushton into his employ, and we both kept him in view, seeing that he was comfortably lodged and looked after. We had hoped to make an effort to get him reinstated, but he declared that he did not wish to make the attempt; he preferred that he should be counted as one who was dead.

No, Rushton had never really parted with his V.C.; it had been in the keeping of a woman for whom he had entertained some affection and who had never parted with it. He found her out when he was settled in my husband's service; she was married, but the Cross had been handed by her to her mother, from whom Rushton received it.

When he died, about half-a-dozen years later, he asked me to take it. I have kept it where you see it, as a memento and as a lesson to everybody to be practically grateful to the soldiers who fight for our country.

George Day.

Digitized by Google

PADDLING HIS OWN CANOE.

TAKEZAWA was the head of a large silk and rice house in Yeddo. His father had been head, his grandfather had been head, his great-grandfather had been head; in fact, the date when the first of the name affixed his seal to the documents of the house was lost in the midst of antiquity. So, when foreigners were first allowed a foothold on the soil of Japan, none were so jealous of their advance, none so ardent in their wishes to see the white barbarians ousted, as the members of the firm of Takezawa and Company.

But times changed. Up to the last Takezawa held out against the introductions of foreign innovations in the mode and manner of conducting the affairs of the firm; other houses might employ foreign steamboat companies as carriers for the produce from port to port, might import foreign goods, and even go so far as to allow the better paid of their clerks to dress themselves as they liked in foreign costume; but Takezawa and Company were patriotic Japanese merchants, and resolved to run on in the old groove of their ancestors.

But times still changed, and the great house, running on in its solid old-fashioned manner, found itself left in the lurch by younger and more enterprising firms. This would never do. So Takezawa consulted with his partners, patrons, clients, and friends, and after much wordy discussion, and much vehement opposition on the part of the old man, it was resolved to keep pace with the times, as much as possible, without absolutely overturning the old status of the house.

Well, Takezawa and Co. had still a very fair share of the export rice and silk business; but their slow, heavy-sterned junks were no match for the swift, foreign-built steamers employed by other firms; so with a tremendous wince, and not without a side thought at "Hara Kiri" —(the "Happy Despatch")—Takezawa consented to the sale of all his junks, and the purchase with the proceeds of a big foreign steamer.

The steamer was bought—a fine three-masted, double-funnelled boat, complete with every appliance, newly engined, and manned by European officers and leading seamen. From the dock at Yokoska, where she was lying, a preliminary trip was made; and so smoothly did everything work, and so easily did everything seem to act, under the guidance of the Europeans, that Takezawa considered his own mariners perfectly competent to handle the vessel after an hour's experience on board.

So the Europeans were discharged with six months' salaries—about six times as much as they would have received at home—and Takezawa fixed a day when the ship should be rechristened, and should make her trial trip under Japanese management.

It was a beautiful day in autumn—the most glorious period of the year in Japan—when Takezawa and a distinguished company assembled on board the steamer, to give her a new name, and to send her forth finally as a Japanese steamer. The ship looked brave enough as she lay in the dock—ports newly painted, brass-work shining, yards squared, and half-buried in bunting. At the mizzen floated the empire flag of Japan—a red sun on a white ground—and as Takezawa gazed fore and aft, and his eyes rested on brightness, cleanliness, and order everywhere, he wondered to himself how he could have been such a fool as to stand out so long against the possession of such a treasure, merely on the grounds of its not being Japanese. A fair daughter of one of his partners dashed a cup of "sake" against the bows of the vessel, and the newly-named *Lightning Bird* dashed forward into the ocean. Her head was made straight for Yokohama (Takezawa had seen the Englishman at the wheel manipulate her in that course on her trial trip, so he knew she couldn't go wrong). And straight she went.

Everyone was delighted; sweetmeats and wine were served round, whilst on the quarter-deck a troupe of the best "Geishas" or singing-girls in Yeddo mingled their shrill voices and their guitar notes with the sound of the fresh morning breeze through the rigging.

The engines worked magnificently; coals were poured into the furnaces by the hundred-weight, so as to keep a good uniform thick cloud of smoke coming from the funnels—if the smoke lacked intensity for a minute, Takezawa, fearful that something was wrong, bellowed forth orders for more coal to be heaped on, so that in a quarter of an hour's time the *Lightning Bird* consumed as much fuel as would have served a P. and O. steamer for half-a-day.

On she went everybody pleased and smiling, everything taut and satisfactory. Straight a-head was Treaty Point—a bold bluff running out into sea. The *Lightning Bird* was bound for Yokohama—Yokohama lies well behind Treaty Point—but at the pace she was going it was very apparent that unless a sudden and rapid turn to starboard was made, she would run not into Yokohama, but into Treaty Point.

The singing and feasting proceeded merrily on deck, but Takezawa was undecided and uneasy on the bridge.

Digitized by Google

The helm was put hard-port, the brave vessel obeyed, and leapt on straight for the line of rocks at the foot of the point, over which the waves were breaking in cascades of foam. But the gods would not see a vessel, making her first run under Japanese auspices, maltreated and destroyed by Japanese waves and rocks; so just in time to save an ignominious run aground, the helm was put hard over, fresh fuel was pile l on to the furnaces, and by barely half a ship's length the *Lightning Bird* shaved the point, and stood in straight for Yokohama Bay.

Takezawa breathed freely for the moment; but, as he saw ahead the crowd of European ships and native junks through which he would have to thread his way, he would have given a very large sum to have had a couple of Europeans at the wheel in the place of his own half-witted, scared mariners.

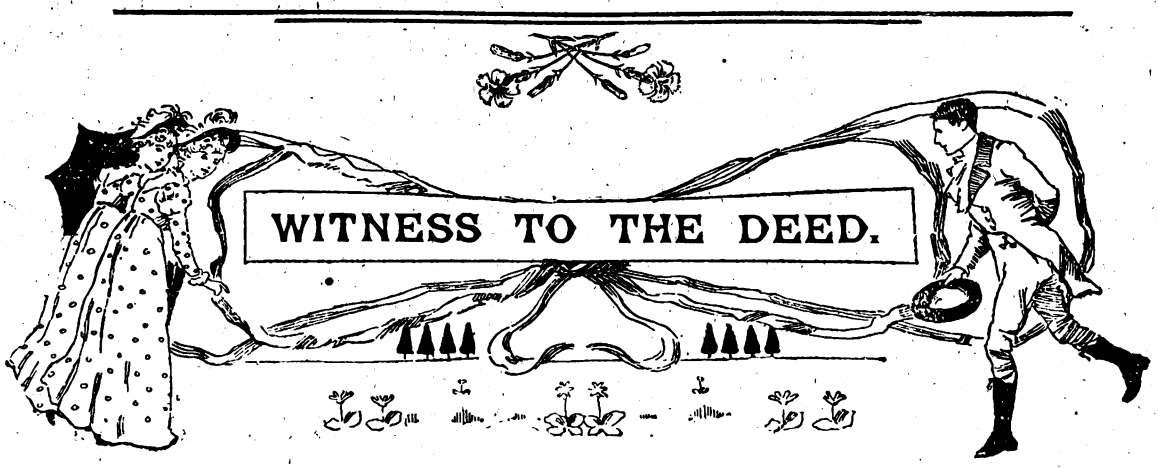
However, there was no help for it; the ship sped on, and the guests on board, many of whom were thorough rustics, were in raptures at the distant view of the white houses on the Yokohama *Bund*, at the big steamers and the graceful sailing vessels on all sides.

To avoid a chance of a collision, Takezawa managed to keep the steamer well outside; they nearly ran down a fishing junk or two, and all but sunk the lightship; still they had not as yet come to absolute grief.

Round they went for a long half-hour; many of the guests were suffering from sickness, and Takezawa thought that he might bring the trip to an end. So he bellowed forth orders to stop the engines, and anchor. The anchor was promptly let go, but stopping the engines was another matter, for nobody on board knew how to do so—there was nothing to be done but to allow the vessel to pursue a circular course until steam was exhausted, and she could go no further. It was idle to explain to the distinguished company that this was the course invariably adopted by Europeans, for under their noses was the graceful P. and O. steamer, a moment since ploughing along at full steam, now riding at anchor by her buoy.

So round and round went the *Lightning Bird*, to the amazement of the crews of the ships in harbour and of a large crowd gathered on the *Bund*; the brave company on board were now assured that the judgement of the gods was overtaking them for having ventured to sea in a foreign vessel, and poor Takezawa was half resolved to dispatch himself, and wholly resolved never to make such an experiment as this again.

He reviled the day when he was finally led to forsake the groove so honourably and profitably grubbed along by his fathers, and strode with hasty steps up and down the bridge, refusing to be comforted, and terrifying out of their few remaining wits the two poor fellows at the wheel. After a few circles, an English man-of-war sent a steam launch after the *Lightning Bird*, and to the intense disgust of the great Japanese people on board, who preferred to see eccentricity on the part of their countrymen, to interference by foreigners, but to the great delight of the women and rustics, who began to be rather tired of the fun, the engines were stopped. Takezawa did not hear the last of this for a long, long time; caricatures and verses were being constantly circulated bearing upon the fiasco, although it would have been as much as any man's life was worth to have taunted him openly with it. But it was a salutary lesson; and although he still kept the *Lightning Bird*, he engaged Europeans to man her, until his men proved themselves adepts, and she afterwards became one of the smartest and fastest craft on the coast. Frank Abell.



My mistress in Gainsboro' road had lost a five-pound note in the house, and the thief was the parlour-maid. I knew it from her actions, and three months after I left the house she was caught in a similar offence and owned up to the first theft.

However, the crime was laid on me, and because I made indignant and perhaps impudent protest I was sent out of the house at half-an-hour's notice and refused a character.

I was without a situation for the next three months. The first thing demanded when I applied for a place was a character.

As soon as it was found that I had none, it was useless to talk further.

It was for this reason that I finally paid a fee to a registry office in Margate Street, and was at length sent for to take a place at general housework.

It was an old man named Dyson who wanted me.

He was willing to take me without a character because he would have to pay less wages and because, as he

Digitized by Google

grimly asserted, there was nothing lying about loose in his house for one to steal. As we sat face to face I sized him up as mean and penurious, but I did not see any evil in him. He had an aged and infirm wife, he told me, and I would be the only servant.

It was not for me to pick and choose. I must have a place and keep it long enough to get a character again. I went with him miles and miles out on the Holborne road, and we at last arrived at the jerry-built and cheap-looking cottage he occupied.

It was a place devoid of almost all conveniences and had been selected for its cheap rent. I found the old wife deaf, almost blind and palsied, and it was apparent that no one bothered about her. She had become childish and petulant, and before I had been in the house half-an-hour Mr. Dyson whipped her with a strap for saying that she was hungry.

As he whipped her I saw him look at her in a way which gave me a chill. In the course of three or four days I made up my mind that he regarded her with detestation and abhorrence and was hourly hoping for her death.

I wondered that he had not pushed her downstairs or found other means to bring about an "accidental" death, but the old man was full of craft and cowardice. I soon had evidence that he was in love with a widow in the neighbourhood, or at least he desired to be free so that he could marry her. The man had no occupation and seldom left the house.

During my first two weeks in the place he never allowed me to see the wife except in his presence, and found fault if I cooked anything extra for her or expressed my sympathy. He had a way of whispering to himself, and a dozen times over I heard him say:

"I've waited for five years, but I won't wait much longer. I'll get rid of her and be happy."

My natural impulse on finding out how he felt towards his wife was to leave the house, but I have explained how I was situated. And, too, I soon got the feeling that I ought to stay to protect the poor old woman. I calculated that, while he might thirst for her death, he would not proceed to extremities while I was in the house.

It seemed as if he would have lived on alone, as he had done for the last two months, if he meditated anything of that sort. I didn't know the depth of his craft, however. He had brought me there to work her death through me. The first thing that raised my suspicion this way was one morning when he asked me to help her downstairs. The stairs were steep and shaky, and he had prised one of the steps loose, that it might slide from under our feet. As a matter of fact it did give way, but I caught myself and saved the woman. When old Dyson saw the failure of his plot, he looked chagrined and savage, and presently found an excuse for cuffing the poor wife's ears.

In the course of a couple of weeks he declared that the cellar was full of rats and gave me money and ordered me to buy arsenic. He recommended me to go to a shop miles away and to say that I wanted it for my complexion and to give my own name. I went to a chemist's only two streets away and gave his name, and when he discovered this he was highly indignant for a day, and I rather expected to be given the sack.

However, in the course of three or four days he developed another plan. After telling the old wife what to say, he left me alone with her for the first time, and she begged me to get her some laudanum for toothache and not mention the matter to him. It was easy to tell that she had been told what to say, and I refused to buy the drug.

A few days later, as I was preparing her some soup, I had to leave the kitchen for a minute. When I returned, the soup was giving out a strange odour, and, being satisfied that the husband had poisoned it, I of course threw it away. He scolded about my waste, but when I looked him square in the eyes he dropped his and had no more to say.

I had been with the Dysons five weeks when the climax came. The old woman was holding her own, if not getting better, and the husband's impatience had a savage edge to it. Their bedroom was on the north side of the house. All along on that side was a deep excavation for a factory, and the cellar was full of stones and water. From the bedroom window the distance to the cellar bottom was about thirty feet. I slept on the west side, with two rooms and two doors between us, but so poorly built was the house that if voices were raised above a whisper they could be heard, and there were also many cracks and crevices to peer through. At ten o'clock one night I lay wondering if he really meant to take her life and how he would finally accomplish it when I heard a half-suppressed scream from his room. I got softly out of bed and went to the further door, and, looking through a crack, I saw that the window was up and that he stood before it with his wife in his arms. She was hanging on to him with fingers of steel, and making a great struggle. I heard him breathing heavily and snarling and growling as he tore her fingers loose, but I did not know what he meant to do till of a sudden he staggered to the open window and flung her out. She screamed as she went to her death, and in my fright I echoed the scream. I remember the man rushing across the room at me, his dashing open the door, his striking me down, and then came darkness which lasted for weeks. He struck me with a piece of iron and fractured my skull. He then carried my body downstairs and carried it a quarter of a mile away, and flung it into another excavation.

Before taking me from the house he put on my hat and cloak, and thus it appeared to those who found my unconscious body next morning that I had been coming home the night before and fallen into the pit. As to his wife, he gave the alarm and brought the police and made out that it was a case of suicide. While he was fast asleep, as he claimed, she had stolen to the window and leapt to her death.

His story was believed, and it was seven months before there was any contradiction. I had a fractured skull, brain fever and pneumonia and for weeks and weeks lay as one dead. When I mended, my memory was confused, and it was seven months before I told my story and put the police on the track.

Long before that Dyson had married the widow and sailed for America, and though efforts were made to find him, nothing came of them. Never did a man deserve the hangman's rope more, and yet, if living to-day, he is free and has no fear of the law.

C. B. Lewis.

Digitized by Google

BY THE HEAD OF A MANDARIN.

In Three Parts.

BY SADI GRANT.

PART II.

Li Ki Fo was no inexperienced adventurer; he had shot bears in the Caucasus, speared salmon in Norway, and hunted wild boar in the plains of the Punjaub; he was as hard as iron, and as callous as a graven image. Of fear he knew nothing, and merely regarded Death itself as an unpleasant but necessary evil. He had been *attaché* at two or three different capitals of Europe, and so was much more large-minded than most of his countrymen. He saw the other countries were more advanced in civilisation, but for all that he preferred his own—in no country of Europe could a nobleman be so completely a law to himself as in China, the high court-officers cared little for law and law's restrictions. In the Castle of Amoy, Li Lang Hi was a king to all intents and purposes, and absolute master of the lives of the dependents on his vast estates. Save for one thing, the life of a Chinese Mandarin was delightfully unfettered. And that one thing was the Queen Empress. If she swooped down on any official, however high in rank, there was nothing to do but to submit. Many a rich and powerful nobleman had she reduced to poverty, and the Imperial Treasury calmly absorbed his estates; she took and restored yellow jackets as it pleased her, and snatched away peacocks' feathers with the most heartless unconcern. One or two stiffnecked Mandarins had been known to object to Her Majesty's all-embracing greed and tyranny, but they were immediately sent a long-bladed knife "with the compliments of the Emperor"—a hint to commit suicide they dared not disobey. If they had, it would have meant a degrading public execution. So the condemned nobleman called his friends together and before them all stabbed himself to death. Then his bones were kept with his ancestors, and no disgrace was attached to the family.

Members of the Chinese Embassies who were supposed to have attached themselves too much to foreign ways and customs had been known to receive the fatal gift. Li Ki Foo himself at one time seemed to have a chance of it. But, before deciding on his execution, the Queen Empress had him appointed to her personal service for a month, and, luckily for him, his stalwart form and splendid muscles found favour in her sight; also she thought that no one so perfectly wooden in demeanour, and with such extremely sloping eyes, could be anything but thoroughly Chinese. So Li Ki Foo passed the ordeal safely, and was permitted to still exist, but the near shave he had had to commanded suicide made him rather bitter in his thoughts about the Celestial lady. He pitied the young Emperor, and was a secret partisan of his; but the Emperor's friends must wait their time—it was hopeless to do anything in his favour while the Queen Empress held by bribes and rewards the greater part of the nobility on her side.

The old Mandarin had this afternoon toddled off to his head wife's apartments, to consult with her on the advisability of Li Ki Foo going to Tartary. She was the chief woman in the household since the death of the Mandarin's mother. She was immensely fat, and had a round face like a full moon, in which her sloping eyes were nearly buried; but she was quite satisfied with her own appearance, and so was her husband—excessive fat is a beauty in China. She wore a jacket and trousers of pale blue satin, much embroidered.

In China women always dress like this, and the men often wear a straight, narrow petticoat, exactly the reverse of what men and women do in Europe. Her feet were simply stumps, nothing is so ugly as a Chinese lady's foot; in childhood the small bones of the foot are broken and the foot itself doubled up till it is simply a shapeless lump, and has no shape of a foot whatever. It slopes very slightly out from the ankle, and is nearly as broad as it is long. The very smallest push would upset a Chinese lady, for they have no surface worth speaking of to stand on at all. Li Lang Hi spent most of his afternoons with this head wife, and was guided much more by her judgment than he would have liked to admit. His favourite sofa was always ready for him, a most comfortable old pair of quilted yellow silk slippers stood waiting to be put on; he could lie and smoke in silence or talk as his wishes directed. A Chinese wife seldom contradicts her husband, or starts subjects of conversation he disapproves of. This afternoon Mi Cheng sat in her downy chair with a piece of elaborate embroidery in her hand, listening with deep interest to the tale of Li Ham's delinquencies.

"'Tis indeed a large sum, O Li Lang Hi," she said at last. "Ten thousand taels for the deliverance of that idle and shallow-pated young man."

Li Lang Hi groaned again.

"Thou speakest but too truly, Mi Cheng, it is an entire fortune of which this robber would deprive me, yet what can I do? It is not meet that the bones of a son of a Mandarin so highly placed as myself should be lost to posterity."

"What says Li Ki Foo?" said Mi Cheng.

"He!" said the Mandarin, scornfully, "he seeks only to make it an occasion for a visit to Tartary, himself."

"And how so?" said Mi Cheng.

"Li Ki Foo purposes," said the old man, "to take himself the ransom to Kin Sin, to the agent of this robber Ku, and he pretends that if this mission is intrusted to him he can, by the wiles he learnt in Europe no doubt, so arrange that Li Ham may go free and yet the ransom be unpaid, or if paid, recovered from the agent."

"Ha!" said Mi Cheng, "in that idea there may be some grains of his father's wisdom."

Li Lang Hi had not looked at it in this light before.

"It seems to me," he said, "that in letting two sons go I risk two ransoms for two sons."

"Thy words are wise, O Mandarin," said Mi Cheng, "yet is 10,000 taels a large sum to pay away without any hope of recovery."

"Also Li Ki Foo is my eldest and best-loved son," said the Mandarin. "I like it not that he should imperil his life."

Digitized by Google

Now, Mi Cheng had also two sons, younger than Li Ki Foo; she bore no ill-will personally to the eldest son, but human nature provides that one's own sons are dearer than stepsons. Should the Tartar Chief dispatch both Li Ki Foo and Li Ham to a better land than China, who was Mi Cheng to grumble at the fate that made an eldest son of Feng Lo? But she must not say this, nor give a hint that such thoughts were in her mind. So she only said:

"Truly Li Ki Foo is a young man of great promise and the staff of thy manhood, O Li Lang Hi."

"What dost thou counsel?" said the old man; "thinkest thou this is a dangerous venture?"

"Who am I, O Li," said Mi Cheng humbly, "to seek to direct thy thoughts? I am but an ignorant woman, yet methinks I have heard that there is a garrison of many Chinese soldiers at Leh, on the Great Wall, and also some troops at Kin Sin itself."

"What meanest thou by that?" said the Mandarin.

"But this, O Li Lang Hi—where soldiers are, there cannot be so much danger for thy son, Li Ki Foo, to venture. He can command an escort from the Chief Commandant."

"That is true," said the Mandarin thoughtfully.

"Yet do I not counsel this journey, O Mandarin," said Mi Cheng, "far be it from me to propose that danger should approach the most excellent and noble Li Ki Foo. Yet is ten thousand taels a large sum of money."

Then she embroidered in silence while Li Lang Hi weighed chances and possibilities in his own mind, smoking his amber pipe. On the evening of the next day he sent for his son, and formally gave him permission to go to Tartary; also, he remitted him an order on his bankers at Pekin for fourteen thousand taels, of which four thousand were for the expenses of the journey.

"This sum of money," said his father, "I give into your charge. It is a large amount to draw at one time. Should you be able to deliver Li Ham without enriching the Tartar Chief, do so, and I promise you, O my son, it will not be forgotten in days to come. After my death the ten thousand taels will be found added to thy original fortune, over and above what I now purpose for thy share."

"I thank thee, O my father," said Li Ki Foo. "I trust thy treasury will not lose the money; it shall not if diplomacy of mine can compass its safety."

"When wilt thou go?" said the Mandarin.

"To-morrow at dawn," said Li Ki Foo. "I will now give orders to my servant, Ah Cheh, that he shall make things ready, and before the morning mist melts on the China Sea I shall be far from the Castle of Amoy."

"May peace and success go with thee, O my son," said the old Mandarin; "yet it is a journey I like not, as I have before said. That thy life should be risked for that ne'er-do-well, Li Ham, is contrary to the dictates of my heart; yet have I consented to thy going, O Li Ki Foo; have a care for thyself and rather let the ten thousand taels enrich the steppes of Tartary than that thy life should be lost."

So Li Ki Foo made his preparations, which, indeed, were mostly already completed by the invaluable Ah Cheh, and the next morning, when the dawn sprang up in the far east, an armed escort was waiting outside the great gates of Amoy. Soon Li Ki Foo came out, clad in a neat riding costume of tan-coloured stuff, and with European riding boots to his knee. Ah Cheh followed him, dressed in much the same manner. The door closed gently after them, and with no further farewells they mounted and rode away, across the rough, short grass of the plain, away from the high road along the coast, taking a short cut known to Ah Cheh, straight from Amoy to the great Wall of China.

The time of year was pleasant for a long expedition. In the morning a cold wind blew over the plains and swept the sand up in clouds, in the belts of forest land the same wind sighed in the pine branches and carpeted the ground with fallen needles. For four days Li Ki Foo and his escort rode, only stopping at wayside inns for rest and refreshment; on the fifth morning they saw the long line of the Great Wall in front of them and knew their journey was nearly over. The square towers and turned-up corners of the houses of Leh stood out against the morning sky. On the journey

Mi Cheng sat in her chair listening to the tale of Li Ham's delinquencies.

Li Ki Foo had told Ah Cheh the reason of his journey—now he called him to his side and said:

"The Agent of Ku, the Tartar, is not to meet me until we arrive at Kin Sin, yet it is likely there are spies of his watching, even at Leh; therefore, Ah Cheh, will I ride into the town with only one attendant. Do you take the other men and follow in two hours' time."

"May I not be the one attendant that remains at my lord's side?" said Ah Cheh.

"Nay," said Li Ki Foo; "I wish none to know that thou art my trusted counsellor, else spies would also be set on thee. To-night, after dark, find out my lodging, and I will arrange my plans with thee further, but only a man of the escort must accompany me on arrival. Also, O Ah Cheh, go thou to the Office of the Post and ask there for a packet for me sent by special messenger from Pekin. That bring to me at night."

Ah Cheh assented and fell back. His master called up one of the escort, remarkable for nothing but his height and strength, then with him he rode on alone to

Digitized by Google

the gates of Leh. There was a considerable garrison of soldiers there just then, as Li Ki Foo knew, and after dismounting and engaging a room at the principal inn, he sent a messenger to the Commander of the Barracks, a man he had met often before, asking him to come

They mounted and rode away.

down, and see him as soon as he could. Li Ki Foo's plan was this; he meant to engage a large force of soldiers and irregular fighting men, these were to follow him to Kin Sin and remain there under the command of Ah Cheh, unless he could induce the Commandant to take up the matter thoroughly and command the expedition himself. This, he was afraid, he could not do, for the Government was very chary of interfering with the Tartar Chiefs, and unless the Commandant received official orders from headquarters, it was very doubtful if he would dare to come to the front himself. It would be easy for him, however, in the slack state of discipline in the Chinese army, to send two or three hundred men under a stranger's command, while he pretended ignorance of their having gone. The Commandant came down to see Li Ki Foo in the evening and they discussed the matter fully over a tasty Chow-Chow stew, made of two of those charming little yellow dogs you sometimes see as pets in England. The Commandant took the greatest interest in the expedition.

"I deeply regret, my friend," he said, "that I cannot myself command it, but it is well known that the General of this Division is on good terms with the Tartars, and it is even said, receives protection money fram Takal, a chief even greater than Ku, Had he done so from Ku, I could not have helped you at all, but as it is, three hundred soldiers shall be at your orders or at the orders of Ah Cheh to-morrow. You will, I presume, give some reward?"

"They need have no fears on that score," said Li Ki Foo, "a thousand taels shall be divided among them if they accomplish my design."

"That design I do not yet know," said the Commandant.

"No," said Li Ki Foo laughing, "because, O most honourable one, it is yet unhatched in my brain. When I get to Kin Sin and have met the Tartar's agent, I must try some means to get to the place where my brother is lying a prisoner, then I can settle with Ah Cheh when he is to bring up the soldiers and make the attack."

"It is a risky undertaking," said the Commandant; "small chance is there of your escape should you be in the Tartar's power when the troops arrive."

"I can but die once," said Li Ki Foo carelessly.

Later in the evening Ah Cheh came in. He had put up the rest of the escort at a small hostelry quite the other side of the town, and though the men wondered they said nothing. Crooked and mysterious ways are too common in China to excite much notice.

Ah Cheh brought with him a small, carefully packed wooden case, and this he delivered into his master's hand.

"It arrived but yester even, my lord," said Ah Cheh.

"'Tis well," said Li Ki Foo, taking it carefully from him, "it is an important item in my plan of campaign. Listen, O Ah Cheh, for I must confide to you all that I intend. From here I go to Kin Sin, with still only the one attendant, to meet the agent of the Tartar chief. I carry an order on the Bank of Leh for ten thousand taels; it will take the agent time to remove so large a sum, and till it is removed, they will, of course, keep Li Ham a close prisoner. My plan is this: I will send greeting to the Robber Chief and say, that being a great traveller in many lands, I desire also to see an encampment of a wandering tribe. Therefore I ask him, of his courtesy, to allow me to journey to his tents, to the place where my brother is confined, and there to stay till the ten thousand taels are in his possession."

"And my lord will so risk his precious life!" exclaimed Ah Cheh, in horror. "What possible chance can either thou, or thy honourable brother, Li Ham, have of escaping their clutches? Do I surround the camp with armed men the chief will avenge himself at once by putting you both to death."

"In this box lies the magic that will preserve us alive, O Ah Cheh," said Li Ki Foo, "have no fear for us. Can I but gain an entrance to the camp where my brother lies a prisoner all will go well."

Ah Cheh looked suspiciously at the box; he knew that in Europe Li Ki Foo had studied chemistry, for he had often been much disgusted at finding the apartments occupied by him at Amoy and at Pekin contaminated by the odour of gases and chemicals; no doubt, he thought, this box had something to do with chemicals, and his opinion of it did not rise on that account. However, he only committed himself to a contemptuous grunt as an expression of opinion.

"To-morrow," said his master, "I go to Kin Sin; you and the soldiers will follow in two days. When there you can have another interview with me, or, should I have left the place, you will find a letter, giving you full instructions, left by me at the inn where I shall have stayed. The most probable order will be that you should at once march out, with all the force you can command, and surround the Tartar encampment by

Digitized by Google

night, as silently and secretly as you can. Then, as soon as daylight dawns, attack it. Li Ham and I will take our chance of being alive when you have succeeded in taking it."

"And what of the money?" said Ah Cheh, "the ten thousand taels?"

"They will not yet have arrived at the Tartar's camp," said Li Ki Foo. "I shall tell the manager of the bank here to accept my written order for the money, which will be given him by the Tartar agent, but to delay paying it for a fortnight, giving as a reason that he cannot collect so large a sum in less time."

"The plan is well thought out," said Ah Cheh, "save only that the Tartar chief may kill both thou and Li Ham as soon as he sees both in his power."

"Of that we must take the risk," said Li Ki Foo. "I think myself that when Ku once sees the order for the money, and learns that it is accepted by the banker at Leh, his mind will be set at rest, and he will guard us but lightly and treat us as honoured guests. That is what I would do in his place."

"That may be so," said Ah Cheh, "but thou, my lord, art not a Tartar savage."

"Well," said Li Ki Foo impatiently, "he must treat us as he lists. The venture must be made. Do thy part, Ah Cheh, as well as thy work is always done, and if thou findest naught but corpses to carry back to Amoy, thy conscience is clear, thou hast warned me."

There was nothing further to be said, and Ah Cheh went away, not exactly sorrowing, but rather enraged at his master's obstinacy and ill-advised rashness. Still his orders were plain; so he collected all the men he could together, in addition to the three hundred soldiers from the fort and his own small troop. He managed to engage about eighty more desperate-looking ruffians, who fought for anyone who would pay them, and were especially useful in removing inconvenient relatives of wealthy families.

Many a respectable citizen, on his way home from a peaceful gamble with a friend, had been relieved of his winnings on the way at some dark street corner, and many a lovely but frail and frivolous maiden had had her cries quenched by them for ever in the dark waters of the swift Hoang-Ho.

They fought for money, but they loved fighting for fighting's sake up here in the North; they were not like their faint-hearted brethren of Corea and Formosa. Civilisation had scarcely crept so far as Leh; they lived, as their ancestors lived hundreds of years ago, by rapine and murder, by lawless fighting with the Tartar tribes.

Li Ki Foo could have asked for no better supporters than these brawny, brown sons of Anak, with hairy chests and mighty limbs.

Ah Cheh assembled all his troops together, and told them the reason of their mission was to deliver Li Ham, the son of a powerful Mandarin, from the power of Ku the Tartar. He told them his plan of surprising the Tartar camp in the early morning, and ended his speech by promising the (to them) huge sum of 1,000 taels, to be divided in case of victory, to say nothing of the loot of the Tartar camps. Grunts of satisfaction rose from all; this was truly a promising raid.

So, two days after his master had left Leh for Kin Sin, Ah Cheh and his followers took the same road, not all together, for fear of attracting attention, but by companies of tens and twenties. On arriving at Kin Sin, Ah Cheh hastened at once to the inn where Li Ki Foo had stopped, and was handed a letter left behind for him. Li Ki Foo's prophecies had been fulfilled, the agent had met him and taken the order for the money, only the agent was no agent at all, but the Tartar chief himself, Ku, of the Lusan tribe. No one but himself could be trusted with such a delicate business. When Li Ki Foo had proceeded to express his desire to pay a visit to the tribe, he had been met with the greatest friendliness. True, Ku did not declare his name and rank in so dangerous a place, but he assured Li Ki Foo of Ku's goodwill and offered to be his guide to the camp.

"In that case who will receive the money from the Bank at Leh?" said Li Ki Foo sharply.

"That can wait," said the pretending agent magnificently. "Rather would my master wait for the money for ever than miss showing hospitality to so learned a traveller and so honourable a nobleman."

Also Ku was by no means indifferent to the fact that by getting Li Ki Foo into his camp he got security for another ransom.

"What fools are these travellers," said Ku to himself. "The shadow of the West has fallen on his brain. It is a deed worthy of a mad Englishman."

Still, he was by no means loth to profit by the mid-summer madness of a rich man's son. A doubt crossed his mind if Li Ki Foo were indeed so foolish as he seemed. He had watched his entry into Kin Sin with but one follower, still, more might be behind; it would be best to get him off to Tartary without delay.

"Lies the camp of the Lusan tribe far from here?" said Li Ki Foo.

"But three days' ride, honoured one," said the Chief;

"You will, I presume, give some reward?"

"straight to the rising sun, turning neither to the north or south."

"Good," said Li Ki Foo. "I will but go to my chamber and set together a few garments for the journey, then am I ready to set forth."

(To be concluded.)

Digitized by Google

SHORT STORIES ABOUT CAMELS.

We devote, every week, two pages of *Short Stories* to pithy, humorous anecdotes similar to those which appear in these columns. A prize of £1 1s. will be sent to the reader who submits the best storyette this week, and a copy of "The Key of the Holy House," by Albert Lee, to each of those whose attempts are used. The anecdotes may be either original or selected; in the latter case the source *must* be stated. The prize of One Guinea offered for the best Storyette in this competition has been won this week by Mr. H. E. Luck, of 19 Cleveland Road, Chichester. Attempts this week must deal with Stories about TORTOISES, and must reach the Storyette Editor, *Short Stories* Office, Henrietta Street, Strand, London, W.C., by Monday, December 10th. Post-cards only, please.

Genuine Camel Hair.

MR. BOWSER has been on a visit to Egypt, and that is why nothing has been heard of him for a week or two.

It has now leaked out that while in the land of the Pharaohs he elected to have his portrait painted, seated on a camel, with the hoary Pyramids for a background, and he accordingly engaged an artist and hired a trusty Arab to attend with his camel.

The appointed hour arrived, and Mr. Bowser perched himself gingerly on the camel, and tried to look as much like an Arab sheik as his modern get-up would allow; but the result was not altogether happy.

The artist, however, got to work, but had scarcely made half-a-dozen strokes when the camel, giving vent to a terrible shriek, started off at a rapid, lumbering gait across the desert, with Mr. Bowser clinging round the animal's neck, and the Arab in hot pursuit.

When the ship of the desert dropped anchor at its home, some five miles or so away, Mr. Bowser had just breath enough to gasp:

"W-what's the matter with the brute?"

"Him full ob grief, sah," replied the Arab solemnly. "Him rec'nised his mother's hair in the painter-man's brush, sah!"

H. E. L.

The "Camels" are Coming.

AT a recent review, as the skirl of the bagpipes broke forth, a little girl, hearing some remarks by her elders, strained eagerly forward, and, without deigning to look at the kilted Highlanders as they swung past, kept her eyes fixed in the direction whence they advanced.

As the last soldier passed she burst into sobs.

Her mother eagerly and sympathetically inquired the cause of her grief, and the child answered:

"You said just now 'Oh, the camels are coming!' and there wasn't one; not even a monkey went past us."

C. G. F. G.

Action and Re-action.

SOME time ago the Ordnance Select Committee assembled to test the feasibility of firing mountain-guns direct from a camel's back.

A gun was strapped to a cradle fastened to the camel's jack-saddle. The animal was led to the test ground, followed by a crowd of interested military experts.

The gun was loaded and sighted, and the camel stood with its tail to the target. A slow match was then lighted.

As soon as the camel heard the hissing it turned round, and those behind had their interests intensified in the experiments by considerations affecting their own safety.

Some lay prone, and speedy but not dignified movements were the order of the day. When the bang came the camel went in one direction and the shot in another, proving that action and re-action are opposite and equal.

M. L.

Cruel.

A WOMAN who lived in the country went to London to see a circus. While the mid-day procession was in progress a camel was taking up the rear.

When it was passing by the woman, she observed the keeper hitting it with a stick. Running up to him she exclaimed:

"You cruel brute! Look at those two bruises you have already made on its back." W. P. P.

Revenge!

A VALUABLE camel working in an old mill in South Africa was beaten by its driver. Seeing that the camel had treasured up the injury, and was waiting a favourable chance for revenge, he kept a strict watch upon the animal.

Time passed away. The camel, knowing that he was watched, was quiet and obedient, and the driver began to think that the beating was forgotten, when one night, after several months had gone by, the man was sleeping on a raised platform in the mill, and the camel was stabled in another corner.

Happening to awaken, the driver saw, by the bright moonlight, that when all was quiet the animal looked cautiously around, rose softly, and stealing towards a spot where a bundle of clothes and a bernouse thrown carelessly on the ground resembled a sleeping figure, cast itself with violence upon them, rolling with all its weight, and tearing them most viciously with its teeth.

Satisfied that its revenge was complete, the camel was returning to its corner, when the driver sat up and spoke.

At the sound of his voice, and realising the mistake it had made, the animal was so mortified at the failure and discovery of its scheme, that it dashed its head against the wall and died on the spot.

W. J. B.

Digitized by Google

What It Was!

THE little hamlet was roused out of its usual apathetic state by an event which had never happened before within the memory of the oldest inhabitant. A small travelling circus was passing through the village.

Bringing up the rear of the caravans was a miserable looking camel. The natives were much exercised in their minds as to what this strange creature could be.

In the absence of the minister (they could get nothing out of the showman), the only one who could enlighten them was the old dominie.

That dignitary was promptly fetched.

Peering through his spectacles at the camel, he remarked:

"There are but two creatures I have never seen—a scorpion and a crocodile. This animal must be either one or the other.

E. C. L.

Entangled.

A MENAGERIE camel, like a captive balloon, never gets far from its tether, and is subjected to so many indignities in its daily life that its kingly heart must ofttimes come nigh to breaking.

When Barnum's show was in Barnsley last year, one of the keepers noticed a collier viciously prodding a recumbent camel with a long stick.

"Steady on, there," he cried, as the pained animal struggled clumsily to its feet. "Let the poor beast alone, can't you? What harm is he doing you?"

The collier dropped his stick and assumed a bewildered expression.

"Guv'nor, hev all camels got four legs?" he asked tremulously.

"Of course, they have, you chump."

"Then Ah'm goin' artside to kick mesen. Ah wor thinkin' abart ostriches when Ah bet Bill 'Iggins they'd only two!"

R. A. H. G.

So He Lost the Case.

"I ONCE had a case," said a member of the Bar "against a man in the country, which was as clear as daylight in my favour, but, by the cunning of the lawyer, he had continued to avoid coming to trial for about two years.

"At last the case was called, late in the term and late one hot day, with the court and jury tired and impatient.

"I stated the facts, and produced the evidence, which was all on my side.

"The judge asked the counsel whether they wished to argue the case, stating that he hardly thought it necessary to submit it on so plain a matter.

"The lawyers agreed to submit it without argument. The jury went out, and immediately returned with a verdict for the defendant.

"As soon as the court adjourned I sought the foreman of the jury, and asked him how in the name of common sense they came to render such a verdict.

"'Why, you see,' said he, 'we didn't think much of the lawyer against you, and it wasn't strange he had nothing to say; but we thought you one of the smartest lawyers in the country, and if you couldn't find something to say on your side it must be a pretty hard case if we had to go against you.'"

WHAT WOULD YOU DO WITH £1,000?

Supposing—only supposing, of course—that you came into possession of £1,000 sterling, what would you do with it? How would you begin?

Probably, if you have a banking account, you would first of all put the £1,000 into it, and then take a deep breath and look around you to see how you could best utilise it.

If you haven't got a banking account, you very soon *would* have one. Then, what would you do? Would you go into a bigger house, spend all the money, and live in luxury for a year?

Or would you live just as you are and invest the money and spend the interest, leaving the capital untouched?

Or would you go for a long holiday on the Continent? Or, if you propose to double the £1,000, how would you go to work?

Write your views on this point, and send them to the Editor of *Pearson's Weekly*, Henrietta Street, London, W.C., in an envelope marked "THOUSAND," to arrive not later than Tuesday, December 11th.

A Columbia Graphophone will be sent to the person from whom we receive what we consider to be the best and most sensible answer.

Well, What Do You Think of the "Twenty Teazer"?

ISN'T IT A LITTLE RASCAL?
CAN YOU DO IT?
CAN YOUR FRIENDS DO IT?

It is One of the most Teazing Teazers that ever Teazed a Teazed Public.

It is not much to look at. You would think there was nothing in it. You would think you could do it on your head in the dark. But you can't.

You sit down at a table after tea with the "Twenty Teazer" in front of you, and you say to your wife, "Now, just time me, and see how quickly I can do this alleged 'Teazer!'" And then you begin.

About two in the morning your wife comes down in her dressing-gown with a candle to find you grovelling on the ground with your coat off and your collar undone, hunting round for the fifth square block of wood which you are convinced must have been in the box.

But you are wrong; there are only four, and the "Teazer" *can* be unteazed.

One point, however, you should bear in mind, that it is not necessary for the numerals to be all facing the same way. Some of them may be upside down, others may be end on, just as you fancy.

THE PRICE IS SIXPENCE,

and you can get it from any newsagent or bookstall clerk.

You can try to do it in the train, or on the 'bus, at home, or up in a balloon, or anywhere except in your bath. Even there you can do it if you can keep the water steady.

The "Twenty Teazer" won't wash clothes; is not a tobacco or a carpet-sweeper; doesn't bark or bite or try to borrow money from you. It simply consists of four harmless little squares of wood in a neat little oblong box.

Digitized by Google

"Market Jemmy."

He put it down carefully. There was a suggestion of stealthiness in the action which puzzled me. It was a small neat volume bound in dark leather.

"A pound, sir?" he queried, making interrogation points of his eyes.

Whilst he busied himself over my order I was staring at the little duodecimo which lay half-hidden behind the scales.

There was a look about it which seemed to be familiar. In the roar of the Great City it awoke memories of the cloister, the chapel and the quad.

It lay upon its side, exposing to view a smooth brown surface which age had darkened, and use had polished, but giving no hint of its author, and suggesting no word of its contents.

He handed me the fruit, and I tendered him a coin. In searching for change, the volume got pushed forward beyond the point where, covered by the scales, it had lain in partial concealment; and on the two inches of bevelled back now revealed, I read the legend in gilt letters, QUINTUS HORATIO FLACCUS.

I looked hard at the man who was counting pence into my extended palm—I looked and was disappointed.

In his face I saw nothing that would differentiate him from his brethren—from the mass of the great brotherhood who make their living in the street.

"Surely," thought I, "a barrowman who can read Horace in the original ought to carry some sign thereof on his forehead."

My friend did nothing of the kind.

"Clean but commonplace," was the mental comment I passed upon his features, "Eyes, dull and watery, lips loose; nostrils wide and spreading, cheeks flabby."

Outwardly the man was a disappointment.

"Thanks!" he ejaculated, as the last penny fell into my hand and closed the transaction in cherries.

I glanced at the book on the barrow.

"Horace?" I murmured curiously, looking at the man with grave and serious eyes, "Horace?" He smiled, and, for a moment I caught a glimpse of another personality.

The man who had been crying "cherries! all ripe, foppence a paound," was not the man who was standing there smiling at me. My curiosity increased mightily.

"We're old friends," he volunteered. "But I don't desire to advertise it."

He picked up the book and slipped it into his pocket.

A policeman came along—the barrow was "loitering"—the officer sauntered up. Our colloquy was broken off just as it promised to become interesting. The man had a story to tell. I turned away unsatisfied.

* * * * *

A week had elapsed before I met "Horace" again. When I pulled up and requested "a pound," his features betrayed no intelligence, and in vain I looked for the little brown volume which had provoked my curiosity.

The preliminary "bit o' business" concluded, I reminded him that we had "traded" before.

"Yes," he said. "I remember you now."

My glance had been wandering over basket and board. He noticed it and added, "I had a friend with me, I think, on that occasion."

"You had," I replied in a voice and with a smile that was intended to invite confidence, "a mutual friend."

"So I reckoned," he laughed.

"Well, I'm thinking you won't see us in company again, Mister."

"Indeed!"

"No." He shook his head emphatically. "It was a mighty piece of folly to bring him to the city. Yet, believe me, I wasn't aware of his presence till I found him hiding in the pocket of my jacket. I ought to have let him stay there. But I've learnt my lesson——"

"Cherries, marm!" he broke off, as a lady stopped in front of the barrow, and I pondered over the traces of culture which had mostly marked his utterance.

"Yes," he resumed, when his customer had taken her departure, "I'm a street-hawker by'r leave, sir——a man in the gutter. And, what business pray has a 'coster' to be seen thumbing his Horace? What do you think?" and he looked up in my face with a smile that was curious and suggestive.

"I think I understand you," I said. We walked up Moorgate Street, our talk growing more confidential. At the corner of Finsbury Square he stopped. "I turn back here," he said, "and go down on the other side. I'm working the Moorfields beat to-day. Meet me to-morrow—eight p.m. You know where. Ask for 'Market Jemmy.'"

* * * * *

It was at a coffee-tavern near Farringdon Street that my fruit merchant told me the story which I have set down below.

"Yes," said he, settling himself in a quiet corner, and producing an aged-looking briar. "Yes, my friend, you guessed right. I was a Public School boy, and am a 'Varsity man. I took a double-first at Oxford; and am entitled to write M.A. at the end of my name. What that name is, is of no consequence to-day. It's long since I answered to it. But in common justice to you, sitting here 'hob and nob' with a man picked off the street, I will say at once that I've never been 'wanted.' No, friend, drink has been my curse. Cards have been my ruin.

"Ten years ago I locked away the memories that lie behind eighty three, and vowed never to open the chamber containing them again. That life has been lived, has ended, and may now be forgotten.

"Of the past, therefore, you must be content to know only, that the depth of my fall may be measured by the fact that while still under thirty, I was first assistant-master at a leading grammar school in a northern county; yet before I had reached thirty-five, I had become an outcast, and a wanderer, and three years later was selling fruit from a barrow.

"Would it surprise you very much to hear that that was really the first step in the process of 'unwinding the accursed chain?'

"I was living at a lodging-house in the Borough. On the same floor lodged a young woman whose husband had deserted her. She worked at a pickle factory. But her health was bad and she could never make full time. Her door was opposite mine. She had one child—a girl,

Digitized by Google

a pretty little flaxen-haired thing of three. The mother was a quiet, well-behaved woman whose lines had fallen in the roughest places. At times her face wore a look of anguish which distressed me to see. But she never complained. The complaints of the poor are seldom heeded. Even the children learn to suffer in silence.

"During the winter I got into the habit of knocking at Mrs. Martin's door to inquire if I could bring in anything for her.

"The little maid always ran to climb on my knee or play bo-peep with the skirts of my coat. I still drank when in funds, but was not often the worse for liquor. You see, I could carry a cargo in those days that would have 'laid out' many another man. My neighbour, I don't think, had ever seen me properly drunk.

"I always avoided her when the fit was on. Her husband had ill-used her in drink, and she would tremble like a leaf at the sound of a drunken step upon the stairs.

"One evening, after a day spent in bed to sleep off a carouse—I'd been doing a bit of penny-a-lining at odd times, you must know, for a popular journal out Fleet Street way; but had got the 'bullet' the week before, and was 'keeping it up.' My report of a certain function which I was supposed to have attended was found to contain but one half-pennyworth of fact to a most intolerable deal of imagination. Not to put too fine a point on it, I'd been on the 'bend' and vamped up a report. It was the second time of offending; and, very properly, my name was removed from the contributor's list.

"Well, one evening at the end of this drunken week, I knocked as usual at Mrs. Martin's door, and, turning the handle softly, went in.

"The fire was just a glimmer in the grate, and the room was in semi-darkness. On the floor, the child was playing with some reels.

"'Mammy seep!' she lisped, getting on her feet and running towards me. But stopping half-way, she eyed me curiously, and muttering 'Bad man you's dwunk!' went back to her play. It was the severest rebuke I ever received. An infantile voice, four simple words, and the turning upon me of a childish figure, had cut me to the quick.

"'Can I get anything for you, Mrs. Martin?' I whispered huskily, eager to escape from the room.

"There was no response, and I drew nearer to the bed. 'Aren't you well?' I said, bending over it.

"The sight I saw sobered me in an instant.

"'Mammy seep,' murmured the child, pulling at my coat.

"The woman had lain down in the afternoon to snatch a little rest. Her cough, always troublesome at night, seldom allowed her to get even an hour of unbroken slumber; and often, after spending the morning at the pickle factory she would return home exhausted, and, throwing herself on the bed, fall asleep from sheer weariness.

"She had evidently done so on this occasion. But a blood-vessel on the lungs had given way—p'raps during a fit of coughing, p'raps in an attempt to change her position—and she had been suffocated; probably before she knew what had happened.

"Well, my friend," continued 'Market Jemmy,' after a few slow and solemn puffs at his pipe, "that is now seven years ago, and not a drop of liquor have I tasted since.

"The child—little Milly—was my salvation. Nobody in the house knew anything of the mother. In London tenement-houses, the inmates, often enough, are a mystery to each other. They come and go, passing each other daily on the same staircase, each mounted by their own familiars, and each bearing their own burden. Very seldom are they curious to probe the secret of each other's lives. The struggle for existence consumes all their energies. The present hour claims all their attention. Only when death steps in is the current turned backward, and guesses hazarded concerning the antecedents of the individual who has 'gone over.'

"Mrs. Martin had been living on my landing for eighteen months but beyond the fact that she had come from Devonshire—poor soul! from the fern-clad combes of leafy Devon to the squalid streets of sordid Southwark—and that her husband had left her; beyond this, nothing whatever was known about her. Plenty of hands, however, were held out to take charge of little Milly.

"Many of them, prompted only by the sweet charity which the poor show to the poor—a few, actuated by motives which, to say the least, were open to suspicion. But she clung to me, and I claimed her; and verily, I believe I should have gone right under in double quick time had another taken her and not I.

"A month later I started out with the barrow to work for her—for her I am living—for her I am saving—for her sake I abstain.

"Live with me?—with 'Market Jemmy.' Heaven forbid! No, friend, Milly's at school. The girl shall have her chance, as I had mine. Heaven send, she make a better use of it.

"After much searching I discovered a throughly good middle-class establishment kept by a widow and daughter in a small town twenty miles from London. I interested them in the girl, and they agreed to take her as a boarder. On the first Sunday in every month I pay her a visit. She calls me 'uncle.' Last week she wrote to remind me that she would be 'eleven' before she saw me again. No," he said, replying to a question; and I fancied I could detect a shade of bitterness in the tone, "I have no ambitions for her. The future lies on the knees of the gods."

He rose from his seat and reached for his hat.

"The wind bloweth where it listeth," he said abruptly, "and no man knoweth—the course that a woman will take, or how far she will go.

"Milly has the promise of beauty," he added quietly, proceeding to refill the aged briar from an ancient pouch; murmuring slowly, as he pressed the tobacco into the bowl with his thumb:

"No, I have no illusions. 'The wine of life is drawn, and the mere lees is left this vault to brag of.'"

We parted at the door; and I walked home under the starry mantle of the night, silent and wondering.

H. Hunter.

OUR NEXT GREAT SERIAL
WILL BE BY LOUIS TRACY,
AND WILL BE ENTITLED
"THE LOST LADY DELIA."

It starts in the CHRISTMAS DOUBLE NUMBER of *SHORT STORIES*, and is of intense human interest.

It is written in a crisp and sparkling manner, and is calculated to hold the attention of the reader from the first to the last chapter.

Digitized by Google

LOVE'S GUIDING HAND.

"I'm very sorry, sir, but I'm a poor woman, and depend upon my lodgers for my living. I can't afford to let the bill run on any longer. You must either settle it to-morrow, or find other rooms."

The two, to whom the lodging house-keeper spoke, exchanged glances, in which there was mingled a world of despair.

The woman observed, and her somewhat unsympathetic face unbent a little.

"I don't want to be hard on you," she added. "As nice a lady or gentleman I never had in my house, so I'll give you another week. Perhaps by that time you will have written to your friends." And leaving her bill upon the table, the landlady left the room.

It was a common case enough.

A young and pretty actress—not too clever in her profession—and with a strong spice of romance in her little Bohemian soul, while playing in a small provincial theatre, had attracted the attention of a good-looking young fellow, occupying the stalls.

By the friendly assistance of a male member of her company, he had secured an introduction; and an acquaintance commenced on both sides with no more meaning than a passing flirtation—had ripened, in the short space of the company's stay, into a deeper sentiment.

Having money and leisure at his command, in spite of her protestations, he had followed the troupe from town to town.

Then one morning, yielding at last to his persuasions, she had accompanied him to church, where they were quietly married.

For a little time, life to the newly-wedded pair had been a dream of happiness, though like all dreams it sometimes had its waking moments, when, with his quarter's allowance running low, the necessity was drawing near of communicating the news of his marriage to his uncle—the stern old Berkshire squire, who had expected such brilliant things of his nephew and heir, and who—for some strange reason—for the o'd man was broad-minded enough in most matters — had an abiding hatred of the theatre.

Hugh Dalrymple dreaded the ordeal before him. He realised how much wiser his wife had been than he, when she had besought him, tearfully it is true, but with all the strength of her unselfish nature, to wait a while. He recalled the mystery—which, head over ears in love as he was, had then seemed of such little moment—attending his wife's birth.

Her father had been an actor, who had died when she was too young to recollect. His professional name had been Horace Lanceley, but more than that she did not know. She remembered her mother well—a gentle-voiced, dainty little woman, with turquoise blue eyes and fair hair, and with cheeks which should have been all smiles and dimples—in fact another such as herself. But for some unknown reason, her mother's eyes had always worn a saddened expression, and her cheeks had been pale and careworn.

Katie's childhood had been made up for years in travelling about the country with her mother—Kathleen Lanceley, as she called herself—playing tiny parts in the various companies in which her mother was the leading actress.

She recalled vividly when all this came to an end, and her mother, who had suddenly received an advantageous offer to tour in America, had left her, after a sad, sad parting, in the charge of a kindly landlady, whilst she went, as she said tearfully, to earn the means to secure her little one's future.

Katie possessed piles of letters, bearing the post-marks of nearly a l the big American cities, full of loving messages and letters which, as time went on, spoke hopefully of that day not far distant, when her mother would be able to return, and together they would leave the stage, and be as happy as the day was long.

She had still another letter—black-edged, and written in a stiff, legal hand, from a lawyer in Massachusetts, stating in curt, legal terms, the death of his client—Kathleen Lanceley—from typhoid fever, inclosing a lock of sunny hair, a photograph of her mother when a girl, and a cheque which represented the dead actress's savings, and which served to start Katie in the profession.

A pathetic little life-story enough, but not one, as Hugh knew, to appeal to Major Dalrymple, so ambitious as he

Digitized by Google

was, for his favourite nephew to form a great alliance.

When the dreaded interview had taken place when their worst fears had been realised—and Hugh, proud and passionate as the fiery old despot, his uncle, had

"I don't want to be hard on you," she added.

turned his back for ever, as he thought, upon the beautiful home which should have been his, it only seemed to draw the two closer together.

Hand in hand, as it were, they had thrown themselves into the great battle-ground of London, filled with the beautiful self-confidence of youth that they could make a living for themselves—he with his pen, and she, with a small part at one of the London theatres.

But alas! "The best laid plans of mice and men gang aft aglee!"

Three months had gone by, the last of Hugh's allowance had long since been spent, and one by one his stories and articles over which he had spent hours of anxious thought, had come back. Thanks to her good looks, and previous experience in the country, Katie had, indeed, been fortunate enough to obtain an engagement as extra lady at a West End theatre, but the small salary barely sufficed to keep t em in food. The rent for the past six weeks past had been unpaid, and now Mrs. Jarrocks had said that unless they could raise her rent, the coming week must be their last.

No wonder that for some minutes after the woman had descended to those mysterious apartments, somewhere in the basement where she lived and slept, the two remained silent.

She was the first to break the silence, and with the sanguine trust in the morrow to redeem the misfortunes of to-day, which is so characteristic of her profession, she hoped still that "something" might turn up. Besides if all else failed—as she told herself—with a little sob rising in her throat, there was always the plan, which more than once in their darkest hours had come to her, which would go far to set matters right—for Hugh.

"Never mind, dear," she said, putting her soft arms round his neck, "it is very terrible, I know, especially for you"—she only thought of him—"but we have another week to look about us, and by that time we may be able to pay the woman."

"We may!" he reiterated. Then with bitter sarcasm:

"And I may be offered the editorial chair of one of the journals, in place of the gentleman who shows such appreciation of my work. The chances are about as probable. But what a brute I am," as he caught sight of the tears welling up into her eyes, "talking like this to you, little woman, instead of trying to comfort you, but somehow," she nestled into his arms and laid her pretty head upon his shoulder, "I can't, and that's a fact! Everything looks so black, and I know no other way of earning money, unless," seriously, "I could get someone to give me a post as a gamekeeper. I *can* use a gun."

"No, no, dear," she replied. "We've not come down to that yet. Fancy my proud Hugh," with a hysterical little laugh, "following someone about, whom he'd know as an equal, loading their guns, and carrying their game-bags. Why he would eat his heart out in a week."

"Why should I? What right has a miserable creature like I, to have any pride?"—with a return to the old bitterness—"My pride has allowed me to live on your poor little earnings for six weeks at the least."

"You forget, Hugh, that I am your wife," she said softly.

"I wish to Heaven I could!"

"Hugh!"—there was acute pain in her tones.

"Don't make a mistake, dearie"—drawing her close to him—"I only mean that I wish I could forget that I had linked your life with mine—had brought you to this," with a sweeping gesture around at the mean little room.

"It is you who have made the sacrifice, not I, Hugh!" she said. "My life wasn't a very easy one before we met. Besides"—with a deep flush—"since we have known each other, I have been very, very happy, happier than I ever dreamt, a girl could be, and to have been happy is something in this hard world, something"—with a sob she could check no longer—"to look back upon, when the happiness has passed away."

"What do you mean by that, Kit?" he asked, taking alarm by the sadness of her tones. "Are you—no!" staring hard at her, "surely not! You are not thinking that this grinding poverty that is, and may be, will make our love grow less?"

"No, Hugh, I have no fear of that, I believe," with a far-away look in her eyes—"we shall love each other always—always! But there!" hastily brushing away her tears. "I'm making a baby of myself, when I ought to be putting on a thinking cap, to discover some plan to help us out of our present difficulties, for by-

Digitized by Google

and-bye things must brighten up. The darkest cloud, you know—finish the quotation for me, sir."

"I can't, for I don't believe in it. There's only one thing to be done, Kit," seizing pen and paper, "and that is, to sink the pride, and write round to some of my old friends, and ask for a keeper's lodge. I won't borrow money from them, but I'll accept work."

With a firm hand, she took the writing materials from him.

"Not to-night, Hugh," she said. "Wait a day or two longer," as he shook his head, "well, over to-morrow, then," and with the wifely tact, which seemed second nature to her, she soothed him into a more hopeful frame of mind, and at least for the present, the letters were forgotten.

He was still unsuspicious when, the following morning as she was starting for a rehearsal as he supposed, she returned twice after she had reached the door, and stooping down to where he sat over his writing, kissed him with a passionate fervour.

He never dreamt that the parting which he anticipated was to last only a few hours, it was her intention to be for all time.

The thinking cap, which had been worn often enough on her poor little aching head, during these last six weeks, had suggested only one plan. Everything she had learnt of the past, had convinced her that Hugh had been very dear to his uncle. She herself was the only serious obstacle to a reconciliation. She would go down to Streathfield, Major Dalrymple's country seat, near Wantage, and propose to the proud old man, that she should go away—bury herself once more in her old profession—and as far as lay in her power—set Hugh free.

To think was to act with Katie. All Hugh's and her own jewellery had gone, save one thing—her mother's miniature. This was encased in a gold locket, on the back of which was the monogram, K. D. in diamonds. The pawnbroker with whom she pledged it, advanced her sufficient for her fare, and a little more, and just at mid-day, when she pictured Hugh putting on his hat to come and meet her, she ascended the steps of the fine old mansion, which had been Hugh's home, and rang the bell.

Thomas—the old man-servant, who had been in the Major's service from a lad—appeared. She recognised him instantly, from Hugh's description, and the wrinkled kindly face seemed like that of an old friend.

"Is Major Dalrymple in?"

The old man started slightly, and a look of strange interest crept into his withered face.

"No! The master is out just now, miss."

"Oh!"

She had nerved herself for the ordeal of meeting him, now she would have given worlds to have had the dreaded interview over.

"But I expect him back very shortly. Would you care to wait?"

There was something in the old servant's expression which gave her courage, and she entered the house. He showed her into the library, then instead of leaving her, fumbled nervously at the door.

"What name shall I give the major, miss?" he asked.

"Mrs. Dalrymple!" she said quietly.

His face fell, although the look, with which he was regarding her, was not less kind.

"Are you Mrs. Hugh, then—the young master's wife?"

"Yes!" she answered, half-shyly.

He heaved a sigh.

"It's wonderful! Wonderful!"

"What is wonderful?" growing annoyed at the

With a firm hand she took the writing materials from him.

old man's gaze which never wandered from her face.

For answer he went to the window, and looked anxiously out at the wide expanse of gardens and meadow-land beyond, then with a mysterious air beckoned her to follow him.

Wonderingly she obeyed.

He led the way up a broad flight of stairs and threw open a door. Within was a bedroom, which had evidently belonged to one of her own sex, for there were traces of feminine occupation everywhere—from the dainty lace upon the pillows, to the knot of faded blue ribbon upon the dressing table. But upon all and everything was the dust of years. The room remained apparently in the same state as its former occupant had left it—as Katie decided, more years than she had known.

She turned to question her guide, but he was standing pointing to a picture hanging opposite to the window—a ray of sunshine which had stolen through the closed venetians, falling full upon it.

"Look!" he said, and his voice quavered as he spoke.

Katie glanced up, then gave a low cry of astonishment.

The picture, which was a full length portrait of a young girl, with pale golden hair, and eyes of the purest blue, might have been herself, saving that she wore a dress of dark material, while the figure in the picture was draped in white.

"Who is she?" she asked in awed tones.

"It is the portrait of my master's daughter—Miss

Digitized by Google

Kathleen. Now you will forgive an old man's seeming rudeness. When I saw you, it was as though I had seen a ghost."

"And this was her room?"

"Yes! Just as she left it more than five-and-twenty years agone. But you must never let out that you have been here. No one ever enters the room except the master, and he only when there is no soul to see."

"You are the very image of Miss Kathleen that was. For her sake he may soften towards you and Master Hugh. But"—with another sigh—"'tis a pity you've been a play-actress, a sad pity!"

They had left the room, and reached the top of the stairs, when a harsh voice calling "Thomas!" reached them from below.

"Go back! It is the master!" the old man whispered hurriedly, growing pale, "He must not see you here! Quick!"

"Where shall I go?"

He hesitated for a moment then replied:

"Back into the young mistress's room. When it is safe for you to come out, I'll let you know, but stop there till I come." And he hurried away.

As Katie found herself once more in Kathleen Dalrymple's chamber and alone, after the first feeling of intense awe which had seized her, had passed, a sense of peace stole into her aching heart, and the eyes of the dead girl—for somehow Katie had the conviction that dead she was—seemed to smile down at her, and how like those eyes were her own!

A curious fancy seized her. Her glance had fallen upon a wardrobe, and with feverish impatience she threw it open, disclosing a pile of dresses hanging within, and one was the white robe of the portrait.

Reverently, like one handling a holy thing, she drew it on, the dust, as she did so, rising from its silken folds in a cloud.

Now indeed as she gazed at herself in the dimmed glass of a great mirror, she saw that the old servant had spoken the truth. The picture upon the wall and the reflection in the glass might have been the same person.

What did it mean? She turned to question her other self—to ask those pathetic eyes which looked down so benignly at her from the painted canvas, to explain the mystery.

But the question was never asked. She was no longer alone.

Before her stood the figure of a tall, very tall, old man, his eyes distended, and the white moustache which hid his grim mouth, quivering with emotion. As she faced him a hoarse cry broke from his lips.

"Kathleen! Kathleen!"

Her terror told her that it was Major Dalrymple, and a gasp of fear escaped her.

At the sound he advanced slowly towards her, then with a doubtful movement, placed a shaking hand upon her shoulder.

The trembling form beneath his touch reassured him, and his face, which a moment before had been deathly white, became almost purple.

"Who are you," he cried fiercely, "and what mummery is this?"

But one word escaped her frightened lips.

"Kate!"

A puzzled, half-nervous look crept up into his eyes.

"Kate! What Kate?"

"Kate Dalrymple! Hugh—your nephew's wife!"

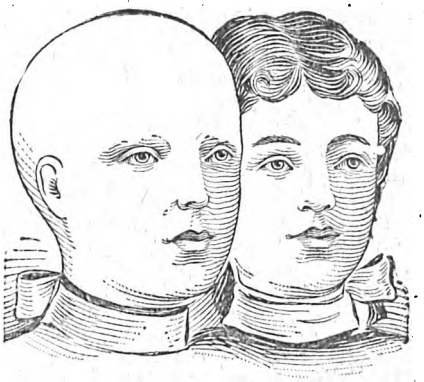
"What?" passionately.

CURES BALDNESS.

Prevents Hair Falling Out, Removes Dandruff, Stops Itching, and Restores Luxuriant Growth to Shining Scalps, Eyebrows, and Eyelashes.

A TRIAL PACKAGE FREE

People who need more hair or are anxious to save what they have, or from sickness, dandruff, or other causes have lost their hair should at once send their name and address to the Altenheim Medical Dispensary, 1792 Butterfield Building, Cincinnati, Ohio, U.S.A., enclosing a 1d. stamp to cover postage, and they will forward, prepaid, by mail, a sufficient free trial package of their remedy to fully prove its remarkable action in quickly removing all trace of dandruff and scalp diseases and forcing a new growth of hair.



MISS EMMA EMOND, Quebec, Can.

The portraits of Miss Emma Emond show what a striking difference is made in a person when the bald head is covered with hair. Miss Emond was totally bald, the hair follicles, not only upon her head but upon her eyebrows, being completely contracted, not the sign of a hair being found. She sent for a free trial of the Foso Remedies, and was rewarded by a growth of hair, which, for thickness, quality, and luxuriance, was as remarkable as the result was gratifying. Miss Emond lives in St. Sauveur, Quebec, Canada, 24 Chateauguay Street.

Miss E. M. Haltnesser, 10 E. Hyde Park Mansions, Marylebone, London, N W., Eng.—"Foso Remedies are wonderful."

Miss Fannie Gibson, Well Bank, Taplow, Nr. Maidenhead, Bucks, Eng.—"Foso Remedies removed the dandruff and made hair nice and glossy."

Mr. G. Collyr, 103 Grundy Street, Poplar, E., London, Eng.—"Have had no itching scalp since using the Foso Remedies."

Mr. G. A. Rose, 40 Old Dover Road, Blackheath, S.E.—"Foso Remedies acting like magic; three weeks had a growth of new hair. It is now quite dark where before I had only a shiny scalp."

Mr. Herbert Emms, 153 Unthanks Road, Norwich, Eng.—"Foso Remedies are excellent. Can keep my scalp in fine healthy condition."

Mr. Geo. Ellis, Etruria, Stoke-on-Trent, Staffs., Eng.—"Have been delighted with results from using Foso Remedies."

Mr. Fred A. Robinson, Clerk in charge Victoria Market, Kingston, Jamaica, W.I.—"Had a severe itching scalp, which has been cured by the Foso Remedies."

Mr. M. Caistner, 28 St. George's Place, Canterbury, Kent, Eng.—"Hair greatly improved; believe your Remedies all right."

Mr. John Warren, care M. J. Reavy, 88 Regent Road, Salford, Manchester, Eng.—"Foso Remedies very good. Enclosed price for further treatment."

The remedy has cured thousands, and no one need fear that it is harmful.

The remedy also cures itching and dandruff, sure signs of approaching baldness, and keeps the scalp healthy and vigorous. It also restores grey hair to natural colour and produces thick and lustrous eyesbrows and eyelashes. By sending your name and address to the Altenheim Medical Dispensary, 1792 Butterfield Building, Cincinnati, Ohio, U.S.A., enclosing a 1d. stamp to cover postage, they will send you, post paid, a free trial of their remarkable remedy.

Remember a letter to us from British Isles requires 2½d. postage. Write your name and address very plain, or, better still, enclose a self-addressed envelope, so there can be no mistake in delivery.

Digitized by Google

"Oh, please, please forgive me!" holding out her hands appealingly. "I only came to ask you to pardon him and to say," with a sob, "that if you will, he shall never never see me again."

He was unmoved by her tears.

"How did you obtain an entrance here? And what is the meaning of this?" touching the white robe she still wore.

She hesitated. To tell him the truth would be to betray another and yet——

"Answer me!" sternly.

She pointed to the portrait.

"I came to see her," she faltered. "She is so like me, and—and—then I found the dress and put it on. I didn't think there was any harm that anyone would ever know. Somehow I fancied it might have been my mother's."

He drew her to the window, bringing her face within the light of the sunbeam, and looked at her long and closely.

"Who was your mother?" he asked quickly, agitation in his tones, and seemingly forgetful that his former question was practically unanswered.

"She was an actress, and," waxing bold in the defence of the dead woman, who had toiled so bravely for her, "a good woman, and I am an actress too. But tell me," taking advantage of a subtle change in his manner, "why do you hate the profession so? Is—is it anything to do with her?" pointing to the picture.

"Yes!" he said slowly. "She left me to marry an actor, and I cast her off."

As she forced him a hoarse cry broke from his lips.

"That was hard, for they loved each other, and love you know, is stronger than ourselves. Ah, it is!" as he gave an impatient shrug of his shoulders, "for it has made me strong enough to give up Hugh."

Again his fierce eyes burnt upon her face, as though he were reading her very soul.

"Sit down," he said, "and tell me about your mother. What was her maiden name?"

And there in the dim light of that neglected room, Katie told her story, speaking of her mother's death in America, and all she knew of the dead woman's past.

"And now," she concluded, "say that you forgive Hugh, and let me go."

For some moments he remained in silent thought. When he spoke again, his voice had become husky, his features had softened, and the fierce eyes were dimmed.

"Yes, go," he said, "and bring Hugh home!"

"Home?"

Her brain reeled. She dared not believe all that his words inferred.

"Yes! To your mother's home, and yours! For more than twenty years I've mourned her loss, now," drawing up the blind and admitting a flood of glorious sunlight, which illumined every nook and cranny of the forsaken room, "I shall mourn no more. Love is stronger than ourselves, as you say. I can believe it, for the guiding hand of love, which led you here, seems to have brought your mother back again."

Hurbert Bartlett.

Digitized by Google

FREE
QUAKER OATS COOKER

OUR OFFER, READ IT

2-Pint Cooker Free. { For **25** white squares like this from front of **2**-lb. packet.

2-Pint Cooker Free. { For **50** white squares like this from front of **1**-lb. packet.

3-Pint Cooker Free. { For **40** white squares like this from front of **2**-lb. packet.

3-pint Cooker Free. { For **75** white squares like this from front of **1**-lb. packet.

Required number of White Squares must be sent in at one time.

On receipt by us, POSTAGE PAID, of required number of WHITE SQUARES, or price mentioned below, before Sept. 1, 1901, a Quaker Oats Cooker will be sent at once, carriage paid, to any address in Great Britain or Ireland.

If you want the Cooker at once, and have not the required number of WHITE SQUARES, send 2/- for 2-pint size, or 2/6 for 3-pint size. **The amount you pay will be refunded immediately** correct number of WHITE SQUARES is sent us postage paid, if received by us before Sept. 1st, 1901. Write your address plainly and mention this Paper.

ADDRESS: DEPT. W 3

QUAKER OATS, LTD., EASTCHEAP, LONDON, E.C.

QUAKER OATS, sold in 1-lb. and 2-lb. Packets only.

Beware of substitution. Quaker name and Quaker Figure on every Packet.

Shilling packets

Kaputine "the" safe Remedy for Headache

WARNING. *Instead of using the common White Headache Powders, which generally consist entirely of a crude drug, which has been condemned as dangerous by the medical papers, insist on having a bona-fide anti-quack remedy, recommended by such eminent medical authorities as Dr. RAMAGE, L.R.C.P., Dr. THURSTIN, L.R.C.P., late Dr. BOYD-WILLIAMS (Liverpool), the Editor of the Medical Journal, "Health," etc., etc. The name of this safe remedy is KAPUTINE.*

ALL LEADING CHEMISTS SELL IT, OR CAN GET IT FOR YOU IN A FEW HOURS.

Sold by BOOT'S, TAYLOR'S, DAY'S, WHITE'S and other Stores. Most Co-operative Stores sell it.

PACKETS, 1/-. SAMPLES ONE PENNY,

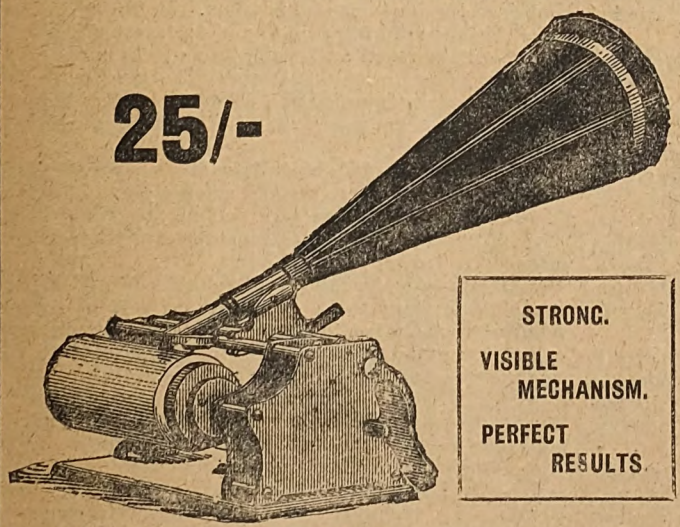
or KAPUTINE LIMITED, HUDDERSFIELD,

will send it FREE for 12 stamps.

WORTH A CROWN A DOSE.

A GRAPHOPHONE FOR 25/-

25/-



GRAND PRIX, PARIS EXPOSITION.

Reproduces Same Records as all Small Cylinder Talking Machines.

Makes Music in the Home, and is an Inexhaustible Source of Amusement and Pleasure.

STRONG.
VISIBLE MECHANISM.
PERFECT RESULTS.

The pleasure in owning a Graphophone is largely increased by being able to make and reproduce your own records. The Graphophone will record your own voice as well as reproduce specially prepared records.

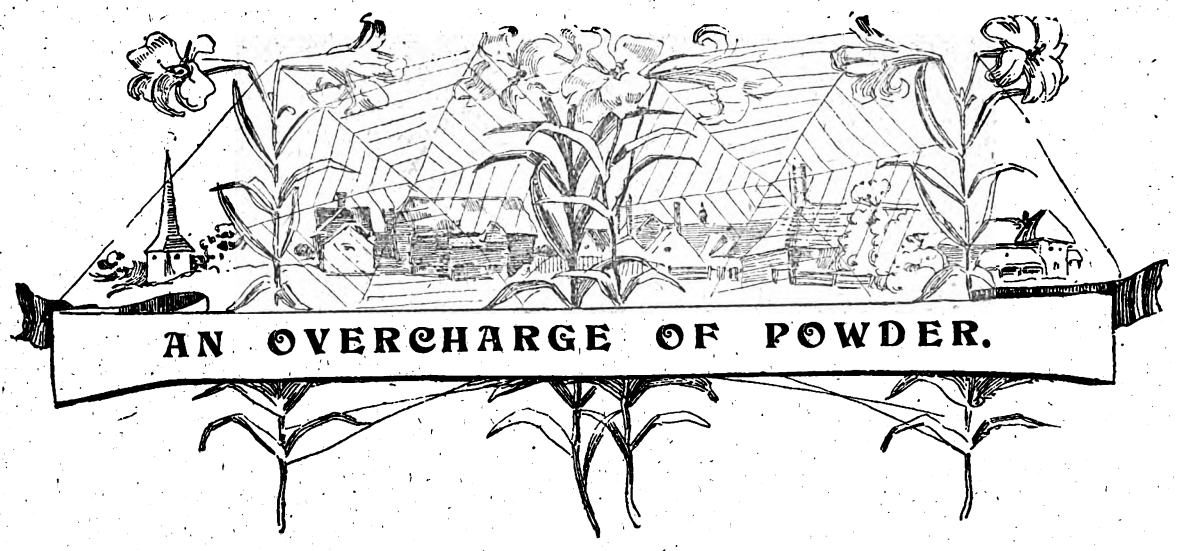
Graphophones are sold from 25s. upwards.

The Toy Graphophone for Children, 8s.

Send for Catalogue C. to

COLUMBIA PHONOGRAPH COMPANY, Genl., 122 Oxford Street, London, W.

Digitized by Google



AN OVERCHARGE OF POWDER.

"THAT lion skin is the largest I ever saw," said Bill.

"I dare say," said the Major.

"And the thinnest," added Bill.

"And the thinnest, likewise," said the Major. "And, in fact, as I heard you whispering to Bob, you hardly think it is a lion's skin at all. I am glad to find you are so observant, my boy, and sorry to say you are mistaken in this instance. The skin *has* some fishy features, but they will be accounted for when I have explained how I bagged the lion that used to wear it.

"This ill-fated beast pursued me when I was riding on a camel in the desert. He was evidently hard up for prey, for he chased us in the daytime and almost all the day, though once in the forenoon we had left him a mile behind, and quite out of sight.

"I discharged all my bullets at him without effect, owing to the unsteadiness of my camel, which was young, and to the visible trembling of the air as it rose from the over-heated sand.

"Night was approaching, and my beast was showing signs of giving in, and the tension on my nerves was growing too great to bear much longer. Something had to be done, and at once. I threw my stock of dried meat behind me; but the lion smelt it, and left it lying, without pausing a second to decide. From this I assumed that he was more thirsty than hungry; that he wanted blood—or water. This thought gave me my cue.

"Though I had hardly a gallon of water left, I instantly resolved to offer it to the lion. Gratitude for the kindness would possibly have made him give up the chase; but I thought it a little safer to stop him by chemistry than by moral suasion.

"I cut my last gourd into halves, scooped out and ate the contents, for I could not afford to waste what was both food and drink. Then I took a dozen seidlitz powders from my medicine-box, which I always carried with me. Still galloping ahead, I put the blue-covered powders into one half of the gourd and the white-covered powders into the other.

"Then I dismounted, being about a quarter of a mile in advance of the lion. I hastily made two small holes in the sand, and placed in them the hallowed half gourds containing the powders, and filled both of these vegetable vessels with water.

"As I turned to mount, the camel suddenly dragged his halter through my hand and fled, panic-stricken. And little wonder either. The welcome sight of the water had quickened the lion's speed, and he was now approaching with terrific bounds. I followed the camel's example, I admit; but then, I did not run away half as fast as that craven brute.

"I looked round to see if the lion would drink, for my salvation depended upon that. To my delight he swallowed with two laps the water in the first vessel, which contained the blue-papered powders. In the vehemence of his thirst he did not stop to make a face, but bounded on to the other vessel, and drank its contents in one gulp.

"Then came a moment's terror. The king of beasts uttered a roar that ended in a portentious hybrid sound, blended of a steam whistle and the hissing of a fireman's hose.

"His eyes protruded; his tail was stiffly perpendicular; his form dilated till it became colossal; jets of steam issued from his eyes, his ears, and his nostrils. Then, with the sound of a thousand champagne corks popping at once the unhappy animal burst.

"A fizzing cataract that shot from his distended jaws propelled a loose tooth of his a distance of several hundred yards, which tooth happened to hit my runaway camel, and at once recalled him to a sense of duty, for he fancied I had sent a bullet after him.

"Had I had the elastic fancy of a classical poet, I should have sung how my lion was changed into a shower of rain. Or I should have called the story by the pretty name of 'Leo and the Fountain.' But I am not an Ovid, and did not think of it in time.

"Anyhow, I hope you know how that skin comes to be so spoiled and stretched. I brought it home as a curiosity, not an ornament; and in this point of view the things you noticed as defects are really its chief merits. Besides, there is a fine moral in that skin—it is the shabby coat of a dissipated lion who drank too much."

Digitized by Google

A Cluster of Fruit Farms.

Could you but witness the conditions under which Chivers' famous Gold Medal Jams and Jellies are prepared, you would not be surprised at their great popularity and high reputation. It is in the pretty Cambridgeshire village of Histon that the process of manufacture takes place. The freshly gathered fruit, chiefly grown upon Messrs. Chivers' own farms (covering many acres of land at Histon, Haslingfield, Haddenham, and Impington), is made into Jam, or the Juice extracted for the flavouring of the Table Jellies. The various processes are carried on in a model Factory, equipped with every modern convenience. Throughout the whole process the most watchful care is exerted to *insure strict cleanliness and purity*. Pure, ripe fruit Juices are employed to flavour the Jellies, and *absolute freshness of material* is always insisted upon. Thus Chivers'

Jellies have earned such a reputation for consistent excellence and purity that the public have perfect confidence in them. The *Edinburgh Medical Journal* says: "A perfect form of Table Jelly. The Orange tasted exactly as if a squeeze of fresh orange had been added." A Yorkshire Vicar writes: "Your perfect success will, I trust, remove for the future all those prejudices which people had previously cherished with regard to ready-made jellies. That your great success may reach every sick room as well as hospital ward is my earnest wish." The *Charity Record* says: "A remarkably delicate aroma. We safely predict an increasing popularity as time goes on."

Chivers' Gold Medal Jams and Table Jellies are sold by Grocers and Stores throughout the United Kingdom. *Insist on being supplied with Chivers'.* A free sample packet of Jelly will be sent on receipt of post-card. S. CHIVERS & SONS, Histon, Cambridge.

Don't Cough-use

They at once check the Cough and remove the cause.

The Unrivalled

One Lozenge alone relieves. Sold everywhere, Tins 13½d. each.

Keating's Lozenges

THE MOST NUTRITIOUS.

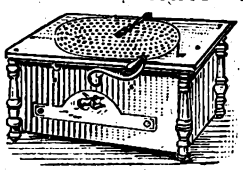
EPPS'S

GRATEFUL—COMFORTING.

COCOA

BREAKFAST—SUPPER.

HAND ORGANS FROM 20s.



Made in three sizes, in black and gold case. Full tone. Six metal tunes, plays all songs, hymns, or dance music. Sent on receipt of 4s. P.O., if desired, balance 4s. monthly. Send for list of tunes, prices, &c. ATLAS CO., 1828 High Street, Camden Town, London; 63 Seven Sisters Road, N.; and 14 High Road, Kilburn.

HAIR DESTROYED.

Send me an envelope (stamped and addressed) and I will tell you how to remove all superfluous hair free of charge. (Send no money.) Address, in confidence, Miss E. V. (Room 3), 195 Oxford Street, London, W.

NOSE

Wintry weather makes Red Noses. I cure them. Send 1/- for my book on "Their Cause and Prevention," or 3/9 for Medically approved Cure. Particulars of my Patent Nose Improver and Ear Machine sent for stamp.—C. LEES RAY, Specialist, South Castle Street, Liverpool.

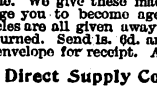
DRUNKENNESS

CURED. This can be done with or without patient's knowledge. Send me a stamp and I will tell you how. (Send no money.) Address, in confidence, Mrs. C. H. (Room 8), 195 Oxford Street, London, W.

RUPTURE

Gentleman (cured himself) will send Free Particulars of inexpensive self-curative treatment. Stamped address.—(Box 49), 59 Castle Street, Carlisle.

1,000 CYCLES.

1/6  1/6

FREE. FREE.

Our Ladies' or Gents' Link will be sent free of any charge for delivery on receipt of 1s. 6d. These are not American or foreign trash, but are made in England. This is our first advertisement, and by it we are determined to bring our name before the public, so this offer will only hold good to the readers of this paper for the next fourteen days. We will send with the bicycle a nickel silver lamp and pump, and the whole will be packed in a wood crate and sent to your address free, immediately you take advantage of this advertisement and the offer we will send. A written guarantee given with each bicycle. We give these machines away to encourage you to become agents for us. If the bicycles are all given away your 1s. 6d. will be returned. Send 1s. 6d. and stamped addressed envelope for receipt. Address, the

London Direct Supply Company,

4 Duke St., Strand, London, W.C.

Mention this paper.

POST FREE THREE STAMPS

A Treatise on the Modern and Successful Treatment of Nervous Diseases and Exhaustion, by local absorption.

Fully up to the advanced ideas on the subject.

THE MARSTON CO.,

59 and 60 Chancery Lane, London, W.C.

BIRKBECK BANK

Southampton Buildings, Chancery Lane, London.

2% on CURRENT ACCOUNTS, on the minimum monthly balances when not drawn below £100.

The Birkbeck Almanack, with full particulars, post free. FRANCIS RAVENSCROFT, *Manager*.

VARICOCELE.

Every man suffering from Varicocele and the allied troubles, should send for treatise, describing their Causes, Symptoms, Results, and Successful and Painless Treatment without surgical operation or the use of cumbersome trusses and electrical appliances. Will be sent sealed, post free; three stamps.

S. S. MURRAY,

7 Southampton Row, London, W.C.

VIE D'OR FOR THE HAIR.

THE AMERICAN TREATMENT.

Vie d'Or puts 10 years on the life of the hair.

Sole Agent:

GUSTAV ROSSELLI, 4 New Park Street, Park Lane, LEEDS.

Price 2/9 post free.

2/9 CHALLENGE TO THE WORLD—OUR WARRANTED TIMEKEEPER, 2/9

With a guarantee to keep correct time for three years, will be sent to any address on receipt of P.O. or stamps value 2/9 and three stamps extra for postage. To every purchaser during this month we give with it ABSOLUTELY FREE a strong Mexican SILVER CHAIN. All we ask of you is to show them to your friends, as by doing so you advertise our business.

GENEVA WATCH IMPORTERS, 148 Old Street, London, E.C.

AND NEURALGIA Cured

by a Simple, Safe, and Speedy Remedy. A Zox Powder can be taken anywhere, at any time, and with any liquid, with wonderful results. *Two free Sample Powders* to any reader of *Short Stories* sending stamped addressed envelope for same to

The ZOX Co., 11 Hatton Garden, London, E.C.

FREE. FREE.

Our £2 10s. Real Silver Watch (with chain), or A Real Gold Ring Set with REAL DIAMONDS and other stones.

SEND NO MONEY.

NO MONEY REQUIRED. WE TRUST YOU.

We give you your choice of either of these handsome presents for selling NINE articles of Jewellery at 1/6 each. (Regular price 3/6).

We do not want your money. Just send us a stamped addressed envelope and say that you will either sell the jewellery or return it to us if you fail to sell it. On receiving your letter we will at once post you the jewellery.

When sold, send us the 13/6 you have received for same, and we will at once send you ABSOLUTELY FREE our £2 10s. Real Silver Watch with Chain, or the Gold Ring, whichever you desire.

A WRITTEN GUARANTEE for TEN years sent with each watch.

You can sell our Jewellery in a few minutes at 1/6 each article. We have thousands of testimonials as to the quality and value both of our Jewellery and Presents.

Send no money. Write to-day.

BRITISH PREMIUM SYNDICATE (Dept. P) 232 Central Chambers, Glasgow.

Digitized by Google

PEARSON'S WEEKLY

FOOTBALL PICTURE PUZZLES.

£100 IN PRIZES.

1st Prize - - £50 in Gold.

2nd Prize - - - - £10 Note
3rd, 4th, and 5th Prizes - 3 £5 Notes
6th to 20th Prizes - 15 Sovereigns
21st to 40th Prizes - 20 Half-Sovs.

Below will be found ten pictures; each picture representing the name of a well-known football player.

If you look at the picture in the margin you will see that the name is Maxwell. What are the other names?

If you cannot find all the names, ask your friends to help you.

All you have to do is to write underneath each picture, in the space provided, the name of the player you believe the picture to represent. Then keep the list by you until THREE other lists have appeared. We will tell you when to send them in.

Example.

Maxwell.

You may send in as many separate attempts as you like when the time comes; but each set of four lists must be sent in separate envelopes, and will be considered as different attempts.

Only one solution is allowed under each picture.

Where two men bear the same surname, but different christian names, the christian name or initial is indicated in the picture.

The prizes will be paid to the competitors from whom we receive the correct, or most nearly correct, solutions.

No more than one prize will go to any competitor.

It must be taken as a condition of the competition that anybody competing therein agrees to abide by the Editor's final decision.

Intending competitors in the above would do well to procure a copy of "The Football Who's Who," which contains the names of about a thousand of the best known players. This book will be found of great service in discovering the names depicted. It only costs a shilling, and may be obtained of all booksellers, and post free for 1s. 3d. from the publisher, 17 Henrietta Street, London, W.C.

No. 1.....

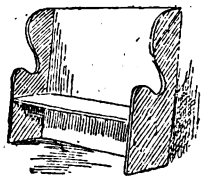
No. 2.....

No. 3.....

No. 4.....

No. 5.....

No. 6.....



No. 7.....

No. 8.....

No. 9.....

No. 10.....

I send in this coupon as a competitor for the prize advertised in this paper, and subject to the conditions printed on this page:

Name and address.....

THINGS TO REMEMBER.

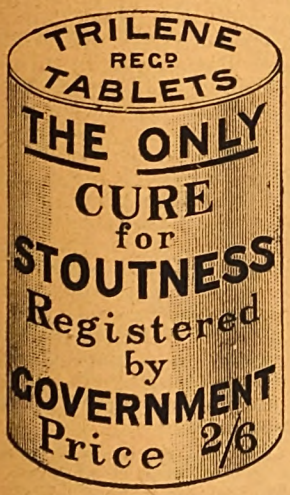
1. Coupons may be sent either from "Pearson's Weekly" or "Short Stories."
2. Do not send in your coupons till we tell you.
3. All coupons are sent at senders' risk, and if they go astray, from whatever cause, we do not accept responsibility.
4. Competitors must attach their private address to their attempts. No prize will be sent to any post-office, refreshment rooms, or other places at which letters are called for. Attempts bearing such addresses will be disqualified.

Digitized by Google

ALL FAT PEOPLE

Can be **CURED** by taking

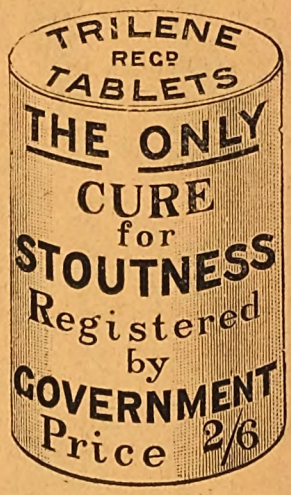
TRILENE TABLETS Regd.



For a few weeks. They will safely REDUCE WEIGHT and CURE CORPULENCY PERMANENTLY, whether Abdominal or General. They are small, agreeable, harmless, sent privately, and never fail to Improve both HEALTH and FIGURE without change of Diet.

An English Countess writes: "Your Trilene Tablets act admirably."

Send **2s. 6d.** to **THE TRILENE ASSOCIATION**, 66 Finsbury Pavement, London, E.C.



SAMPLES OF TESTIMONIALS.

"87 Alexandra Road, Norwich, October 19th, 1896.

Gentlemen,—In reference to Trilene Tablets, I may say that my wife found the greatest possible benefit from the use of them; their action was rapid, and exceeded our utmost expectations, as they were also most beneficial to the respiratory organs. My wife was many years growing so stout, but although the disease was, I consider chronic, the Tablets soon reduced the same completely. You have our united thanks, and if I can do anything to promote your interests I will freely use my utmost endeavours to do so.

"Yours faithfully, J. R. CANHAM."

MRS. DARNLEY SMITH, Landscove Vicarage, Ashburton, writes: "Trilene Tablets have reduced my weight very much. I am so much lighter in every way, and better in health."

COUNTESS SECKENDORFF, of Berlin, writes: "The Tablets greatly benefited me personally, and I am recommending them to friends."

MISS CHATTERTON, 7 Salisbury Villas, Banstead, Surrey, says: "I weighed 12st. 8lb., but am now 11st. and getting much better."

Nurse CROUCHER, at Mrs. Bennett's, 14 Buckleigh Road, Streatham, says: "I lost 9lb. from the box I took."

"77 Hindhill Street, Heywood, February 5th, 1898.

"Gentlemen,—I have not quite finished the box of Tablets and am 2lb. lighter. The change is great, and several friends are beginning the treatment, which not only reduces fat but strengthens rheumatic joints—such has been the case with me. "Yours sincerely, M. A. HEYWOOD."

Mrs. D. BURTON, of Silverleigh, Tunbridge, writes: "I am very pleased with difference in size, my friends all telling me how much thinner I am getting."

Miss NORTHLEDGE, The Laurels, Riseholme Road, Lincoln, says: "The Tablets reduced me 1st., so that I am cured."

West Cornforth, Ferryhill.

Mr. WM. USHER says: "A sister of mine, who was 17st., was greatly reduced by your Tablets to 15st."

Extract from *The Lady*, September 3rd, 1896: "Many stout persons have suffered untold agonies in unavailing efforts to reduce their bulk, either by means of severe dieting, or by taking more or less deleterious drugs; but all these pains would have been saved if they had only invested in a box of the wonderful Trilene Tablets which are quite harmless, containing neither mercury, arsenic, nor any other mineral poison, and which are an unfailing cure for obesity."

MRS. T. BOSTON, Cambridge Villas, Clifford Street, South Wigston, says: "I congratulate you on your wonderful Tablets. My weight at first starting them was 11st. 7lb., and I now weigh 9st. 11lb."

Mr. MCLEOD, 44, Calside, Paisley, writes: "I have been cured. If you want to know my weight now, it is 10st.; reduced 1st. 8lb., and I am quite content."

A. M. PRATT of Ongar House, Ongar, says: "My weight is so much reduced it is unnecessary to take more. The reduction of weight was from 12st. 6lb. to 10st. 4lb."

MRS. H. COX, 28 Watnall Road, Hucknall Torkard, writes: "The box of Tablets has reduced my weight 1½ stones."

MR. WALKER, 236 London Road, Hazelgrove, Stockport, says: "I have used one box and am 14lb. lighter. Send another soon as possible."

Col.-Sergt. WHITTLE, of East Lancashire Regt., Burnley, Lancs, says: "A man in our regiment in 1891 lost several stone from taking your Tablets."

MRS E. ALEXANDER, 102 Dixon Street, New Swindon, says: "They have reduced me quite 2 stone, and I am now quite cured."

Mrs. W. A. RADFORD, of High Street, New Brinsley, Eastwood, writes: "Before taking Tablets I was 46 inches round waist, now I am 32 inches. I hope soon to be 23. I could hardly move or get up, now I get about easily. Please use this as you wish."

Countess FURSTENBERG, of Germany, writes: "They act speedily and well."

The Princess LIECHTENSTEIN writes from Landsberg, Austria: "Pray send me your excellent Tablets."

Mrs. WEAVER, of Greenpits Villa, Ross, Hereford, writes "I am reduced from 13st. 8lb. to 11st. You may use this if you like."

MRS. CROSSLEY, of Rose Hill, Torver, nr. Coniston, says: "There is a very decided diminution of fat. I am delighted, and cannot speak too highly in praise of Tablets. My heart is better, and I can breathe so much easier. You may refer to me as often as you like."

Lady C. CONRAD writes from Wiesbaden: "I am very pleased with your Tablets."

Mrs. TAYLOR-ROBINSON, of Tweed Green House, Whalley Range, Manchester, says: "I feel so much lighter and better since taking your Tablets, and am so much thinner that I hardly recognise myself."

Miss A. LONG, of 9 South Parade, Waterford, writes: "Your Tablets have reduced me 14lb."

Miss A. DAWSON, 62 Orchard Street, Weston-super-Mare, says: "Glad to say the Tablets have sufficiently reduced me. I shall always recommend them."

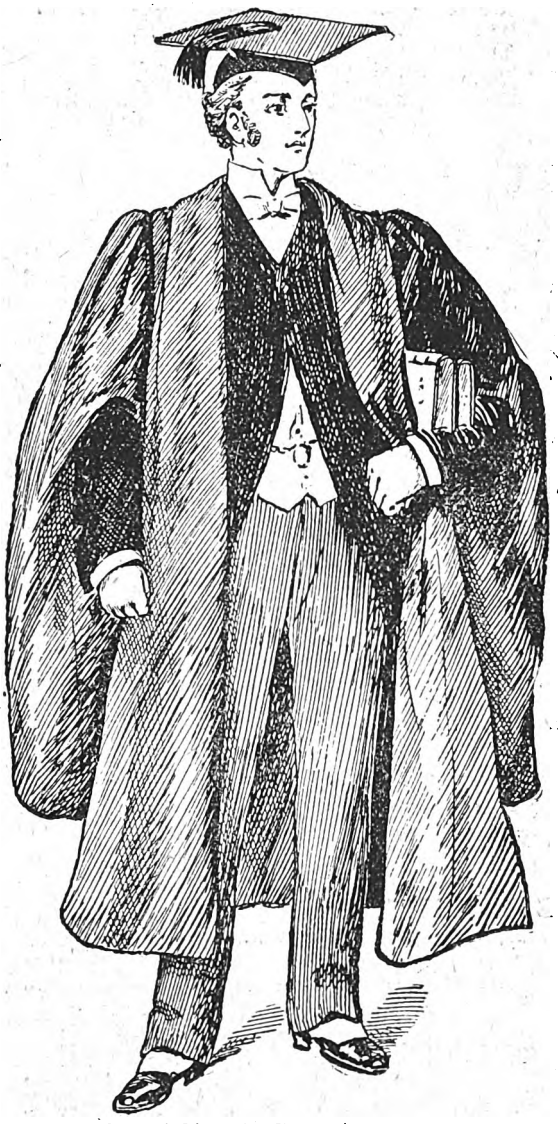
Miss F. L. BALL, 47 Chesterfield Road, St. Andrews, Bristol, writes: "I am quite cured through your Tablets. They improve the figure, and greatly relieve shortness of breath."

Miss PATIENT, of Woodberry, Theydon Bois: "Feel great benefit from Tablets. I have lost 2st., and am sufficiently reduced."

Mrs. DREW, of 1 Bellevue Gardens, The Nursery, Devizes, writes: "I took Tablets some years ago; they soon reduced me and I have not got stout since. Send me a box for my mother."

THE TRILENE ASSOCIATION, 66 FINSBURY PAVEMENT, LONDON.

Digitized by Google



A BOOK THAT IS NOT A NOVEL.

"Not a novel! Then who wants to read it? People only read novels and newspapers nowadays." That is what you say immediately. But for once you are wrong. At the present moment hundreds of thousands of people are turning over, and eagerly reading, the pages of a book that is not a novel. They are telling their friends about it, and very soon every one will be reading the book that is not a novel. If you want to be interested, if you want to be instructed, if you want to live long, if you want to be healthy, if you want to be beautiful, you must read the book that is not a novel. What is it called? What does it cost? Where can I get it? What is it all about? It is called "SECRETS OF BEAUTY, HEALTH, AND LONG LIFE." By Professor Boyd Laynard. Its cost to readers of *Short Stories* is One Shilling and Sixpence (post paid). You can get it from Hammond, Hammond, and Co., 19, 21, and 23 Ludgate Hill, London. What is it all about? It is a practical guide to beauty, health, and long life. It is a book to read through with interest and profit. It is a book to refer to when in difficulty or doubt. It is a book for the lady to keep on her toilet-table. It is a book for the business man to have at hand when the strain and worry of work threaten his health. It is a book for the young to read, in order that they may get the most out of life, and live to grow old. It is a book for the old to read in order that they may feel young. Among the numerous subjects dealt with in Professor Boyd Laynard's work, the following are but a few (a complete syllabus showing the contents of the whole 127 chapters enumerating upwards of 500 subjects, and divisions of subjects, can be had free on application to the publishers):

Analysis of beauty—Beauty a possible attainment—The way we make our own faces—Secrets of face transformation—Changeableness of beauty and its causes—Metaphysical secrets of keeping young and preserving a youthful appearance—The author's investigations into the causes why some individuals look younger than others at a certain age—Wonders of the skin—Relation of the skin to beauty—Effects of mental emotions upon the skin—Effects of heat, cold, and changes of temperature upon the skin—Bad complexions and their causes—Diet that spoils and diet that improves the complexion—General care of the complexion—Construction, growth, and wonders of the hair—Why hair falls out, and its remedy—Premature greyness: its causes and prevention—General care of the hair—Superficial hairs and how to treat them—Wrinkles: their prevention and treatment—Freckles, tan, and blackheads—Oily skin, dry skin, and loose skin—How the nose can be improved—Protruding ears and their treatment—Offensive breath—Anatomy of the teeth—Why teeth decay—General care of the teeth—Tallness, and how to attain it—Round shoulders, and how to cure them—How to acquire a full chest—Perfect form and figure: their proper proportions—Thinness, and its treatment—Excessive stoutness—Care of the hands—Care of the feet—Physiognomy; or, the art of reading character from the face—Mental influences upon health—Power of the mind over the body—Influence of the mind in curing diseases—How the mind can induce disease—How violent passions injure health—Laughter as a medicine—Ailments cured by laughter—Wonders of digestion—Relative value to our bodies of the principal articles of food—Fruits and vegetables as medicine: their various influences upon the physical system—Health-preserving diet, and its consistency—Diet favourable to mental exertion and intellectual culture—Influence of various foods upon our passions and propensities—The influence exerted by the mind upon the appetite and digestion—Some perilous articles of food Light, and its influence upon health—Exercise and its relation to health—Baths and bathing; their influence upon health—The way we breathe, and how it affects our health—The marriage state, and its influence upon health—Statistics showing the comparative vitality of married and single persons—100 professions, trades and occupations: their respective influences upon health and long life—Sleep, and its relation to health—Conditions for healthy sleep—Insomnia—The eyes, and how to preserve them—The ears and hearing: how to prevent deafness—The voice: its culture and preservation—Memory, and how to improve it—Stammering, and how to cure it—Prevention of disease—Colds: their nature, prevention and treatment—Indigestion—Constipation—Neuralgia—Rheumatism—Nervousness—Headaches—That rebellious organ, the liver—Blushing: its physiology and treatment—Rules of life for attaining longevity—Compendium of the mental, moral, physical, and external influences that lessen the years of our earthly existence—The mental, moral, physical, and external influences that are conducive to long life—How to live to a hundred—Premature old age and its causes—Short biographies of 30 modern centenarians, whose ages range from 115 to 185 years—Attainment of long life under physical disabilities—General principles that can be laid down for the anticipation of longevity—The eight signs of long life.

"The Most Remarkable Work of the Present Century."

Vide THE PRESS.

ORDER FORM **415,216.**

To HAMMOND, HAMMOND & CO.,
19, 21 & 23 LUDGATE HILL, LONDON, E.C.

Please forward me Professor Boyd Laynard's complete work, "SECRETS OF BEAUTY, HEALTH AND LONG LIFE" (carriage paid), for which I enclose the sum of

ONE SHILLING AND SIXPENCE

Name _____

Address _____

Advertisements should be sent to "Short Stories" Advertisement Department, Henrietta Street, London, W.C.

Digitized by Google

NEW FOOTBALL COMPETITION—£100 IN PRIZES.

SHORT STORIES

A WEEKLY MAGAZINE FOR HOME AND TRAIN

No. 624. FOR WEEK ENDING DECEMBER 15TH, 1900. [ONE PENNY.

WORTH A GUINEA A BOX.

BEECHAM'S PILLS

WILL MAKE YOU LOOK WELL

These family favourites are composed entirely of Medicinal Herbs, and are warranted free from mercury or other Poisonous substance. They can harm no one, and may be given to children or to the aged and infirm with perfect safety. They cleanse the stomach and bowels and purify the blood; invigorate the whole nervous system, and give tone and energy to the muscles.

BEECHAM'S PILLS have stood the test of over fifty years without the publication of testimonials. Parents recommend them to their children. Friends recommend them to one another, and BEECHAM'S PILLS recommend themselves.

FEEL WELL

AND KEEP WELL

The manufactory at St. Helens is a model of system and cleanliness, and the care bestowed on their manufacture ensures BEECHAM'S PILLS being always reliable.

6,000,000 Boxes are sold annually; and wherever tried they have been adopted as the specific to be depended on for defeating those evils which usually assail health in our daily lives.

Sold Everywhere in Boxes, price 1/1½ (56 pills) **and 2/9** (168 pills).

'Advertisements should be sent to "Short Stories" Advertisement Department, Henrietta Street, London, W.C.

Digitized by Google

Mr. Geo. R. Sims' Discovery

"TATCHO."

20,000 LARGE (4/6 SIZE) BOTTLES TO BE DISTRIBUTED.

"TATCHO" is a brilliant spirituous tonic, the colour of whisky, free from all grease. A sprinkle of a few drops on the scalp and five minutes with the brush daily works marvels with every head of hair.

"TATCHO" acts as an invigorating tonic. It stops the hair falling, creates a luxuriant growth, and imparts to it a bright and youthful lustre.

"When I discovered the preparation, I found that I had hit upon a remedy capable of working wonders," said Mr. George R. Sims to the representative of the *Daily Mail*. "Look at my hair now. Look at the colour. In time people got to know. Then the trouble began.

"Letters in thousands poured in to me from men and women in every quarter of the world, from all parts of the Kingdom, from America, India, Africa, China, and Australia. The work of answering the letters was enormous, and as far as possible the desired information was supplied; but it became quite evident that at the rate at which the demand was increasing I should very soon need a large staff of clerks to attend solely to the Hair renewer department of correspondence.

"In consequence, I said to myself. Why should this thing go on? If the public wants my hair renewer, the public shall have it; but the demand must be met in the ordinary business-like way. So I resolved to place the genuine article within reach of all, and with the assistance of a number of gentlemen, possessing the necessary commercial facilities, that has been accomplished."

THE GEO. R. SIMS' COMPANY HAVE DECIDED TO DISTRIBUTE

20,000 LARGE TRIAL BOTTLES OF TATCHO

to enable those who have not yet profited by Mr. G. R. Sims' discovery, to have the opportunity of doing so. The Company does this in the belief that such distribution will enable the preparation to become more widely known, and will introduce it to every home in a far more satisfactory manner than through unlimited puffing by advertisement.

COUPON.
S.S.
Dec. 15, 1900.

If you are desirous of participating in this distribution cut out this Coupon and send it to the Geo. R. Sims' Co., 810 Great Queen Street, London, W.C., accompanied by a postal order for 1/10. You will receive by return of post a plain package containing

A FULL SIZE 4s. 6d. TRIAL BOTTLE OF "TATCHO". POST PAID,

which will enable you to give TATCHO a fair trial and to satisfy yourself as to its merits.

TO THE QUEEN
PURVEYORS

CROSSE & BLACKWELL'S

GREEN PEA. GRAVY. JULIENNE. MULLIGATAWNY. TOMATO. HOUSEHOLD. CRESSY, &c.

SOUP TABLETS

OF ALL GROCERS ETC. THROUGHOUT THE WORLD

NOSE Wintry weather makes Red Noses I cure them. Send 1/- for my book on "Their Cause and Prevention," or 3/9 for Medically approved Cure. Particulars of my Patent Nose Improver and Ear Machine sent for stamp.—**C. LEES RAY, Specialist, South Castle Street, Liverpool.**

THE ONLY EFFICACIOUS SUBSTITUTE FOR COD LIVER OIL.

DEVONSHIRE CREAM

(Really Genuine). In Patent Air-tight Tins.
½-lb., 1/4; 1-lb., 2/4; 2-lb., 4/-, including Tin & Postage.
Mrs. CONYERS, Morchard Bishop, DEVON.

A SUM of from 12s. to 25s. per week can be earned in spare hours or evenings by either sex everywhere.—Send addressed envelope for particulars to Box 24, Eclipse Works, 89 Aldersgate Street, E.C.

NEW AUTOMATIC KNITTER.
FOR HOME WORK.

"The machine that knitted the hosiery and comforts for the troops in Africa."—See what *The Times* said.

Knits Socks (a pair in 35 min.), Stockings, Fancy Goods, &c. Easily learned. Lessons Free.

Cash, hire, and Work Terms from "Sorres" dept.: 67 Southwark St., S.E.; 55 Oxford St., W.; 192 Upper St., London, N.; 105 Nicolson St., Edinburgh; 58 Union St., Glasgow; 122 Stephen's Green, Dublin; 62 Great Hampton St., Birmingham; 31 Stokes Croft, Bristol.

ESTABLISHED 1851.

BIRKBECK BANK

Southampton Buildings, Chancery Lane, London.

2% on CURRENT ACCOUNTS, on the minimum monthly balances when not drawn below £100.

The BIRKBECK ALMANACK, with full particulars, post free.
FRANCIS RAVENSCROFT, *Manager.*

Advertisements should be sent to "Short Stories" Advertisement Department, Henrietta Street, London, W.C.

Digitized by Google

SHORT STORIES

No. 624.] For the Week Ending December 15th, 1900. [ONE PENNY.

THE CRAZY AUNT.

"Vingt minutes d'arrêt!"

The train for England drew up at Amiens station, bringing to an end a painful talk between two people in a first-class carriage.

"The long and the short of it is, Lilla, you will have to put this nonsense out of your head," said Captain Jones, as he opened the door.

He was a good-looking man, with stern eyes and a determined jaw.

He might have been at least a dozen years older than his sister, who, however, had defended herself through a course of bullying all the way from Paris.

"You had better come and have some luncheon."

"No," she said, "I don't want any."

"Don't be a goose."

"I'm not hungry. I would rather stay here."

Under any other circumstances Captain Jones would have stuck to his point till he had gained it. But in this case it would have meant losing his own luncheon, so he shrugged his shoulders and walked away with the stream of passengers towards the buffet.

Lilla sat quite still in her place. She was a girl of twenty, and might have been a pretty girl if her features and expression had been a little less decided. Her eyes were remarkable—large, blue, and grave, with straight brows and dark lashes. She was pale, but her complexion was clear and good. Sometimes, when she was amiable, she did look very pretty, and at all times she was handsome. She was plainly dressed, and her manner was cool and straightforward.

Just now she looked anything but happy; paler and graver than usual, frowning slightly and sadly, as she sat alone by the carriage window and gazed across the lines at the crowded station. She could see her brother's broad shoulders disappearing into the buffet, and thought, as she watched him, how horribly disagreeable he was. As if a woman of twenty might not decide for herself! Just personal prejudice, and nothing more. He was so narrow-minded; he thought everybody ought tc be made on his own pattern. What could be more ridiculous!

Some sort of dimness—a dimness of vexation—clouded Lilla's eyes as she thought of the long, weary argument she had just gone through. Of course, she was not weak-minded enough to cry; but it is terribly

All rights reserved.]

hopeless work trying to convince one's brother, or even to make him understand that one means to have one's own way. After about five minutes of peace, and a strange stillness, for the train was nearly empty, Lilla was startled from her thoughts by a voice from the platform below.

"May I ask if this carriage is full?"

She looked out and saw an elderly woman, carrying a bag and some shawls. Her voice was breathless and very tired, but there was a curious charm in it, a high sweet tone, and as she lifted anxious eyes to Lilla a very pretty smile lighted up her pale, delicate face. She was extremely well-dressed, but looked a little dishevelled. Lilla wondered instinctively what she had done with her maid.

With the unaffected readiness which belonged to her, she instantly made the stranger welcome, took her bag and shawls, helped her to climb into the carriage, and thought with satisfaction how disappointed Percy would be, when he came back, to find that his brotherly scoldings could not go on in peace all the way to Boulogne.

"Oh, thank you, how very kind you are!" said the stranger, looking earnestly at Lilla and smiling sweetly. "This is delightful. I thought I should never get away from that odious place, and the train seemed so full. There is room for me here, really?" looking round at Percy's scattered belongings with a touch of alarm.

"Yes; there is only my brother," said Lilla.

"How providential! What a place this is to get away from! I never stopped here before; but something happened yesterday in Paris which put me out dreadfully, and I felt too ill, and too cros , to start early in the morning, so I came as far as Amiens in the afternoon. Such a stupid thing to do! I had to leave my poor maid in Paris; she was ill—left her with a friend, you know—and then my—well my escort disappointed me, and I couldn't sleep last night—and really, do you know, that ever since this train came in I have been wandering up and down trying to find a compartment."

"It is full. I don't know how we managed to get one to ourselves," said Lilla.

"The officials were really very stupid. I thought one was going to help me. I asked him to find me a carriage

Digitized by Google

First he wanted to put me into the *Dames seules*, which is a thing I can't endure; and then he opened a door where a man was smoking, and when I declined that he shrugged his shoulders and waved his hands—'*Voilà le*

"Oh, thank you, how very kind you are," said the stranger.

train! Madame peut choisir!' So I struggled along the platform, actually got into one or two empty carriages and out again, because they were so full. No, I am not Irish," she said laughing, as she perceived a smile about Lilla's mouth. "They were full of bags—don't you see?"

"Yes, I see perfectly," said Lilla.

"Now, I ought to be very thankful," said the stranger, and she became silent for a few minutes, leaning back in her corner, watching Lilla with her bright expressive eyes, which seemed much younger than her pale face, marked with lines of pain and age. At a little distance, her slight figure, her eyes and manner, made her look less than forty; she was in reality near sixty.

Lilla was not a very talkative girl. After doing what she could for the lonely lady, and listening with sufficient politeness to her history, she fell back into her own grave silence, and watched the platform till she saw Percy coming back.

The stranger thought, "What a severe face! The girl is unhappy, I believe; but I like her, too. Now that is the sort of girl——"

Captain Jones's arrival at the door disturbed these meditations. He hesitated a moment, while his sister looked at him gravely. Then he said, "Give me my coat and things, will you? I am going to smoke," and he took himself off to another carriage.

When he was gone, the strange lady began again to talk to Lilla, who, in spite of herself, had to respond to these advances. There was something very pleasant, though not very wise, about her companion, who chattered of France and Paris, and abused England, and said a great many things that Lilla totally disagreed with.

In theory, this strong and sensible girl could not have imagined herself enduring the talk of a woman like this. It was exactly the kind of woman she disliked and despised—a silly, vain, affected, self-conscious chatterbox, much too young for her age, and altogether ridiculous. This was Lilla's charitable judgment. She would not confess to herself that there was a mysterious something in the stranger which redeemed all this; but the time went on, and she found that she must meet those quick, kind eyes, and smile in answer to that smile, and, in fact, be conquered by such a sunny presence as she did not at present count among her friends. What was it? What was it? Why was she obliged to give her sympathy, and even, worse and worse, later on, her confidence, to a foolish, weak-minded, accidental companion like this?

"Oh yes, many of the French manners and customs are most superior to ours," said this lady, talking so fast that Lilla—English to the backbone—could not contradict her. "Their marriages, for instance—how sensible they are! and how happy!"

"No, horrible. I can't bear them!" exclaimed Lilla; but her companion hardly seemed to hear this.

"Of course," she said, "people's friends and relations must know them better than they know themselves. Well, what a comfort not to be allowed to throw themselves away on the first person they take a fancy to. Oh, dear, what nonsense. Two silly children with a penny binding themselves down to a life of misery, finding out too late that they don't suit each other in the least. And if they were French everything would be arranged easily and carefully—money and all the rest of it. Frenchmen never make fools of themselves. I wish my nephew was a Frenchman!"

She said this half to herself, and sighed. Then she looked at Lilla, "Yes," she said, "I am in great trouble."

Lilla was looking at her with an earnest interest which was certainly encouraging. There was a kind of wistfulness in her eyes, and she said, "But one's relations don't know what is best for one, I am quite sure of that."

"Well," said the lady after a pause, smiling very prettily, "if I happened to be your grandmother I think we should disagree about that. However, we all speak from our own experience. Now I have a nephew, who at this moment is driving me quite mad by his detestable obstinacy. He has fallen in love with some girl I never saw or heard of, and wants to marry her at once. Now, listen. It is really a relief to me to tell somebody, and I'm sure you are sympathising and kind."

Lilla shook her head a little, but the stranger smiled and went on. "I don't want to boast of what I have done for Jack, but I must tell you, that you may judge between us. He has never had any money, and never will have any, except what I give him. I paid for his education, which was an utter farce from beginning to end. He never passed a single examination, failed in everything he tried for, simply from idleness, for I don't think he is a fool. Idleness, ingratitude, selfishness. Now he coolly tells me that he is going to be married, and, of course, expects me to support his wife as well as himself, for she has nothing. Some stray girl he met abroad, no doubt as odious as English girls abroad generally are. Our tempers are neither of them sweet,

Digitized by Google

and I must tell you that Jack and I were very angry with each other. He declared that he expected nothing from me, which was utter falsehood and nonsense. So we wished each other good-bye. He may go his way, and I shall go mine. I shall certainly do nothing more for him, and I think he knows it. As to my money, it shall go to somebody who deserves it."

She looked Lilla straight in the face as she spoke. There certainly was something very strange and unusual in this outpouring from an utter stranger. In theory, there was nothing that Lilla disliked more; she hated effusive people, who talked of their own concerns, and thought they must interest everybody. But here was a contradiction. This woman's talk really interested Lilla. She listened attentively to every word; odd little thrills seemed to run through her as the story went on; her eyes deepened, and a faint colour rose to her pale cheeks. Lilla was at her prettiest now, and the stranger, looking at her, almost forgot her own troubles in admiration.

"What do you think?" she said, after a minute's silence. "I am right, am I not?"

"I don't know," said Lilla, with much more hesitation than was usual with her. "You couldn't expect, could you, that your nephew would give up the girl if they really cared for each other? Perhaps she is a much nicer girl than you think."

"Oh, no, no, I don't believe it. Of course, he says she is lovely. He wanted to show me her photograph, but I wouldn't look at it. But don't you understand, even if she were an angel he has no business to think of marrying at all. And he has engaged himself without even the politeness of consulting me. Well, as I tell him, but I know you think him wrong, which is very amiable of you. You would never forget all your duties and principles in that sort of way."

"Yes, indeed I should, I do," said Lilla quickly, with a sudden blush. "My brother thinks me just as bad—just as obstinate and ungrateful, as you think your nephew."

"Then I am sure your brother is mistaken." The stranger spoke as quickly and decidedly as Lilla herself, but with such a look and tone of kindly sweetness that Lilla suddenly moved from her own place, and sat down beside her. Almost directly her new friend took her hand, and held it while they talked together. This sympathy, so strangely met, brought Lilla's troubles rushing to her lips and eyes. She had no mother, no kind, foolish aunt, no one but a married elder sister, from whom she expected nothing but blame. Percy thought she had been making a terrible fool of herself, and the world in general was sure to agree with him.

She told her fellow-traveller that she and Percy had been in the south of France, and had there met a young man sketching, who meant to be an artist. They had seen a great deal of him, and at last one day—— Lilla did not enter much into her version of the old story, though, no doubt, like other people, she thought it was quite different from that of everybody else and far more interesting. But her few words were quite as touching, quite as effective, as other people's sentimental histories. There was a kind of simple genius about Lilla, which her brother called "being stupidly different from other girls."

Lilla's lover had no money; he had no profession; but he was extremely, brilliantly clever, drew beautifully, and was sure to be a great artist some day. He seemed to think that some relations might help him a little just at first, and Lilla thought her brother Percy, who was unmarried and well off, might do the same for her. But Percy took a very different view of the subject. He did not at all share his sister's faith in the artist's future; he wanted her to marry a friend of his own, who admired her. Percy, in fact, was not at all kind about it.

"Percy wants me to write to him, and tell him—but no, that I never will do," said Lilla, sadly and strongly. "I see we shall have to wait for years. I told him I thought so. He didn't seem to think so—but anyhow, he knows it will make no difference to me."

"Is he good-looking?" asked her fellow-traveller.

"Oh—yes!" said Lilla. She might have been talking of the Apollo Belvedere.

"And he paints well, does he?"

"At last one day——"

Digitized by Google

"Yes, indeed—such lovely landscapes. And he has only begun quite lately."

"He has a spark of genius, no doubt; that makes all the difference," said the stranger. "Jack thinks he can draw, I believe. He told me one day that he could make money by his sketches. Of course I laughed at him."

The visitor was coming in.

So they went on talking as their train hurried through France.

Lilla could hardly believe, afterwards, that she had actually told all her history and poured out her whole heart to a person she had never met in her life before; but then this was such a wonderful person. She began to realise what she had done when they saw the sand hills and the sea, and then rushed on to Boulogne through the green *bruyères* and the fir trees.

"I ought not to have talked like this—but you have been so very kind, and I really am unhappy," she said.

Then the strange woman took her hand again.

"My dear, you must not be unhappy. Trust me, and don't be unhappy. I think I see a way out of your troubles—only don't give in, whatever you do."

In spite of her beating heart and her heavy eyelids, Lilla could hardly help laughing at her friend's inconsistency.

"Give in! Oh, no," said she. "But I am afraid you are much more hopeful than I am."

"We shall see. In the meantime will you give me your address?"

"Yes; thank you so much. I do hope we shall meet again."

Lilla hastily pulled a letter out of her pocket. Then she coloured a little and hesitated. Then she took the letter out of the envelope and gave the envelope to her friend, saying half-aloud, "I have no other."

Looking at the letter in her hand, and putting it back in a safe place, she missed the first expression on her friend's face, which was that of extreme astonishment, almost anger, quickly succeeded by intense amusement.

"'Miss Lilla Jones!'" she read out, in such an extremely odd voice that Lilla was startled.

"Is there anything wrong?" she said.

"No, my dear, nothing. Only your direction in the South of France is not of much use to me."

"Oh, I'm so sorry. Please give it me back. I can find a scrap of paper, I daresay."

"No, no; I like this. Write your English address on it—there's plenty of room."

"And—may I have yours?" asked Lilla, when she had obeyed.

"No, it doesn't matter about me. You shall hear from me. We shall know all about each other in time. Here we are. Thank you for a miserable journey turned into a happy one."

"You have comforted me very much," said Lilla gratefully; but she was rather at a loss to understand her friend's meaning. The happiness of the journey, to all seeming, had only consisted in having the knowledge of another person's troubles added to her own.

* * * * *

Jack, as his aunt, Mrs. Lindsay, always called him—this was only a pet name, the world in general knowing him as Reginald Carr—was very much surprised at receiving a kind letter from his aunt a few days after she had cast him off for ever. The beginning of the letter was kind, at least; the latter part seemed totally unreasonable.

Jack was staying on at the hotel in Paris, where he had come on purpose to meet his aunt, and to break the the news of his engagement. From former experience he had quite expected that his aunt, after storming a little, would kiss him and give her consent. He was then going to take her back to England, where his further plans would soon arrange themselves. But her horrid obstinacy had knocked everything on the head.

Jack did not know what to do with himself, and so for the present was finding a little amusement in Paris. He was very painfully conscious that he could not marry on nothing. At the same time he could not possibly give up the girl with whom he was so much in love. He was furiously angry with his aunt.

In this letter she invited, or rather, ordered him to come to London at once, naming a particular day and hour when she desired to see him. She went on to say that she had met the person to whom she intended to leave all her money. "But there is still a loophole for you," she wrote. "You do not deserve anything at all, but come here at once, and we shall see whether we understand each other any better than we did."

"Hang the old woman, and her money! What on earth does she mean?" said Jack, with other exclamations of the same kind. "She's mad. I wish she and her money had never been heard of. It's too bad, to bring a fellow up to expect a thing, and then disappoint him after all. Who has she picked up now, I wonder! One of the Lindsays? I'll be hanged if I go. I'd require to pack at once."

He did go, however, not being quite such a proud and rash young man as he supposed himself, having also a private reserve of love and respect for his aunt,

Digitized by Google

however ungrateful his words and thoughts might be—but he went in a very bad temper. He left his luggage, which was immense, at Charing Cross Station, and drove in a hansom to his aunt's house, not being sure whether she meant him to stay with her. She said nothing about that, but received him kindly and gave him luncheon, for he had arrived early in the day, according to the sudden and queer request.

There was something very odd about the old lady. Jack, who was inclined just then to take a dark view of all things, thought she was going out of her mind. She looked at him in such a curious way, and said funny things which he could not really laugh at. She moved about constantly and was in the highest spirits, while he sat slouching and looking down; his eyes were hollow and his face was red after a windy crossing.

"Did anybody ever think you good-looking, Jack?" asked Mrs. Lindsay.

"How should I know?" said the young man.

"Not a fair question, is it? I ought to ask somebody else. Well, you have told me nothing about your journey. Was it rough? Had you pleasant companions?"

"Yes, awfully rough. Don't know; didn't look at them; they were Frenchmen, mostly. By-the-bye, how did you get on?"

"Ah, by-the-bye! the first time I ever travelled from Paris alone. Well, I stopped at Amiens, you know—a great mistake; and yet it wasn't. I believe it was one of the best things I ever did in my life."

"How was that?" said Jack, trying to seem interested.

"Well, from Amiens to Boulogne—on to London, in fact—I had the most charming fellow-traveller. She helped me, she took care of me, she did everything for me; she told me all her history, and we became friends for life. I found that there was only one thing she wanted to make her happy, and I determined that she should have it."

"What?" said Jack, suspiciously. He guessed what was coming now, and thought himself most abominably treated. Not even one of the Lindsays, her husband's relations! but an accidental woman picked up in a railway carriage! Some sharp designing creature, who had got round his aunt and made a fool of her. It was no surprise when Mrs. Lindsay answered his question—"Plenty of money."

Jack threw himself back in his chair. He tried to look as if this was nothing to him; but scowled hideously at a picture over the chimneypiece.

"It's a common complaint, and a difficult cure," he said. "Well, go on, Aunt Fanny. Is she French or English, young or old?"

"English, young, and very pretty," said his aunt. "At least, I am sure you would say so."

"I bet you I shouldn't," replied Jack. "I haven't that desperate admiration for every girl I meet."

"I know that—but I know the sort of thing you do admire. Now, Jack, suppose you and I have a bet on the subject. Ten pounds, if you like."

"No thank you, I can't afford it," said Jack smiling grimly. "Besides, I'm not likely to see her, unless she has taken up her abode with you. And you can't expect me to like the notion of her—particularly."

"I am sorry for you, Jack, really," said Mrs. Lindsay. "But it is all your own fault. I have made up my mind, and I can't change it now."

"No, so it seems," said Jack, getting up and shrugging his shoulders. "Why didn't you let me stay in Paris?"

"A very bad place for you. Besides, as I have told you, there is a loophole. I will give you another chance."

"What's that?"

"You may marry her," said Mrs. Lindsay abruptly; and then she went to the other end of the room, and stood there fidgeting with some flowers, turning her back to her nephew.

Jack stood on the hearthrug with his hands in his pockets. First he laughed, an unflattering laugh to Mrs. Lindsay's new favourite; then he said. "Did you really send for me from Paris to tell me that, Aunt Fanny?"

For a moment she seemed to misunderstand him in some way. She turned round quickly with an exclamation on her lips—"You don't—" but then she stopped herself as quickly, for poor Jack looked both angry and dejected. "Well, you need not be scornful," she said. "My friend is very much too good for you. How do you know that she would have you, after all?"

"I don't see how you know it, either," he said. "But she won't be asked, so it doesn't matter."

"Look here, my dear Jack. You are ruining yourself; you are losing your last chance. The fact is simply this. If you marry anyone but this friend of mine I won't leave you a penny. You may go your own way; you may go to the dogs if you like."

"Thank you, I will," said Jack. He walked towards the door, but then he turned round again and faced his aunt, looking extremely grave.

The conviction had come to him that she really must be going out of her mind. She had always been an odd woman, with a peculiar temper and a great many fancies; but she now seemed to be something really too extraordinary. Jack, who was a thoroughly honest fellow, with all his faults, was grieved and shocked at her unaccountable behaviour. In former days she had always been kind, generous, and honourable. Now she seemed quite heartless. There she stood, almost laughing, giving him the alternative between total ruin and the most blackguardly, scoundrelly behaviour. An evil spirit appeared to have entered into her.

"You can't mean it, Aunt Fanny!" he said. "I have told you who I mean to marry, and you can't possibly expect me to change my mind. If I have to work hard for her, very well, I can and I will. We shall not be dependent on you."

"Then we understand each other. You refuse my offer. Go and work, then. You are a Vicat Cole in miniature, I believe," said Mrs. Lindsay. "We need not be anxious about you."

"I don't understand your offer," said Jack, taking no notice of this unkind remark.

He was flushed and very angry; to himself the poor fellow seemed to be in the midst of a whirl of mocking faces. His one wish now was to get away, and he turned to the door again. Just then came a visitor's knock.

"Here she is," said Mrs. Lindsay. "I asked her to come and see me this afternoon. Well, Jack, then you have quite made up your mind; you won't marry her? Perhaps it was too much to expect. Don't rush out of that door; you will meet her. Go out this way, into the study; wait there for ten minutes, and then come back to me. I should like you to see her, though, of course, my plan won't do."

Digitized by Google

They did not meet at all as strangers.

"I don't want to see her. I'll go off at once, thank you."

"Jack, do me this last favour. You need not stay in the room. You need only come in and say good-bye to me, if you like. You may be just as rude and sulky as you please—but I want you to see her. Go!"

Jack fled, for the visitor was coming in. It was Miss Lilla Jones. She looked very pretty, and very well-dressed. Mrs. Lindsay received her with eager kindness, and after thanking her many times for coming, began to talk seriously.

"I have been thinking a great deal about you," she said, "since we parted, and if you will let me, I am going to speak very plainly. First of all, my dear, it will never do for you to marry a poor man."

Lilla smiled, coloured, and looked at her rather sadly.

"Your brother is perfectly right, you know. It is a dreadful look-out for you. Now listen to me, I told you in the train the other day how much I liked French marriages, and how wise I thought them. Do you remember? Well, now I have taken it into my head to arrange a marriage for you—one to which your brother can't possibly object. I want you to give up all your wild ideas, and to be very good and sensible, and to make me and all your friends very happy—by marrying my nephew."

Lilla's face fell in a wonderful manner. She stared at Mrs. Lindsay in blank astonishment, and the only thought that crossed her mind was, "Poor dear thing, she is crazy!" She began to wish herself safe out of the house, was in fact a little frightened, and did not in the least know what to say.

"But you know—I told you—" she stammered out. "I thought you understood—"

"I understood perfectly," said Mrs. Lindsay smiling. "But I have just been talking to my nephew. I told him that he must give up all his nonsensical ideas, and offer himself to you. My dear, if you will marry him I will leave him all my money, and allow him fifteen hundred a year now. If you won't I intend to cut him off with a shilling, and I think in that case I shall leave everything to you. There's only one difficulty."

"More than one, I should think—but what is the one?" asked Lilla, as quietly as she could.

"He declares he will have nothing to do with you. He will not give up that girl he met in France. But I think, when he sees you——"

"Please, Mrs. Lindsay, don't let us have any more talk like this," said Lilla, getting up, with scarlet cheeks and eyes shining with surprise and anger. "You can't be serious in anything you are saying. You can't mean it—but your whole plan is perfectly impossible. How could I accept your money—a perfect stranger; and as to—I never heard such extraordinary things in my life."

"So Jack seemed to think," said Mrs. Lindsay, coolly. "You take my proposal very much in the same way that he did, poor boy!"

"Did you think that either of us could possibly consent to it?" asked Lilla, her blue eyes so dark and flashing that Mrs. Lindsay looked at her with admiration. "Besides, you astonish me. Don't you remember telling me not to give in? I have really hoped, all this time—you were so kind on the journey."

Lilla's voice failed a little. She bit her lips, and her eyes suddenly softened. It was too evident she was going to cry. The pain, the disappointment, the almost insult from a person in whose kindness she had trusted, were too much for her, added to her former troubles.

Mrs. Lindsay watched her for a moment, and an odd convulsion passed over her face, too. Then she got up, came across to the girl, took her face between her hands and kissed her, looking at her with such happy, loving eyes that Lilla's tears were checked.

"I really am fiendish," said Mrs. Lindsay, and she sprang across to the door, opened it, and called Jack.

He came slowly forward from the study.

"Come in, Jack," said his aunt. "Here is my friend. You need not be at all afraid of meeting her; she will have nothing whatever to say to you, and I have told her that you are in exactly the same state of mind towards her. But you both think you have to do with an old madwoman, so please indulge her last fancy by shaking hands. Oh no, Jack, no! You are forgetting yourself. This is disgraceful."

For Jack cried out, "Lilla!" and Lilla gave a little scream and they did not meet at all as strangers, but as lovers long parted, while Mrs. Lindsay, whose remonstrances were useless, walked away smiling to the window.

Eleanor C. Price.

Digitized by Google

BELOW THE SURFACE.

A Tragedy of Earl's Court.

THE Welsh Orchestra finished its last item in the Empress Theatre with a rush. The crowd of saunterers lounged on round the ring. As the music died down a sudden arresting of divided attention took place.

Pure and sweet above the steady "trapse, trapse" of the crowd and the light arguments of the merits of this or that group, soared out a woman's lovely voice. For a moment or two it was difficult to see where the music came from, and then I pushed my way through the people going all ways, till I found myself craning my neck over the heads of others who had arrived first and in front of the group containing the singer. The singer had her face turned away from me, and all I could see was little more than that she was probably beautiful. She had an almost olive skin, and that lovely but not aggressively black hair possessed by Southern Europeans.

I turned and verified my guess—the name descriptive of the group was Italy. As the song continued the girl, barely more than twenty, turned her full face to the audience taking little notice of them. The song seemed to draw her very soul. From cheering trills to the wailings of a love-lorn soul, the music changed; and one felt insensible to all save the real sorrow of a young life. She seemed to sue for pity from the lightly-come pleasure seekers, anon to implore Heaven's help in vengeance for her soul's pain.

I could not move; the girl's whole being seemed to permeate the crowd. Men stood agape, and when the last verse came with its exquisite harmony of anguish, one feared to move lest a visible vengeance should follow.

Then with a snapping of the tension the applause rang out. The girl sat down near the back of the stage, and—it was not mere fancy—real tears of anguish glistened in those dark eyes.

The crowd would not be satisfied: a man came up behind me; the crowd increased though the song was over. The girl rose and came forward. The clapping and cheering increased. But she did not intend to sing again. She bowed towards each corner of the crowd. Then, as she inclined to my side, a startling change came over the girl's face. Every bit of colour fled, and with what was apparently an effort to reach out over the heads of the crowd, she fell prone on the stage. At the same moment I was pushed aside by the man who arrived just as the song finished.

"Heavens! it's Pianita!" was his whispered ejaculation as the girl's face was turned full towards us.

No one apparently heard him but myself. My attention was centred for a second on the girl, who was at once attended to by someone of the audience. I had the impression that my neighbour on the first impulse began to push through towards the stage. His second thoughts, however, made him turn away. No one but myself had seen what was evidently a mutual recognition.

But the man had seen that I had noticed it. He was a young man, a well-set Englishman of a good type. A look of genuine concern came over his face for the moment. The crowd soon dispersed on finding the girl was being cared for, and we two were left alone.

"That was curious, wasn't it?" he said, casually. "I knew her once."

And we got into conversation. He was not very communicative, but I was quick to gather that these two in the South had been parties to what he said were very trivial love passages. But I could not believe that, and I felt instinctively that even if the chapter had been but a mere passing detail in his life, it had meant more, if not absolutely everything, to the girl. And I felt sorry for her accordingly, though I felt even in the short conversation we had that he was quite sincere in his belief that she had just such a light feeling.

We strolled round the Exhibition grounds for half-an-hour or so while he told me his tale. We became quite friendly—he was evidently of an ingenuous, confiding nature—and the girl had interested me to such an extent that I listened keenly to his story.

As time went on we decided to go round and ask for the girl. He had no compunction, and I willingly accompanied him. We went. An attendant took in our message and we soon found ourselves waiting in a little reception room at the back of the Theatre. "The Signora would come," the attendant said. She moreover added that the girl had not recovered long, and was very poorly still. I waited at his request. In a moment or two she entered. No name had been given, but she knew whom to expect, and as soon as she saw him rushed forward with extended arms.

The look in her eyes when she first saw him was sufficient to tell me what the meeting meant to her. Oh! that it meant the same to him!

Digitized by Google

"*Carissimo mio!*" she cried, and buried herself in his arms.

He gently put her aside. "Well, Pianita, this *is* funny. Fancy you in England! Why are you here?"

She opened her dark eyes a little, "Why what do you think, *caro mio?* To see my——"

He looked a little astonished. "Not to see me, Pianita, surely? That will never do, you know."

She drew away from him, but her whole soul was in her glance.

"Why, surely," she said; "I couldn't live always without——"

He saw it was more serious than he had anticipated. He almost appealed to me. I stood by all the time. No opportunity had been given to notice my presence, and she was far too much entranced at seeing him to mind a stranger. The tale seemed to unfold itself to me with more than a touch of sadness.

"Well," he said, "I'm staying in town for a day or two. Come and see me in the Warwick Road"—giving the number of the house—"I am up here alone, for you know"—playfully pointing a finger at her—"I'm a married man, and my——"

The remaining words were lost to me as I caught sight of the momentary expression on her face. For a second the evidently unwelcome news, I thought, would make her faint again. But no! that was not the expression. The look of intense love which she had kept fixed on him suddenly gave place to a pallor and a look as of one to whom that news was not absolutely unexpected, but who expected it as the very last straw in a load of evil. But it was only momentary. She drew away and the coolness suddenly assumed was almost as tragic in its intensity as the look of vengeance I felt the other was.

Yet her quiet assumption of the thread of the conversation disarmed us both.

"You married!" There was a hard sort of laugh. Then, after a pause, "Well, I will come and see you perhaps to-morrow," she said.

We left after a most conventional leave-taking, and left the Exhibition grounds on our way home. Before parting we exchanged cards, and I promised to look him up. His name was Leonard Methuen, and he was an official in the Government service.

* * * * *

The promised visit to his rooms was almost forgotten a week after. But I was terribly awakened to the remembrance by the newspapers, which told of a tragedy in the West End.

As the papers said, "A young man, Mr. L. Methuen, was found in his rooms at Warwick Road stabbed to the heart with a stiletto which was found in the hand of an Italian girl lying dead at his side. It is clearly a case of murder and suicide by the girl. The latter has been recognised as one of the performers in the Woman's Exhibition. No motive is known at present."

But I knew of one. Perhaps wrongly, but I could not think evil of either of the victims. The two cold and hot-blooded natures had viewed life differently.

Stuart Blofeld.

FOR A YEAR AND A DAY.

Nicholas Littlefield was a man who certainly ought never to have been married, at least so said those who knew him best. And this not because of any personal obliquity or moral one-sidedness—he was, indeed, honest and true to a degree—but solely by reason of his peculiar temperament, his utter inability, in fact, to rightly recognise his responsibility as a husband and father, a social unit, a living member of the great human family.

A clever man, he ever seemed to be but on the eve of success, the accomplishment, the fruition always, like the "Children's Ship," kept outside the bar, or else, hindered by the off-shore breeze, never advanced beyond the horizon, by-and by to disappear again into the great dark sea of "hope denied." A simple-minded, absent-minded man, too, was he, so much so that the failing, if failing it were, exposed him not a little to the mocks and gibes of his especial circle.

His occupation no one knew, for he had tried so many ways and means of providing for his own needs and those of his household that it is doubtful whether he was himself able definitely to specify the particular trade or profession he was really of.

His wife, one of those exceptional natures, popularly known as "one-of-a-thousand," in giving him herself had kept back no part of the price. Love is, proverbially, woman's, a woman's whole existence, the fractional portion of the average man's life that it occupies being hardly worth consideration. Hepzibah Littlefield's home was her world. It contained all that she loved and cared for—husband and infant son, and although the pinch of poverty was often felt she bore it bravely for the very love's sake.

Nicholas' latest idea was inventive. He had discovered, or thought he had—which with some people amounts to the same thing—a means by which the careful housewife might cook, warm, and illuminate with atmospheric air, caught, bottled, and distributed by a mechanical process too elaborate for description here. With the persuasive tongue of the inventor he had induced a friend, possessed of more money than discretion, to defray the preliminary expenses—patent fees, the making of models, and other things and sundry connected with the exploitation of "The Universal Heat and Light Generator."

As yet it had been all going out and nothing coming in, so that it was not wonderful that Hepzibah should sigh much in secret, and look forward with trembling anxiety to an almost hopeless coming-time. Not only did this domestic revolutionary fail to impress other

Digitized by Google

people with the marvellous efficacy of his discovery—inasmuch as slender pockets must, so he argued, feel the benefit of practically free fire and light—but upon his hands remained a vast stock of unsaleable machines, which, though paid for by the friend aforesaid, effected nothing and did good to nobody.

It was at this time that Nicholas conceived the notion of seeking fortune in a foreign land—Australia to wit. He was childishly ignorant of travel, had never, indeed, sailed salt water in all his life; but, as he told Hepzibah, there was just a possibility that the Antipodes would recognise the value of his "Generator," and that in something less than no time he should have "struck oil," and be in a position to send across for her and little Guy.

For he meant to go alone. The house in London was Hepzibah's own, and she had besides a small annuity of something under a pound a week left her by her father at his death. She would, therefore, be not quite without means, if even she received nothing from her husband, which was an eventuality more probable than otherwise.

One thing troubled him, and, for him, troubled him much, for it touched him closely—the parting with his little son. He felt it more even than the leaving his wife. Oftentimes had he neglected the doing of trivial things, the remembering and carrying out of which would materially have brightened Hepzibah's life and given a sensible fillip to her happiness.

But the child—his little laddie—had so wound himself round his father's heart, shown him so plainly that there existed something upon which he could lavish his affection, that, waverer as he was, he almost hesitated as he kissed the chubby little cheek on the night before he went. He was to be up and leave before daylight, and Guy would be in dreamland when Nicholas started on his journey.

"Where's you goin'?" said Guy, wistfully looking up into his father's face. "When's you comin' back?"

"Where am I going, old chap? Why, to 'Tom Tiddler's Ground' to pick up gold and silver for you and mumma. And I'm coming back when I've got a sackful. Then we'll have good times, sonny, good times. Never have been or will be such times as we'll have then. And I'm only going for a year and a day, you know."

"Oh, make haste then, daddy, and come back; and you'll bring me some nice toys, won't you? A steamer with real engines that'll work, and a magnet that draws ducks in a basin of water, and a cannon that will fire off, and a——"

"Oh, yes, I'll bring you a steamer and a magnet, and I won't forget the ducks."

"You are a dear, good daddy!" and the little arms were round his neck, the little fair-haired head nestled on his breast, and Nicholas, fearing to further trust himself, gently laid the child back upon the pillow and left the room with a sob in his throat that echoed there many and many a time in the course of the year that followed.

* * * * *

There is a long, wide street in the great city of Sydney, the Antipodean metropolis, which is every whit as crowded and full of bustle at midday as is the principal thoroughfare in any one of the largest provincial towns in England. The shops are as big and as well-stocked as are those of London, which is saying a good deal.

A certain man, a loosely-built, shambling creature, shuffles restlessly along the pavement, stopping every now and again to examine carefully the shop windows, especially those in which toys and pretty things, suitable for children, are displayed in tempting profusion.

At last he halts in front of a shop of more than ordinary pretensions, and where the goods on show are of the most superior and costly description. Nothing else appears to attract his attention or have any interest for him. Toys evidently are the sum and end of his quest.

He might be, for all the passers-by knew to the contrary, a veritable "Santa Claus" on the look-out for objects to fill his little customers' stockings with next Christmas. His eyes rove in earnest, eager fashion over the feast of good things (in the toy way) set out before him, and it is only when he has apparently come to some sort of a decision with regard to certain possible purchases that he at length enters the store.

What a wonderful collection it is of articles that he selects, and how scrupulous is he that not only shall each particular thing be of a certain style and make, but he never questions in any way the cost, however great, and is utterly indifferent to the probable amount of the bill.

The salespeople are inclined to think him some harmless being with a mania for toys and childish bric-a-brac, but when, his errand done, he gives orders for the whole to be securely packed for Europe, and forthwith despatched on board the ss. *Southern Cross*, they are puzzled beyond measure.

He cares not, however, and as he wanders back through the streets to his rooms, and looks round them for the last time, he smiles contentedly to himself and sits for an hour or more gazing at the faded photograph of a pretty boy of about three, the only thing which has not been stowed away for removal.

Only a month ago he had been discharged from the asylum as a cured patient. Eighteen years before he had been brought there by two men, who said that he had been wounded at an up-country camp. Three "sundowners," after sharing his tea and damper, had during the night made an attempt to rob him. The result was a serious blow on the back of the head, and for awhile complete unconsciousness. They had thought it well to bring him by easy stages into Sydney, where a doctor had certified that his brain was at least temporarily unhinged.

The police who accompanied the little party testified to the respectability of his two mates, and the authorities, finding upon him no clue in the shape of an address to friends or relatives, could do nothing but detain him. A large sum in gold dust, sovereigns, and notes was handed over to the steward of the asylum as the property of the injured man.

His name, Nicholas Littlefield, marked on his linen, was all in the way of identification they could discover, and in the hope that he would presently recover his memory and general mental balance, they decided not to advertise.

Time went on, and still he remained oblivious to everything in his life previous to his landing in Sydney. Sometimes, but very rarely, he would cry quietly, and, taking a pillow, would carry it tenderly in his arms up and down for hours, talking to it and crooning over it. Then he would relapse into utter ignorance of his past, and so continue for perhaps a year or more.

When he left the institution rooms were taken for him in the city, and every arrangement made for his comfort. From the moment, however, of his re-entry into social life he seemed to be possessed with but two dominant ideas: he would go back to England and at

Digitized by Google

once, and he must get the toys for his little Guy that he had promised him on the night when he had bidden him good-bye.

This was all possible, for during the first years of his residence in the colony he had been fortunate, not as a pioneer of atmospheric heat and light generation, for his Australian cousins would have none of it, but as a gold-miner. Associating himself with two honest-hearted Englishmen, he had been singularly successful, and, although not now inordinately wealthy, had sufficient to make things easy at home for the rest of life's journey. It is easily understandable that he never wrote, seeing who and what he was, and of course after the accident writing was impossible, his mind being a blank.

That nearly twenty years had elapsed since England's shores faded out of his sight he had not even the faintest notion. Little Guy was little Guy still to his sore, hungry heart. He pictured the toddling feet hastening towards him, the outstretched, dimpled hands eager to grasp at the treasures his "dear daddy" had brought him; while his ear could hear distinctly the crow of delight as wonder after wonder revealed itself to the baby eyes.

He lived in sheer anticipation. Poor Hepzibah scarce came into his vision, or if at all, but as a mere detail, a necessary background to the fair-haired, laughing little elf who was calling him home again with love's sweetest note, and whose little hands were hauling, as were they on his heart-strings, on the tow-rope of the *Southern Cross*.

The other passengers thought their fellow somewhat uncanny, unsociable; in fact, not a little mad, but he hurt nobody—he was so quiet, so gently inoffensive, that often the children would come around his deck-chair and listen to him as he told them fairy stories of marvellous and original ingenuity. At first the parents, especially the mothers, were fearful and repressive, but soon it was seen that the old man—his hair was snow-white now—was quite harmless, and the little ones learnt to love him dearly.

The packing-case containing the wonderful gifts for his baby boy he refused to be parted from, and it stood in his cabin, where he could always see and touch it, while he never failed when going on deck to lock the door and put the key in his pocket.

* * * * *

It was a cold, bleak November day when he disembarked at Tilbury Docks. For an hour previous to landing he had been busy selecting certain articles out of the wonderful packing-case and making them up into a huge parcel, which he carried ashore with him. Regretfully he left the case behind, to be forwarded up to London with his other baggage.

The lamps were being lit as he descended from a cab at the end of the street. He would not drive up to the door, he would inquire first if all were well, and if Hepzibah and his boy still lived in the old house. His heart beat excitedly; he could scarce control himself. The parcel in his arms was more than once in danger of falling, it was of enormous size, while he, for a man, was diminutive, and disposed to nervous unsteadiness of gait and manner.

Halfway along the street he saw come swinging along a fine, stalwart, young fellow, fully six feet in height.

"Pardon me, sir," said Nicholas hesitatingly as they came abreast of one another, "could you tell me if Mrs.—Mrs. Littlefield still lives at No. 7? There is, too, a—a little boy living there," and Nicholas' voice trembled as he looked wistfully up into the young giant's face.

"No. 7? Oh, yes, Mrs. Littlefield still lives there, I know; but the little chap you speak of is gone—gone long ago."

"Gone! Not dead—not dead!" and Nicholas, deadly white, clutched hold of the young fellow's arm to keep himself from falling. "Don't tell me he's dead! See, sir, these are for him. He asked me for them, and I remembered—I remembered. This ship—look!" and he began nervously to undo the string of the big brown-paper parcel. "The engines—they work; I tried them! And see, too, I've got the magnet, and the ducks, and the cannon, and—he's not dead! He can't be! Tell me he's not dead!"

Gently releasing himself from Nicholas' grasp, and supporting him with his own strong arm, the other said softly:

"No, he's not dead, for I saw him this morning, and spoke to him, and he to me. I live at No. 7 myself."

It might have been some echo of the long ago days, something familiar in the tone of voice, that broke the spell.

"Your name? What is your name? Tell me—tell me!"

"Guy. My name is Guy——"

"Oh, God!—dear God! how good you are! But I—I cannot understand. Are you really my little Guy—my baby laddie?"

"If your name is Littlefield, as I think it to be, I am. But not your little Guy. Come, it's only a step. Come to mother; she will be glad."

And the two went on and went in.

It was Nicholas, but yet it was another man. The grey-haired, patient-looking woman that rose up to greet him knew him, and just took him to her—thankfully, joyfully. She had hoped for it, against reason, perhaps, but still hoped for it, yearned for it, and now she had obtained her heart's desire. Ralph Enderby.

Does Anyone Want a Christmas Card?

Applications for the Christmas Cards are pouring in by thousands every post, and some little delay will necessarily result in filling the most recent orders. However, copies of the Cards may be obtained at the rate of six for fourpence, or twelve for sevenpence, post free.

The picture is a reproduction of a photograph, and contains a seasonable and suitable inscription. All those applications which have been received up to and including Friday, December 7th, will be attended to without any charge, but having dispatched the whole of the original number printed, we are urged by those who have received the Cards and want more, to reprint. This we are doing, and propose to make the nominal charge mentioned above, to which we are sure readers will not take exception.

Application should be made to the Christmas Card Room, Pearson's Buildings, Henrietta Street, London, W.C.

£420 HAS NOW BEEN PAID AWAY

in connection with the Scheme, and there are still many Envelopes waiting to be claimed.

The Sketch

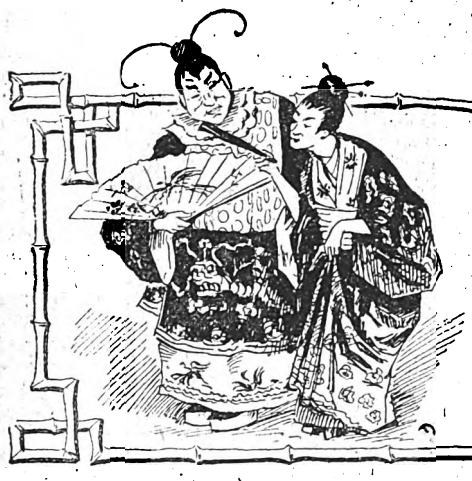
"HAVE YOU GOT THAT £10 NOTE?"

suitable for two gentlemen and one lady, has now been put into type, and is to be obtained in book form, at sixpence per copy, from Messrs. Samuel French Limited, Theatrical Publishers, 89 Strand, London, W.C.

NO FEE WILL BE CHARGED AMATEURS FOR PLAYING IT.

The scene is one that can easily be arranged, and the costumes are quite ordinary ones.

Digitized by Google



Mr. Bowser's Tribulations.

XXX.—HE STARTS A TEMPERANCE CRUSADE AND GETS ALL MIXED UP.

THE Bowsers had finished dinner in great harmony and returned to the sitting room when Mr. Bowser opened the front door to take a look at the weather. Just then a drunken man came along, and after holding to the fence for a moment he pushed the gate open and lurched forward on to the grass.

Mr. Bowser called his wife to the door, and, pointing to the recumbent figure, he said:

"And they send money to the heathen of Africa when we have such things as that at home!"

"That's nothing new," observed Mrs. Bowser.

"No; it's only a drunken man, only a husband and father, only one of our fellow beings turned into a beast in order that public-houses may thrive. My goodness, if I only had the power to stop such things!"

"Men have been getting drunk ever since they learnt how to make strong drink, and they will probably keep on for anything you can do. It's an evil, of course, but we needn't be upset over it."

"And do you tell me," exclaimed Mr. Bowser as he turned on her, with indignation in his tones, "that you can see that man lying there like a hog without feeling that someone should be held severely responsible?"

"What can we do?"

"I'll show you what we can do. I'll take this man's case as a start, and before I've finished I'll make Rome howl. Here and now I'll begin a temperance crusade."

"Then you'll do a very foolish thing and get yourself into no end of trouble. You'd much better come in and smoke your cigar and let the man sleep for an hour and then stagger off home."

Mrs. Bowser entered the house, and he descended the steps, followed by the cat, and bent over the man on the grass, whose legs were doubled up under him as he snored in blissful ignorance. It took a great deal of shaking and punching and rolling to rouse him, but at last he sat up and looked stupidly about him and called out

"Wha-what's er mazzer? Whaz you hitting me f'r?"

"My dear fellow man, I am here to aid you," replied Mr. Bowser. "Someone, in order to make a few pence profit, has sold you liquor and made a beast of you. Come with me and point out the man, and I will let him know what the world thinks of him. Ah, the shame of it — the shame!"

"Yesh, shameful case—shameful," muttered the man as he seized the iron rails of the fence and pulled himself to his wobbly legs. "Shay, old man, you goin' buy me nozzer glass er beer?"

"No, indeed. I'm going to save you. Brace up and try and throw off this stupor, so you can go with me."

"Goin' ter shave me, eh? Well, I want ter be shaved. When we goin' ter get er beer, eh?"

"There will be no more beer, my friend," solemnly replied Mr. Bowser as he patted the man on the arm. "I take it that you have a wife?"

"Yes, got er wife."

"And children?"

"Yesh; sheven little children."

"And they may be hungry at this moment because you have spent your money on drink. I can almost imagine that I hear their wails for bread."

"Shameful case—shameful," muttered the man as he seized the iron rails of the fence.

Digitized by Google

Mr. Bowser received what is called "the cold chuck."

"Yesh, wailin' for bread, and hain't got no bread," said the man as he began to soften. "Wife and sheven children wailin' for bread, and I'm full er beer!"

"And someone ought to be sent to prison because such a state of things is allowed! Man, you were tempted to drink."

"Yesh; tempted to drink. Had er shilling ter buy bread f'r er children, and man said I had better spend it on beer. He orter be shent prison. Wish I had anozzer glass beer, though."

"I see. When the craving once begins, it is hard to satisfy it. You'll get no more beer, however. I am going to save you from yourself. Let me get my hat, and then you come with me."

"Are you going to the pub?"

"Yes; I want to call at half-a-dozen public houses and hold you up as an object lesson. After that we will take bread and hope and consolation to the wife and children."

"Where are you going?" asked Mrs. Bowser as Mr. Bowser came in for his hat.

"I'm going to start a crusade against intemperance," he replied. "There's a man who has been reduced to the level of a hog by dealers in strong drink, while his wife and children are starving."

"But you'd better guide him out of the gate and let him go. You'll only get into trouble if you pursue this fad."

"Fad! Fad! Woman, have you got human feelings, a soul, a heart, any care whether your fellow creatures walk upright or grovel in the gutter? I shall go with him. I shall start a crusade. I shall accomplish something for humanity."

She could say no more. She stood on the steps with the cat while he took the drunken man by the arm and led him up the street. She sighed as she felt that something was about to happen, but the cat arched her back and grinned.

Mr. Bowser led his man into the first public-house he came to. There were a dozen men drinking at the bar, but he heeded them not as he fastened his gaze on the publican in his shirt sleeves and said:

"Wrecker of homes and destroyer of family happiness, behold your work!"

"What's the matter with you, old man?" was the reply as the publican came from behind the bar.

"The matter with me, sir—the matter with me is that I found this man reduced to the level of a beast through your influence and temptations. Gaze on him! He is a husband and father. His wife weeps and his children cry for bread, while you have taken his last copper for drink."

"Yesh, taken my lash copper," tearfully added the convert.

"You old duffer, whatever do you mean!" shouted the publican as a dangerous look gleamed in his eyes.

"I mean that you and others have wrecked this poor man's life and that of his family, and are driving him to a pauper's grave."

"Yesh, wrecked my poor life!" blubbered the inebriate as he smelt round for beer.

"You're a liar!" shouted the publican at Mr. Bowser.

"What! Look out, sir!"

"I say you're a liar and an ass! The man has neither wife nor child and is one of the worst characters in town. What do you mean by coming in here and telling me such a story as this?"

"You have tempted him, and you know it," exclaimed Mr. Bowser, feeling that he must bluff it out.

"Liar again! He has never had a drink in this bar. Get out of this."

Mr. Bowser received what is called "the cold chuck."

The publican and his potman seized him and tossed him about and punched his head and flung him out on to the pavement, like a bag of sand, and he wobbled home like a mule with the blind staggers.

"Well, how do you like crusading?" asked Mrs. Bowser as she and the cat met him in the hall.

Mr. Bowser held his swimming head in his hands and uttered a sort of moan.

"You needn't hunt any farther for an object lesson," she continued as she looked him over and saw that he was a "chucked" man.

This time his moan was longer drawn out. and she waved him upstairs and followed after with a wet towel, the camphor bottle, and a yard of sticking plaster.

M. Quad.

[Next Week: He Levelled all Distinctions and a Tramp Levelled him.]

Digitized by Google

A Commonplace Story.

THE wind howled and whistled along the Embankment, making the poor wretches who nightly sought what repose they could on the hard seats shiver with cold. It was only those whose business, or sterner necessity, caused them to be out who passed along that way.

One of the few pedestrians out on that bitter night was Arthur Rollitt. As he passed several of the occupants of the seats appealed to him for aid.

"'Ave yer a penny, sir, just ter get a cup o' corfy?" asked one.

Arthur drew out several coppers and handed them to the man.

"Thank yer, sir," was the response. "It's awful cold, an' a cup o' corfy does warm yer."

Then he turned to his companion.

"Come on, Bill, this gent's gimme enuf fur us both ter 'ave a cup an' a bite o' summat to eat as well," and with repeated thanks the two human scarecrows, for such they were in appearance, scurried off to the nearest stall to get the warmth-giving fluid.

Arthur Rollitt pursued his course, resuming the train of thought which this incident had disturbed. Two years ago he had come up to London to take a good berth which he had secured, thereby exciting the envy of his companions in the village where he had resided.

To them, who had never seen London except on a brief holiday trip, this was synonymous with coming into a fortune. Some of them had been up probably to see a football final at the Crystal Palace, and in the course of the day had included flying visits to sundry places of interest.

They had gazed in admiration at the big building where "ahr member" was supposed to nightly watch the interests of the country in general and their part of it in particular; they had trod the floors of the Abbey and St. Paul's with reverential steps; they had been to the Tower and thought of the story of the two young princes who, according to the school history books, had been murdered there; they had noted the top-hatted, frock-coated throng, and concluded that this garb was indicative of a well-filled purse. All these things had they seen, and returned home wishing that Fate or Fortune would lead them to the gay Metropolis.

Hence, as I have said, when Arthur Rollitt gained his London appointment he was greatly envied. But while I am thus descanting on the ideas and longings of the young men of the villages, Arthur Rollitt is cooling his heels on that wind-swept Embankment. And why is he there?

Let me trace his career through the two years. On his arrival in his new berth he had most assiduously, during the day, devoted himself to his duties and quickly won golden opinions from his chiefs. During the evenings he also assiduously devoted himself to other things.

There were many, many theatres, and these he frequented. In his own district he had paid a shilling for the privilege of a seat in the pit, here he paid half-a-crown. There were dances, too. At home he, like his fellows, went to occasional dances, where all that was necessary were a white tie and a pair of shoes, and even these were not *de rigueur*. Here, he must, of course, have a dress suit, and the dress suit was accordingly procured through the good offices of a friend who introduced him to an accommodating tailor, and, later on, this same knight of the shears fitted him out with the frock coat for which his soul yearned. Meanwhile, he kept on spending at a rate that exceeded his income.

When the holidays came he betook himself to the home of his childhood, but it must be admitted that it was owing more to a desire to appear in his fashionable clothes and air his London-gained knowledge—some of it—than to a superabundance of filial affection.

By-and-by bills began to fall due, and the smiling tailor began to wear a frown. Still the young fool pursued his course. With the advent of summer came trips up the river on Sunday and various other amusements, and Arthur Rollitt gained the title he was particularly anxious to get. He was dubbed a jolly good sort. He was a good talker, and had read largely before he commenced the "giddy goat" business, and he was accounted clever.

But soon the creditors grew tired of waiting, and one day one of those disagreeable individuals, yclept bailiffs, came upon the scene, and tendered him a most pressing invitation to call upon a gentleman known as the county court judge. This was the beginning of the end.

Messrs. Watkin, Son, and Watkin were old-fashioned enough to have an extreme abhorrence of debts and very little faith in those who incurred them. They had heard rumours that young Rollitt was in difficulties, and though his work was still well done, they had a doubt that he might be tempted some day to relieve those pressing difficulties by juggling with their accounts. Such things had happened before, and prevention was to their minds much better than cure.

On presenting himself at the office one morning shortly after the visit of the county court emissary he was informed that the chief wished to see him.

"Hang it," muttered Arthur. "Wish it had been any other morning."

The fact of the matter was the previous day glorious news had arrived from the seat of war, and he had been "Mafficking," eventually arriving home with the milk, and consequently he was not in the best condition for an interview with the chief. Pulling himself together he obeyed the summons.

"Good-morning, Mr. Rollitt," said the chief as he entered. "Take a seat, will you?" and then he went on scanning the morning's letters.

Arthur waited, wondering what was coming. When

Digitized by Google

he had got through the pile, Mr. Watkin again turned to him.

"Don't you think you are a very foolish young man?" he asked.

"I don't quite understand you, sir," stammered Arthur.

"Don't you? Well, I haven't much time to spare this morning for explanations. Briefly, we have heard rumours of difficulties with your creditors, and as we pay our employés sufficiently well to enable them to avoid that kind of thing, of course we have drawn our own conclusions. Moreover, we don't care for gentlemen like the one who visited you recently to be seen coming into our offices, and we therefore think it would save any further unpleasantness if you were to tender us your resignation at the end of the present month."

"Very well, sir," replied Arthur, and the interview terminated, as did his engagement with Messrs. Watkin, Son, and Watkin in due course.

This was the end of his hopes of building up a fortune as a City merchant. He had so little hope of gaining another situation, considering the circumstances, that he applied for none. He sat down to write stories instead. To his intense joy and, it must be admitted, his surprise, his first was accepted, and before he met with a rejection eight of his short tales had been accepted and paid for.

Sanguine as ever, Arthur Rollitt began to look forward to the time when editors would inundate him with requests for more; but suddenly the fountain of his inspiration dried up, and his manuscripts came back to him with heart-breaking monotony.

He never wrote home. They would doubtless see his work in the magazines, and would judge from it that all was well. When he had overcome his difficulties he would go and see them with the laurels of his literary triumphs on his brow. Meanwhile, before his London friends he presented a smiling face, and the general impression was that young Rollitt was doing remarkably well. How well he was doing one incident will show.

One night, after a visit to a theatre on the invitation of one of his friends, he strolled down to the Embankment. He had now come to that stage where he paid for his bed night by night at a cheap—very cheap—hotel, and on this particular occasion he had not the requisite coin.

"Funny time to be strolling around here, isn't it?" queried a policeman whom he encountered.

"It's all right, constable. I am a journalist, and at present I am engaged upon a series of articles describing night life in London for a country paper."

"Oh, is that it? Well, you'll find plenty to write about here," replied the officer, and strolled away.

Thus did Arthur Rollitt gradually but slowly slide down, until at last he could meet his friends no more, and thus we find him strolling once more on the Embankment.

"How the dickens do those poor wretches stand it?" he muttered. "And yet, except in the matter of dress, they are better off than I. There are so many things they can do which I cannot. Matches, newspapers, or penny toys they can buy and sell in the streets."

A thought occurred to him which seemed to amuse him.

"I wonder what my friends would say if one night I pushed a box of vestas under their noses and yelled 'Wax-lights, cigar-lights,' or I might try 'Collar-studs, six a penny.'"

Here his laugh, which was a joyless one, suddenly ceased. Thoughts of friends who were dear to him came before his mind's eye, friends who would grieve at his mysterious absence, and as these thoughts crowded through his brain the laugh gave place to tears, and these in turn gave place to anger—against himself.

"Don't be a fool," he muttered, addressing himself. "It's your own fault. You have made your bed, now go and lie on it."

He had reached Waterloo Bridge. He stood upon the seat of one of the embrasures and looked down at the muddy waters and the lights on the barges.

"I can't swim, and they say drowning's a pleasant death," he muttered.

"Hello, sir, what are you doing up there?" asked a constable, and looking down Arthur Rollitt saw the officer of the former night on the Embankment. The constable in turn recognised him.

"What is it this time, sir? Are you going to do night life on the river?"

"No, under it," muttered Arthur under his breath. Then, addressing the policeman, he said: "Did you ever attempt to describe the tragedies of life and death, officer?"

"No, sir," he replied.

"Well, you can make a start—with mine," and with this Arthur Rollitt plunged swiftly over the parapet.

The constable blew his whistle, and soon the alarm was raised, but only the body of Arthur Rollitt was recovered. There was nothing in his pockets to identify him—he had been careful to remove everything to obliterate all marks before starting out.

A few days later a jury returned a verdict that an unknown man was found drowned, and that there was no evidence to show the state of his mind.

His friends will go on wondering what has become of the gay and brilliant member of their circle, not knowing that on a cold October night the foolish life was ended.

John Hy. Peat.

Special Features of Next Week's

CHRISTMAS DOUBLE NUMBER

OF

"SHORT STORIES"

will be:

No. 1.—The opening chapters of a grand New Serial by Louis Tracy, entitled:

"THE LOST LADY DELIA."

This is a story of absorbing interest, and is calculated to hold the attention of the reader throughout.

No. 2.—The first of a series of articles called:

"THE LION'S WARS,"

dealing with all the principal wars in which Britain has been engaged during the last hundred years. Each article will contain a full-page illustration.

The number, which contains 64 pages, is also crammed full of

CHRISTMAS STORIES

by the best authors, and illustrated by the best black and white artists.

The price of all these good things is only

2d.

Tell your Newsagent ***at once*** to reserve a copy for you.

Digitized by Google

BY ORDER OF THE BOARD.

For seven years old John Fosdick had been teller at a large bank in a western town. Previous to his taking the place he had been a private banker and merchant and had come to grief. He had secured the place through the influence of the chairman, but there had been a "ring" against him in the bank. The place had been promised to a relative of the cashier's, and old John was looked upon as an intruder.

Without the chairman behind him, even after he had held the place for three or four years, he would have received notice by those in authority. He was a man who said but little and rendered faithful service. As he grew old they tried to make his age a point against him, and, not succeeding in that, it was hoped that he might get caught upon a forged cheque or some other act of carelessness.

He went his way without paying them back in their own kind. If he lost his place, it meant poverty to himself and wife in their old age. He was prompt, careful and systematic, and the plans of his enemies were defeated.

The seventh year was drawing to a close when old John was hauled over the coals. A stranger presented a cheque which he hesitated to pay and about which he consulted the cashier. Later on the cashier stated that he had ordered it to be held over pending examination. Old John said that he had been ordered to pay it at once. The cheque was paid, and being forged, the bank was £150 out of pocket. It was a question of veracity between cashier and teller, and it was decided within the bank that the cashier had the better of it. Just then, too, old Fosdick slipped in a wrong figure in making up his day's account, and, though it made only a difference of twopence in the total, it seemed to prove that old age and carelessness had unfitted him for his position. The chairman being abroad, the board took the case under consideration and "by order" the old man was sent out into the world to begin life anew. There were resolutions, of course, and one of them was to the effect that the bank presented him with the sum of twenty pounds for long and faithful services.

He put on his hat without protest, and he left the bank without taking the money. At his humble home an old and anxious wife met him and, wifelike, gave him sympathy and encouragement first of all.

"Never mind, John; never mind," she kept saying. "We have a few pounds saved, and you are only fifty-five years old, and something good is sure to turn up. You have fought too long to give up now."

But the weeks went by, and nothing turned up. The business world has very little use for an old man who has no capital. John Fosdick's savings were gradually used up, the generosity of his few friends exhausted, and there came a day when the question of food and fuel became a serious one.

He was not one to sponge or turn beggar. If the world would not let him earn his food, at least he would go out of it and hope that his going would open the hearts of men towards his widow.

After pondering for an hour he started out with the firm intentionof drowning himself in the river.

It was a blustering November day, and as he passed the bank with bowed head, bent shoulders and well-worn garments, even those who had deprived him of his place felt a touch of sympathy. He was making for the suburbs and a highway bridge and wondering how long it would take to drown and what men would say of him when dead, when he caught sight of men and horses skulking behind an empty factory. It was singular, bound on such a mission as he was, that he should have seen or wondered and speculated on why those men and horses were there, but he had hardly passed the factory when he suddenly turned about and ran for the business part of the town with a speed that astonished himself.

In the vaults of the bank was a sum close upon £60,000, deposited there temporarily by a railway company. Outside the vault was a big safe containing £5,000 more. It was a quiet afternoon, with few people moving about. Over a hundred of the men living in town had gone over to the next town to an auction of real estate. There hadn't been a better opportunity for years to make a dash at the bank.

Of a sudden old John Fosdick, bareheaded and his gray hair flying, burst into the bank. He was speechless with his running, but he did not try to use his voice. He dashed open the gate and seized the heavy doors of the safe and closed them with a bang.

Several employés tried to seize him, thinking he had gone crazy, but he shook them off, and just as firing and shouting were heard in the street he slammed the door of the vault. He had only turned from it when four ruffians dashed into the bank, each with a pistol in hand, while three others remained outside and fired at every pedestrian in sight.

"Hands up and money out!" shouted one of the three who entered the bank, and in an instant every official and employé was covered.

The cashier gave in, and the others followed suit, but old John Fosdick stood up gamely under the deadly revolvers and quietly said:

"Gentlemen, this bank is closed for the day."

"Open the safe and vaults or I'll blow your brains out!"

"I have a key to neither."

"Take that!"

The old man sank with a bullet in his brain, and the white-faced cashier would have opened safe and vault with his own hands but for the arrival of assistance. A few citizens had gathered and killed one of the watchers and wounded another. This caused a stampede on the part of the desperadoes.

They did not even grab the money packages in sight, but hastened to get away as fast as possible. John Fosdick had not drowned himself, but he lay dead. He had been discharged on account of old age and carelessness, but his speed and acumen had saved the bank from being robbed. He wondered what men would say of him after death. They said he was a hero. He had hoped men would have pity on his aged widow. When he had been laid away, the bank voted her a life pension, the citizens and the railway company made up a public purse, and she wanted for nothing the rest of her life.

C. B. Lewis.

Digitized by Google

BY THE HEAD OF A MANDARIN.

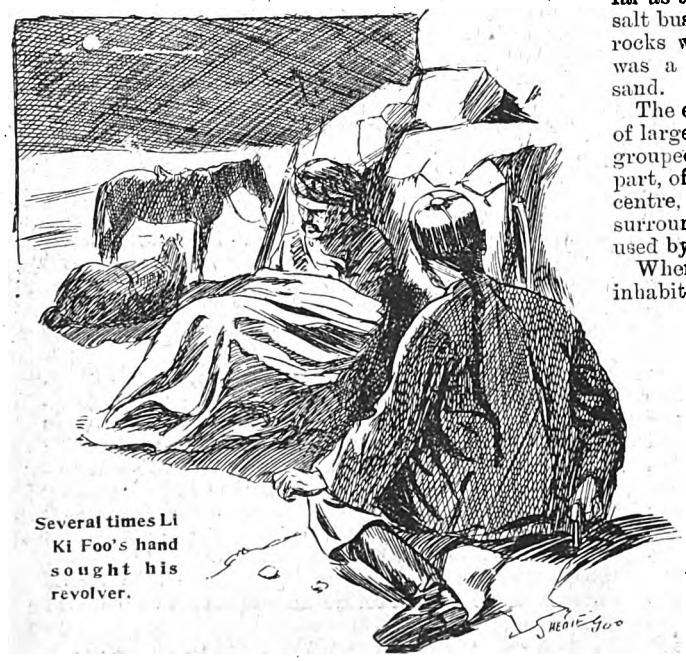
In Three Parts.

BY SADI GRANT.

PART III.

His first action on finding himself alone was to open the little box sent after him to Pekin. Inside were two small, flat, white cakes of some opaque substance, wrapped up carefully in cotton wool and then inclosed in small, neat, chamois-leather cases. They might have been mistaken for watches. Li Ki Foo placed these carefully in the two pockets of his embroidered waistcoat, then buttoned his straight jacket over. He wrote a few lines to Ah Cheh to tell him he had gone due east to the Tartar camp, to the camp of the Lusan tribe. These directions were enough, for when a large tribe like this were camped anywhere in the neighbourhood of a town, it was well-known in that town in which direction the encampment was. Then taking up a small bag already packed with necessaries, and pushing a Colt's revolver into his belt, Li Ki Foo was ready. He left his only attendant behind with the note for Ah Cheh, and rode forth alone and unattended, except by the Tartar, across the pathless waste of the great steppes.

His companion was mounted on a horse as good as his own, of a tireless breed, ugly and wiry, accustomed to scanty food and frequent fasts, and long journeys across the shifting sand. They talked as they rode of many things, and a pleasant kind of friendship sprang up between them, without, however, in the least imperilling their ultimate intentions—that of the Tartar Chief to force a ransom from his guest, or that of the guest to kill his host, if he could find freedom for his brother in no other way.



Several times Li Ki Foo's hand sought his revolver.

Long before the end of the ride, Li Ki Foo had a very shrewd idea of who his companion really was. There was a dignity and presence about him that could not well have belonged to a man of inferior position, also, on two or three occasions, he practically admitted his headship of the tribe. Several times when they bivouacked together under the shadow of the great desert rocks, Li Ki Foo's hand sought his revolver, and he felt tempted to blow the Tartar's brains out, and so dispose of his brother's greatest enemy.

Yet each time an immense distaste of such a deed stopped him; it was such an unsportsmanlike way of getting rid of an enemy, to murder him by night. When the faint lavender streaks of dawn stole along the edge of the steppe, and the night owl gave a farewell hoot to the crouching leopard, when all nature lay hushed in the arms of the rising day, such evil thoughts fled like ghosts. No, the fight, if fight there was, must be fair and open, and Li Ki Foo fell back on his saddlebags with a sigh of relief.

The Tartar was not so unconscious during those long night vigils as his friend imagined; he slept almost literally with one eye open, and had Li Ki Foo really tried to shoot him, he might not have found him so entirely unprepared as he imagined.

On the evening of the third day they approached the Tartar camp. Scattered goats and camels, in search of fresh green stuff, became frequent; the trees had long been left behind, and hundreds upon hundreds of miles of rolling plains, like the waves of the sea, stretched as far as the sight could reach. Patches of scrubby, short salt bush made dark patches here and there, and great rocks were scattered about; but the prevailing colour was a hopeless yellow—hundreds of miles of yellow sand.

The encampment was very rough and primitive, but of large extent, quite three hundred tents and huts were grouped together; the tents were made, for the most part, of a kind of rough sacking, but two or three in the centre, standing alone, twenty yards or so from the surrounding ones, were white, the usual travelling tent used by Europeans.

When the two horsemen were seen approaching, all the inhabitants of the camp crowded out to welcome them, and Li Ki Foo could be under no further doubt as to who his companion was. The women and children kept in the background, but the men came forward, roughly saluting the chief, and among them Li Ki Foo saw his brother. He rode up to him at once, the bystanders looking on curiously, but not attempting to interfere.

"Greeting, Li Ham," he said shortly.

"Greeting, O Li Ki Foo!" said Li Ham in return; "wherefore comest thou thus unattended, unless thou also art a prisoner of the Tartars?"

"I came but to bring thy ransom, my brother," said Li Ki Foo, so that all might

Digitized by Google

hear. "Till it arrives I tarry in the Tartar's camp with thee."

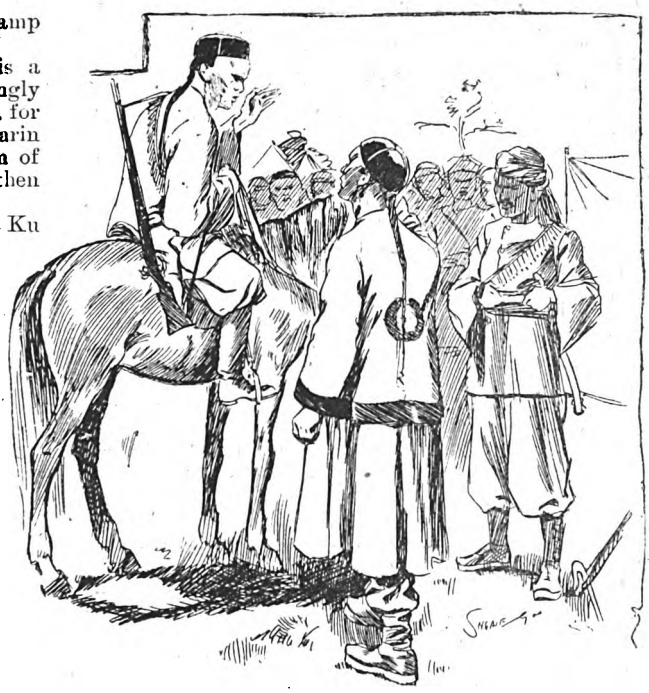
Li Ham did not look as if he considered this a specially good arrangement, still he was exceedingly relieved to hear the ransom was really on its way, for he had been by no means sure that the old Mandarin would consider him worth the loss of so large a sum of money. He assisted his brother to dismount and then turned with him to greet the Tartar Chief.

"Thou knewest not I was myself thy host," said Ku civilly, "yet it is so, and we are no worse friends for our journey across the steppes together. Where two brave men meet there treachery flies. Here art thou my honoured guest, O Li Ki Foo; rest in peace in the strangers' tent till thy brother's ransom comes here from Leh."

"I thank thee and accept thy hospitality," said the Chinaman, gravely, "the word of the Chief is security for the traveller. Yet may I share my brother's tent, O Chief, I would have an added debt of gratitude."

"A prisoner's hut is not the tent of a guest," said the Tartar, "rather may thy brother share the stranger's tent with thee."

So it was settled. Li Ham's wardrobe was not extensive, and his belongings were soon moved into the tent appointed for his brother's use. A large bowl of goat's milk and a long piece of a kind of black bread was brought for Li Ki Foo's refreshment, together with a message that the Chief expected both brothers to dine with him at sunset.



He rode up to him at once, the bystanders looking on curiously.

As soon as Li Ki Foo found himself alone with his brother, he hurriedly explained to him the plan of deliverance. This met with little favour from Li Ham, who would much have preferred that the ransom should have been paid in a straightforward manner without further risk to himself.

"Already have I lost a finger," he said sulkily. "It seems to me, my brother, a very poor chance that we have of not losing our lives. These Tartars draw back at nothing. Should Ku see these troops of which you talk surrounding him, he would murder us both without a moment's delay."

Li Ki Foo calmly took from his pocket the two small leather packets, and gave one to his brother.

"Thou hast heard of dynamite, Li Ham," he said. "Take this; it is a bomb, so constructed that a sudden blow will make it explode, and then one alone of these small packets contains sufficient dynamite to kill and destroy all within a radius of twenty yards. Take it and keep it, for it is possible I may be separated from you, when the attack of Ah Cheh's troops takes place."

Li Ham drew back.

"It is not a pleasant waistcoat companion, O my brother," he said fearfully, "art sure the heat of my body will not cause it to explode?"

"Have I not carried both from Kin Sin?" said Li Ki Foo contemptuously, "and am I yet dead? Take it and place it in safety, for I know not when I may have the chance of passing it to thee again."

Li Ham took the bomb and placed it with inward trembling in a small inner pocket.

"When thinkest thou Ah Cheh will arrive here?" he asked his brother.

"In two days at latest," said Li Ki Foo shortly. "I gave him orders to follow at once, and he left Leh but two days after me, so he should arrive here at dawn of the third day from now."

"And supposing," said Li Ham shrewdly, "that both thou and myself are overpowered by numbers, before we have time to throw the bombs, what then? It seems to me like enough. The Tartars are no fools."

"Of that we must take our chance," said Li Ki Foo, "there is of course a risk of such possibility."

"Not only a risk, but a great likelihood," said Li Ham angrily; "the Tartars number at least two hundred full grown men; say, if twenty are slain by thy infernal bomb, will not the remainder suffice to overpower two men?"

"The remainder will, I trust, be so blinded and astonished by the explosion, that we can escape," said Li Ki Foo; "also we must not resort to the bombs till our last extremity is reached, and then our troops should be close at hand."

Still he could not hide from Li Ham, or even from himself, that it was likely to be a risky business. Li Ham privately determined to use his bomb before the attack on the camp became known, if he had the opportunity. That evening they dined with the Chief, in the open air outside his tent. The wine was good, having been looted from a caravan of Persian merchants, who were crossing from Leh to Ispahan, but the food left much to be desired, broiled kabobs of very dry, poor meat, probably goats' flesh, and rice, followed by cheeses of camels' milk, and a lot of small dried figs, really the best things there at all. Ku informed his guests that a messenger had already been dispatched to the bank at Leh, with the order for the ten thousand taels, and that he trusted they would not be long detained.

"In the meantime the best my poor camp can offer is at your honours' disposal," he continued graciously; "also, in two or three days' time, I go to hunt the wild sheep of Thibet with thirteen of my best followers, and if you will, you can accompany us."

Digitized by Google

"How long do you propose being away from the camp, O Chief?" asked Li Ki Foo.

"But three days," answered Ku. "It is an opportunity for your Excellencies," he added politely, "to see something of the steppes and the wild country round the camp."

"I thank you," said Li Ki Foo, "ever have I much wished to explore strange countries and to see strange sights outside of mine own land."

Yet he was inwardly much perplexed, for he calculated that Ah Cheh was not due till the third day, and if anything happened to delay him he would find them gone. So time passed on till the evening of the second day and both brothers retired to their tent for the night, outwardly calm as usual, but inwardly very much perturbed. Instead of lying down and undressing as usual, they merely put out their oil lamp to divert suspicion, and then sat in the dark ready dressed for flight, sitting bolt upright to avoid falling asleep. A Tartar was mounting guard outside, but when all was quiet in the camp he, too, lay down on the rough ground, and was soon snoring as loudly as his companions in the tents. Li Ham crept cautiously out to the tent door and listened eagerly, but no sound could be heard on the still night air.

"If Ah Cheh plays us false," he muttered, "or even if he is delayed but a few hours, the plan will fail."

Across a small, open stretch of ground the moon shone brightly on the white tent of the Chief and on a guard of three men at the door. What an opportunity was this to get rid of Ku, swiftly and easily, by throwing the bomb across the open place! In a minute Li Ham's hand was in his pocket, and he held the bomb in his hand. He took off the outer coverings, and stood for a second looking at the flat, round cake that was capable of such murderous deeds. Then he lifted his hand to throw it.

"Stay!" cried Li Ki Foo, who had just come out to see what his brother was doing. But he was too late. The bomb had fallen short of the tent, but had struck a large stone outside sharply; instantly there was a terrific explosion. Sand and stones flew up in such blinding quantities it was impossible to see what damage was done. Both the Chinamen were thrown to the ground by the violence of the explosion. But they were too far off to be hurt, though their guard, who was only a few steps nearer, was killed by a fragment of rock falling on his head. Shrieks and cries came from every side, the camp was thoroughly woken up, and men rushed to the chief's tent from every quarter.

"Now is our time to escape, if ever," whispered Li Ham, and together they crawled out of the *débris* of their tent, and then, getting quickly to their feet, stole away as fast as possible to the outskirts of the now disorganised encampment. Nobody stopped them or asked where they were going, but they knew this state of things would not last for long, and they had better get away as soon as possible. They stumbled over tent ropes, and trod on many a sleeping dog, ere they reached the open plain. Here they looked in vain for any sign of Ah Cheh and his relieving force.

The first grey light of very early morning only enabled them to see a short distance, however, and they hoped as they went forward to meet him. Otherwise their case was hopeless indeed; there was no refuge of any kind for more than fifty miles, and they well knew that as soon as the Tartars had recovered the shock of their leader's death they would scour the plains around for their escaped prisoners. When caught, if caught they were, the vengeance of the Tartars would be terrible.

"Hadst thou but had patience," said Li Ki Foo, "all might have been well, but now, should Ah Cheh not appear in sight before two hours have passed, we are but dead men."

Li Ham did not reply, but marched on stolidly by his brother's side.

"Could we but secure two horses!" said Li Ki Foo, hopelessly.

"At the station where the outer guard lies," said Li Ham, "there saw I your horse but yesterday."

"Thou sayest not so?" said Li Ki Foo eagerly. "At all costs we must get him."

In the camp itself there were not more than thirty or forty horses, and these were kept in the centre and well guarded, as being the robbers' most valuable property. Li Ki Foo knew it was hopeless to think of getting them, but a single horse in an outside shed was a different thing. They stole up to the guard's hut silently, and looked in through an opening in the wall. Yes, there was the horse all right, but there was also a man sleeping on the ground beside him, fully armed. Li Ham being the lightest and smallest of the two, crept through the opening and dropped gently inside; then, quickly seizing the Tartar's short curved sword, he plunged it into the man's side twice. His victim simply groaned and rolled over dead; then Li Ham opened the door and led out the horse. The animal knew his master at once, and rubbed his head against his shoulder.

"For once must thou carry double, O Selim," said Li Ki Foo, patting his neck; "hasten, my brother, for the Tartars will be after us in a very short space."

Seizing the Tartar's sword, he plunged it into the man's side.

Digitized by Google

The bomb exploded with immense force in the face of the foremost Tartar.

Li Ham had re-entered the hut to take the dead Tartar's sword and knife, for both he and Li Ki Foo had been deprived of their weapons as soon as they had reached the camp. Now Li Ham came out and mounted quickly behind his brother. They rode away quickly straight across the steppe in the direction of Kin Sin.

Li Ki Foo was afraid to urge Selim too quickly forward. in case he should break down altogether; still they went at a good pace, and the camp was soon several miles away. The sun got hotter and hotter, and Selim began to show great signs of fatigue; but hope was in sight. Still far away they saw a cloud of dust, which betokened the movements of a large body of horsemen—without doubt it was Ah Cheh at last. Alas! before these had come properly in sight, another body of horsemen was seen riding towards them from the opposite direction, and these last were much nearer.

The Chinamen urged on their horse to the utmost, and he responded by a gallant effort, but they could see his strength was nearly exhausted, and the Tartars gained on them steadily. Li Ki Foo looked round and took in the situation at a glance.

Not far off was a clump of rocks, that would afford a slight shelter to them and their horse. He still had one dynamite bomb and Li Ham had the Tartar's sword and knife. They would fight for their lives yet. Ah Cheh was now only half-a-mile off. Li Ki Foo told his plan to his brother in a few short sentences, and riding up to the rocks, they quickly dismounted, and established themselves in the best position they could.

On came the Tartars, their curved swords gleaming in the sun. Li Ki Foo waited till they were close to the furthest rock before launching his only defence. Then he threw the bomb, and it exploded with immense force in the face of the foremost Tartar. Most of the Tartars were killed, or so wounded as to be incapable of further fighting, and the remaining few, after lingering round for a very short time, turned and rode back across the plain to their encampment, no doubt thinking it hopeless to stay and engage the enemy they saw coming on in such force, with their weakened numbers.

The Chinamen were nowhere to be seen, and their horse had torn away the bridle from its fastening, and was racing wildly over the steppes. Li Ki Foo and his brother were not dead, however, but they were insensible and half-buried by earth and stones; when Ah Cheh came up he soon unearthed them. Ah Cheh was not surprised by the explosion, for he had expected the packet sent to Pekin contained something of the kind, and he was thankful to find it had not killed the aggressors, as well as the aggressed.

He and a few of his little army stayed behind with his master, but the rest went on, under the command of the head soldier. They had come out for the purpose of looting the Tartar camp, and it was a pity they should be disappointed, according to Ah Cheh's own opinion.

The soldiers found, however, they had no easy task, for the men who turned back after the explosion gave warning of their coming, and the camp was fully prepared for their onslaught. Men fight hard when they fight for their lives and the whole of their earthly belongings, and in time the Chinamen were driven back. They got, however, the thousand taels Li Ki Foo had promised in the first place, though it did not come to very much, when divided among so many.

Li Lang Hi welcomed his sons back with satisfaction, but he was more convinced than ever that the magic of the English, though useful was diabolical; and he recommended both sons, for the good of their souls, to put all foreign explosives and barbarian devices aside for the future, and trust only to the wisdom of China, the sharpness of her swords, and the beguiling deceit of true Chinese diplomacy.

"BESIEGED WITH B.-P."

A complete record of the Siege of Mafeking.

By J. EMERSON NEILLY.

War Correspondent of the "Pall Mall Gazette" in Mafeking.

Crown 8vo, Price 1s. net.
Post Free, 1s. 3d.

"Mr. Neilly tells admirably the thrilling story of the siege."—*Scotsman.*

"As a realistic picture of how things actually happen, no less than a worthy record of one of the most splendid incidents of our history, 'Besieged with B.-P.' is a notable book."—*Pall Mall Gazette.*

At all Railway Bookstalls and Booksellers.

C. ARTHUR PEARSON LTD., HENRIETTA STREET, W.C.

Digitized by Google

SHORT STORIES ABOUT ELEPHANTS.

We devote, every week, two pages of *Short Stories* to pithy, humorous anecdotes similar to those which appear in these columns. A prize of £1 1s. will be sent to the reader who submits the best storyette this week, and a copy of "The Lucky Bargee," by Harry Lander, to each of those whose attempts are used. The anecdotes may be either original or selected; in the latter case the source *must* be stated. The prize of One Guinea offered for the best Storyette in this competition has been won this week by Mr. John T. Murdoch, 8 West Adam Street, Edinburgh. Attempts this week must deal with Stories about XMAS FESTIVITIES, and must reach the Storyette Editor, *Short Stories* Office, Henrietta Street, Strand, London, W.C., by Monday, December 17th. Post-cards only, please.

Charlie Got Jealous.

THEY were at the menagerie last Christmas. He looked a very shy young man, and the girl who leant on his arm was—well, one of Edinburgh's bonnie lassies.

When they came to the elephant the girl nervously (?) tugged at the young man's arm and exclaimed:

"Oh, Charlie, will it bite?"

"No, dear, of course not," said the young man with wonderful temerity, "elephants can't bite, but they can hug."

"Oh, Charlie!" said the girl, with a distracting smile, "I don't mind that."

And Charlie got so jealous he took her to see the tiger.

J. T. M.

Funny!

WHILE spending an evening at Belle Vue last week, I was watching an elephant—which had been giving rides—drinking at the lake, when two lads about twelve years of age came along.

One of them looked knowingly at the tremendous animal for a minute, and then, taking the other by the sleeve, pointed to the elephant, saying:

"Push him in, Tommy."

H. C. G. S.

Elephants Served Up Whole.

AT a certain restaurant not a hundred miles from Henrietta Street, it is the boast of the management that you have only to ask for a particular dish to get your wants supplied.

The other day a gentleman entered its portals and inquired of the obsequious waiter what he could have for lunch.

"Oh, anything you like, sir," replied the menial, "from a salted sausage to a pickled elephant."

"Oh, very well," replied the customer. "I'll have pickled elephant."

"Yes, sir," and the waiter disappeared to come up smiling a minute later with the announcement:

"I forgot to mention, sir, that we only serve our pickled elephants whole—we don't supply them in slices. If you think a whole one too much, we have some ham and chicken I can recommend."

He had ham and chicken.

J. B.

True Story of an Elephant.

A STORY is told of a civilian elephant that was employed in a timber yard. A number of logs had to be moved by him, and only one remained when the bell rang for ceasing work.

Of course the elephant knew the bell and what it meant, and was sauntering away, when the foreman bade him move the last log.

He did not object, but with all his tugging and straining did not manage to lift it. Seeing this, the foreman called up a second elephant to help, but even the two together did no good—the log could not be stirred. It must be left.

Next day, to the foreman's astonishment, when the bell rang for beginning work, the first elephant marched straight up to the log, lifted it quite easily, and carried it to its proper place.

One can only think that the clever fellow said in his heart, and told his companion:

"It's an awful shame to make us go on working when the bell has rung, so let us pretend we can't move the log!"

J. G. B.

Animal Friendships.

WILD elephants sometimes make devoted friends of other animals.

A party of hunters in Central Africa once wounded a large bull elephant, which, travelled scores of miles into the jungle, after receiving the heavy bullet in his shoulder.

The chase was abandoned for the time, but a fortnight later the hunters came upon the same beast. He was lying on his injured side near a stream in a dense forest. A buffalo cow was standing over the fallen monarch, gently licking the blood from the wound.

Frequently she would leave him and go to the stream, and by pawing at its edge toss a lot of water upon the rank grass within reach of the elephant's trunk. It was probably in this way that refreshing moisture had been conveyed to the fevered and suffering giant, keeping him alive.

The hunters were divided as to whether the elephant should be put out of his misery. It was finally decided to give him a chance for his life under the nursing of the cow.

Several weeks later, when the party were making their way back towards the course, they came across a lame elephant attended by a buffalo cow. The pair were not molested.

S. A. C.

Digitized by Google

Almost Human.

A valuable elephant contracted a virulent disease of the eyes, and after suffering with it for a few days became blind.

His owner called in a surgeon, who, after examining the elephant's eyes, applied nitrate of silver to one of them, and the elephant, uttering a roar of pain, jumped up and behaved in such an outrageous fashion that it was some hours before he could be calmed down and secured.

The application was successful, the sight of the one eye being almost entirely restored.

The surgeon was willing to operate on the other eye if the elephant was properly secured before the operation. However, the elephant had recognised the doctor's voice, and, to everybody's astonishment, followed him of his own accord, lay down without any persuasion, placing his head on one side with the diseased eye upward, then curled up his trunk and drew in a deep breath, like any human being might do who was about to undergo a painful operation, and awaited the doctor's pleasure.

J. B.

Simpson's Experience.

We had all told the best "yarn" we could think of, with the exception of Simpson.

"Now, come along, old man," said one, "what about that elephant business?"

Simpson fell back in his chair.

"Don't! don't!" he cried, "don't ask me to describe that horrible affair."

Everyone was instantly interested.

It took about fifteen minutes before he was finally persuaded to tell us his experience.

For half-an-hour he kept us all spellbound with the graphic description of how he was chased by a huge elephant in an Indian jungle.

"At last," he continued, "I got my chance. Dropping on one knee, I took accurate aim, and if it hadn't been for that confounded servant shaking me to say that 'breakfast was ready,' that elephant would undoubtedly have lost an eye."

H. C.

Engine and Elephant.

In certain parts of India railway engineers have many difficulties to encounter, some of them more amusing to read about than to experience. Of one such difficulty, the following story is told:

"A freight train was lumbering along, when a big elephant came out of the woods and undertook to butt the engine off the track. The engineer did not like to charge the brute, for fear of an upset, and several times reversed the engine, in the vain hope that the elephant would take that as a sign of surrender, and retire.

"Finally the elephant backed into the engine, and, setting its forefeet firmly between the rails, endeavoured to push the train backward with its hindquarters.

"The engineer promptly put on all steam, toppled the elephant over a small embankment, and before it could recover its senses, the train passed on."

E. R.

Where Ignorance is Bliss.

A party of seven excursionists from the vicinity of Manchester were, a few weeks since, perambulating about the shore at Seacombe, opposite Liverpool, and, seeing several flats and schooners lying high and dry on the beach, the tide being out at the time, one of the party turned round to a friend of his and said:

"I say, Bill, how do them there fellows get their vessels down in th' water?"

"Can't say," was the response.

"Well," returned Bill, "I'll know afore I go whoam to-neet."

On the party went, and at last, on coming to a schooner where one of the seamen was seated at the stern, Bill, to satisfy his curiosity, goes up and thus interrogates the sailor:

"I say, maister, how d'ye manage to get vessel into water?"

"Why, we don't put the schooner into the water; the water comes up to her."

Bill chuckled and, placing the tip of his thumb to the end of his probosc's, roared out:

"Gammon! thou'rt not old enough to joke us Manchester fowk."

A. W. H.

Well, Have You Done the "Twenty Teazer"?

ISN'T IT A LITTLE RASCAL?
CAN YOU DO IT?
CAN YOUR FRIENDS DO IT?

It is One of the most Teazing Teazers that ever Teazed a Teazed Public.

It is not much to look at. You would think there was nothing in it. You would think you could do it on your head in the dark. But you can't.

You sit down at a table after tea with the "Twenty Teazer" in front of you, and you say to your wife, "Now, just time me, and see how quickly I can do this alleged 'Teazer!'" And then you begin.

About two in the morning your wife comes down in her dressing-gown with a candle to find you grovelling on the ground with your coat off and your collar undone, hunting round for the fifth square block of wood which you are convinced must have been in the box.

But you are wrong: there are only four, and the "Teazer" *can* be unteazed.

One point, however, you should bear in mind, that it is not necessary for the numerals to be all facing the same way. Some of them may be upside down, others may be end on, just as you fancy.

THE PRICE IS SIXPENCE,

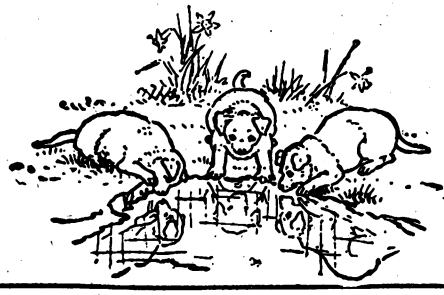
and you can get it from any newsagent or bookstall clerk.

NEXT WEEK THE . . .

CHRISTMAS DOUBLE NUMBER
OF
SHORT STORIES
will be here.
ORDER IT NOW. PRICE 2d.

Digitized by Google

WAS IT A FAILURE?



"It is just like a Beauty and the Beast, only the pity is—there is no Beast!"

The remark and the complaint were made by rather a plain young girl below a wall overhung with a mass of red and pink roses. There was an air of romance about the garden, where she was wandering alone, although it was only the garden of a hotel; but then the hotel was in Italy, the land of romance. It was growing late for the lake season; the crowd of English visitors had gone by; the heat was becoming fierce; people hurried off by the passes to the cool snowy uplands of Switzerland.

In all the Grand Hotel de Bellagio there were only two people left. Their names, as they called each other, were "Auntie" and "Hetty"; or, as they were written up on the hall-board, "Mrs. Kerrhurst, Angleterre; Miss Douglas, Angleterre."

There was a certain charm in finding that the whole place—the great spacious hotel, with its salons and verandahs, its wide marble stairs and corridors, its gardens lying along the lakeside with seats and shady walks—was at their sole disposal.

For, if the evening steamboats happened to bring a few travellers—some Russians, some German-American Jews, a German bridal pair—the boat, early the following morning, was generally certain to take them all away again, and leave the place empty during the hot still day.

Hetty often thought, as they sat down to their solitary breakfast of a morning in the long stately *salle-à-manger*, with its polished floors and carved and panelled walls, with its vast windows, which let in the scent from the magnolia-trees, and its suite of unemployed servants waiting listlessly about—she often thought it was like living in a fairy tale, where there was a palace all in readiness, but whose owner never appeared.

"That is the worst of it," she complained. "It is very nice being alone, auntie, but I must say I should like to see the Beast."

To which "Auntie" would respond: "Perhaps when he comes he will complain he can see no Beauty."

Mrs. Kerrhurst, who had lived in India, maintained that the secret in hot weather is to keep the shutters and windows closed, so she spent her days in her room at the back of the house, but Hetty, despite her aunt's deprecations that she was growing hopelessly sunburnt, preferred descending the broad terrace-steps, crossing the *parterre*, aglow with all-coloured flowers, and wandering about with her books under the leafy colonnade by the lakeside. She never tired of watching the wonderful changes which passed over the mountains, whose velvet-like green slopes rose sheer out of the water, nor of noting the lights and shadows over the distant snow-crowned peaks.

One day "the Beast" appeared. Hetty found him in possession of her favourite seat—the little corner bower in the uppermost path of the garden, where a yellow jasmine strewed its blossoms on the ground. There was no mistaking his nationality—it was "Milord Anglais" every inch. Age, apparently over fifty; an iron-grey moustache, keen, severe grey eyes, a forehead furrowed with melancholy lines, an expression both sad and savage.

That was the vision which from henceforth haunted the garden and *salons*. He was always alone, never spoke to anyone, always looked miserable and defiant. At *table d'hôte* he sat silent and rigid between some noisy foreigners, or generally he dined at a little side table alone. But Hetty was not repelled.

"I should like to make him look a little happy," she said. And she undertook the mission.

From that time the waiters—according to whose caprice people are either thrown together or kept apart at the *tables d'hôte*—ruled that the seats of the three English people should be placed side by side. And from the informal introduction: "Will you pass the salt, please?" Hetty made her starting-point. At first she met with anything but brilliant success. Colonel Wyse (as his name was registered on the hall-board) met her advances with chill sternness.

His answers were not so much blunt or brusque as grimly indifferent. He did not admire the lake scenery; he did not call it hot; he did not think much of Bellagio; he did not like Italy or anything Italian, it was quite a mistake of Hetty's to consider it a matter of regret that no more English arrived; it was a still greater mistake to imagine that foreigners were better than nobody; he hated foreigners; he detested the scent of magnolias, and wished that all the trees might die; he considered nightingales a downright plague, and had risen in the night to fling a piece of soap out of the window, which had gained him the satisfaction of dislodging twelve from one bush.

Everything he said was as though it were forced unwillingly from him. A shy person would soon have been discouraged; conversation must have flagged had it depended on him; but Hetty chattered unceasingly. She was not long in discovering that the Engineer Colonel, notwithstanding his haughty, forbidding mien, was in reality possessed by a certain shyness not uncommon to the corps; but, being one of those shy people who are the very last to own to it, he had grown accustomed to cover his shyness with an air of savageness. Most who met him were afraid of him; he had no friends; he travelled about for his health from place to place, lonely, *blasé*, discontented, suffering. The bright girl with the sunny smile at Bellagio, who insisted on making him talk, was a wonderful exception to the general rule of acquaintances, who, however

Digitized by Google

sociably disposed, always ended in giving up their efforts as quite hopeless. But Hetty talked and laughed on—never sought for subjects suitable to his gravity—chattered away about the merest, most frivolous girlish trifles—anything that came uppermost; showed him her hands tanned to nut-brown by the morning's row; asked his advice what to do with them; consulted him on the colour of a silk scarf she intended to purchase; described a "spoony" scene she had witnessed in the arbour between a demonstrative German bridal couple. It was like sunshine on ice. A thaw set in—day by day the morose engineer relaxed, listened, grew interested in the girl as a comical study, was known to smile grimly, left off saying sarcastic things, grew less cynical and more gracious. Hetty began to be triumphant. The look of melancholy changed to something more like happiness when she was near.

She thought it a great discovery when she found out there were two things he liked—one was music, the other was tea—but he never met with either to his taste, so he said. However, Hetty's playing seemed to please him, for every evening, when she sat down to the piano in the empty public *salon*, he brought his cigar to the seat nearest the door, just outside in the verandah, and smoked there in the summer twilight so long as the music continued.

Hetty played as she talked—on and on—and never expected polite observations between whiles, such as "That is very pretty; who is the composer of that piece?" She seemed to play for herself more than for outsiders; no one was expected to listen unless he liked.

"I do not believe anybody can make better tea than I can," announced Hetty confidently. And the next rainy day there came a knock at Colonel Wyse's room, where he was spending a cheerless afternoon, and the *femme de chambre* of the stage presented a cup of hot, fragrant tea, with the compliments of the ladies of No. 14.

Quite a sweet smile accompanied the thanks for that cup of tea the next time they met. Then came an invitation to see the tea made; and at five o'clock one day Colonel Wyse found a welcome to Mrs. Kerrhurst's private *salon*, where Hetty was busy with spirits of wine and an Etna-lamp.

"This is the primitive way in which we do things abroad," said Hetty, with a wave of a solitary spoon towards two cups set out without any saucers, and a tiny china teapot with a broken handle. "This is my pet little old teapot which I bought in the market at Verona once. It is of no use carrying saucers; they take up too much room, and always get broken in the packing. We take turns with the spoon; it is the only one my aunt's butler would allow us to bring from home. But, oh! dear, I did not know we had eaten all the last *pane dolce*. Wait a minute; I will be back directly."

And Hetty snatched her hat and ran out of the room, leaving her aunt to ring for another cup and spoon, and to talk to Colonel Wyse about India and the people they mutually remembered there.

In a few minutes, indeed, back came Hetty breathless, bearing in triumph what she called a *pane dolce*—a round light cake with raisins.

"Do you patronise that quaint little baker's shop under the arcades, Colonel Wyse? That is where I have been. I told the woman I could not wait for paper and string, and had brought no *centesimi*. She always says '*Fa niente*.' Now the tea is ready."

Colonel Wyse thought it the pleasantest tea-party he had ever known, and all the better for the absence of silver equipage and liveried footman, and the state and formality of an English drawing-room. But it must have been the sociable charms of the tea-maker and his hostess which made the real difference.

"Hetty has set her heart on rowing to San Giovanni by moonlight," said Mrs. Kerrhurst. "The moon does not rise until ten o'clock; if you would not think that too late, and would care to finish your cigar on the water, we shall be very glad."

It was not at all the sort of thing in the Colonel's "line."

"What difference does it make in a place whether the moon or the sun is shining?" he inquired of Hetty at that evening's *table d'hote*, when she alluded in joyous raptures to the prospect.

"Oh, if you do not know, I am afraid I cannot explain," she answered, a little puzzled; "except," she added lucidly—"except that it is the difference between sunlight and moonlight. Besides, the moon makes everything look so romantic."

"Ah, all romance was knocked out of me long ago."

"Oh, what a pity!" said the young girl, looking so sorry for him.

It may have been that he found it refreshing to watch the fresh glow of romance in somebody young and happy; at any rate, he was in the boat, which glided over the moonlight water, by garden walls overhung with roses, and by ilex copses where the nightingales sang, until it reached the broad, weird flight of stone stairs, bordered by cypresses, leading up the hill from the village of San Giovanni; and if the musical clang of the bells from the church campanile was nothing but a common sound to him, it may yet have been a pleasant change to be with one to whom they spoke the purest poetry.

Days and nights passed—a month flew—and Colonel Wyse, who had intended staying only a few days, still lingered on at Bellagio. They were happier days than he had known for many years—so happy that it was becoming dangerous. Circumstances threw the three English people very often together. A wonderful new feeling began to make its way into the self-hardened heart of the man who had grown accustomed to find this world a rough, cold place. At first he looked upon it as a mere madness, a wild impossibility; but the feeling forced its own way, and for a little while he indulged it.

Suddenly an influx of other English arrived at the hotel. They were a large party of mostly young people, all of whom proved to be friends of Mrs. Kerrhurst's and of Hetty's. They absorbed Hetty. All day—at the *tables d'hôte*, in the garden, on the water, in the veranda—she was surrounded by some of them. They were all so young and so happy; and the poor old Colonel, looking on, began to feel old and unhappy again. He never felt so old or so unhappy as when he saw a certain Alan Thornton helping Hetty in and out of the boats, laughing and talking with her under the trees.

"It is natural, quite natural," thought he, resigning himself to the loss of Hetty's companionship, and never for a moment guessing of the comparison Hetty, in her own mind, was making between some young men and some older men, nor how strongly she decided that the empty-headed class, who could talk of nothing but balls and theatres and races, were a great mistake; and that others who had "lived," and who possessed brains

Digitized by Google

and sense, were far more to be admired and appreciated. Often, in the midst of Mr. Thornton's light rattling talk, she remembered with regret one of Colonel Wyse's blunt speeches.

"You must miss your friends," said Colonel Wyse, when they all departed, and Hetty's chair was once more moved up next his.

"Ye-es," said Hetty, "I shall miss the girls; but it is pleasant to have the place to ourselves again, I think. It seems like old times to be sitting at this end of the table again."

Her undisguised pleasure at that fact was not lost upon her neighbour.

The next day he said abruptly:

"I am going to England to-morrow."

It was a surprising piece of news; for it had been a long-settled thing that he and they should meet again in August, since both were bound for the same place in Switzerland. There was apparently no urgent reason for such a reversal of plans. He only said he had changed his mind; and if Mrs. Kerrhurst and Hetty had known Colonel Wyse better, they would have been aware that that was a thing he had rarely done in the course of his life before.

They were sorry; they had grown accustomed to their quaint companion and friend, whom, in the privacy of their own rooms, Hetty still called "the Beast," but she used the name as a term of affection.

"If there is anything I can do for you in London I hope you will let me know," said Colonel Wyse, as he gave the address of his club to Mrs. Kerrhurst, who, with Hetty, was remaining on the Continent for another year. Mrs. Kerrhurst happened to say something about the pleasantness of returning home to England, and to the welcome of friends. "I have no friends who will be glad to see me, nobody cares whether I am in the country or out of it." It was said so sadly that it wrung Hetty's heart with pity. "After all, my mission has failed." She sighed to herself, for since many days she had observed that all the sad lines had come back, that the face wore a look of greater suffering than even before.

"Good-bye," said he, with one firm grip of her hand as the steamboat came plying across the lake from the opposite shore, and he managed to smile as he said it. But Hetty's face had lost all smiles. Passengers and luggage were conveyed on board from the little pier at the garden gates, the ropes were loosened and thrown on land, "A col·ico?" sounded the peculiarly accented familiar shout, and the boat pushed off. Hetty stood among the roses on the terrace and waved a farewell.

"Might I have succeeded?" Colonel Wyse asked himself afterwards, as he remembered her face, from which the sunshine had fled.

Good, generous old "Beast:" Rather than put her to the test—rather than sacrifice one so young and bright—he, who was so much older, so broken down in health and dismal, had resolved that he would go away before his feelings should deepen—would go away and leave her to a better fate.

Of course, he never guessed what a dreary place Hetty found the beautiful garden by the lakeside after he had gone, and how "unwarrantably sorry" (as she called it to herself) she felt for the next few days.

"I can never forget your kindness at Bellagio. I am going to try the climate of Algiers for the winter," said a letter dated from the United Service Club, which was received by Mrs. Kerrhurst in the following autumn.

Before the winter was ended Hetty had given her heart to someone who, to her mind, combined youth, and brains, and fun, and every other charm to be desired.

They were married in London during the season and went to Italy for their honeymoon.

"What are you reading?" Hetty's husband asked one morning.

Hetty was absorbed in an open letter, over which she had begun to laugh softly, and had just exclaimed, with fervent warmth, "I am glad—so very glad." In answer to the question, she looked up and explained.

"It is a letter inclosed by auntie. Come and read it too. It is from a friend auntie and I once made in our travels. He has written to her. He was lonely and very miserable. I tried to cheer him, but in the end I quite, quite failed."

The foreign letter-paper was principally filled with a long, well-written description of Algiers. The writer hoped Mrs. Kerrhurst and "Miss Douglas" were well—he was feeling much better himself. At the very end of the letter he said there was a small item of intelligence he wished to tell them—he was going to be married. To this bare news was added no detail whatsoever—only a few half-apologetic remarks; he feared that in his frail state of health it might be thought unfair, but he had not acted without full consideration, and he was weary of the selfish, profitless life he had been leading.

"It is the very best thing for him that could possibly have happened," wrote Hetty to Mrs. Kerrhurst; "but I must say it is the most surprising thing, and the last thing I should ever have expected to hear. I always thought he was a confirmed 'old bachelor.' Try to find out who his wife is to be and what she is like."

But there was no one to ask—there was no one who knew more about him than they knew themselves. All they could ever hear was through the same friends who had been at Bellagio. They once told Hetty they had met "her old beau" at Montreux, travelling with a wife who, although not a child like herself, was still young compared to him, but that he had become surprisingly young again himself, and looked surprisingly happy.

Hetty never found their descriptions of the wife satisfying to her curiosity. It is easy to say that So-and-so is "fair," "tall," "slight," "rather pretty," "seems to be musical"; but the same adjectives apply to other people, and out of them Hetty could not frame to her fancy a living character. She could only feel glad there was some one to make the lonely life happy at last.

As the years went by, Hetty quite lost sight of her strange friend of those few summer weeks on the Lake of Como; but she remembered him and them together, and it was with a touch of real regret that she heard, not long since, of his death. But she likes to think that the end had been brightened, and that in the final failing of strength, there had been one near with the right and power to help. She had longed to make him happier; and although she still believes that it was "quite, quite a failure," she rejoices that, in a better way than any she could ever have planned, a happier time did come.

But "auntie" has her own thoughts. She feels sure that one thing led to another—that the generous earnest efforts of those summer days were not thrown away—that it was an unconscious girl's sunny influence which had won a way through the fast-locked door of a heart which had isolated itself from all life's sweet links, and that it was the same influence which unintentionally had raised a longing for a better state, which afterwards was sought and found.

Eleanor L. de Butts.

Digitized by Google

How a Child Was Illegally Patented.

SOME time last winter a lady, whom we will call Mrs. Smith, took her little girl, aged four, with her to make a call on Mrs. Robinson, her near neighbour. Mrs. Robinson was busy in her kitchen, where she received her visitor with her usual cordiality.

There was a large fire blazing in the stove, and while the ladies were excitedly discussing the new bonnet of the local Methodist minister's wife, the little girl imprudently sat down on the stove-hearth. She was instantly convinced that the stove-hearth was exceedingly hot, and on loudly mentioning the fact was rescued by her mother and carried home for medical treatment.

A few days later Mrs. Smith burst in great excitement into the office of a young lawyer, and with tears and lamentations disclosed to him the fact that her child was indelibly branded with the legend, "Patented, September, 1892."

These words, in raised letters, had happened to occupy just that part of the stove-hearth upon which the child had seated herself, and, being heated almost to red-heat, they had reproduced themselves upon the surface of the unfortunate child.

The lawyer entered into the mother's sorrow with much sympathy, but, after he had in some degree calmed her mind, he informed her that a breach of the law had been committed.

"Your child," he remarked, "has never been patented, but she is, nevertheless, marked, 'Patented, September, 1892.' This is an infringement of the statute. You falsely represent by that brand that a child for whom no patent was ever issued is patented. This false representation is forgery, and subjects you to the penalties made and provided for that crime."

Mrs. Smith was, as may be supposed, greatly alarmed at hearing this statement, and her first impulse was to beg the young man to save her from a convict's cell. With a gravity suited to the occasion, he explained the whole law of patents. He told her that had she desired to patent the child she should have either constructed drawings with specifications, showing distinctly what parts of the child she claimed to have invented.

The model, or these drawings, she should have forwarded to the Patent Office, and she would then have received in due time a patent—provided, of course, the child was really patentable—and would have been authorised to label it, "Patented."

"Unfortunately," he pursued, "it is now too late to take this course, and we must boldly claim that a patent was issued, and has been in some unaccountable way lost in the Patent Office."

This suggestion cheered the spirits of Mrs. Smith, but they were again lowered by the further remarks of the young man. He reminded her that the child might find it very inconvenient to be patented.

"If we claim," he went on to say, "that she had been regularly patented, it follows that the ownership of the patent, including the child herself, belongs to you, and will pass at your death into the possession of your heirs. Holding this patent, they can prevent any husband from taking possession of the girl by marriage, and they can sell, assign, transfer, and set over the patent-right and the accompanying girl to any purchaser.

"If she is sold to a speculator, or to a joint-stock company, she will find her position a most unpleasant one. To sum up the case, madam, either your child is patented or she is not. If she is not patented, you are guilty of forgery. If she is patented, she is an object of barter and sale, or, in other words, a chattel."

This was certainly a wretched state of things, and Mrs. Smith, in order to ease her mind, began to abuse Mrs. Robinson, whose stove had branded the unfortunate little girl. She loudly insisted that the whole fault rested with Mrs. Robinson, and demanded to know if the latter could not be punished.

The young man, who was immensely learned in the law, thereupon began a new argument. He said that where there is a wrong there must be a remedy.

"Mrs. Robinson," he continued, "by means of her stove has done you a great wrong. In accordance with the maxim, *Qui facit per alium facit per se*, Mrs. Robinson, and not the stove, is the party from whom you must demand redress. She has wickedly and maliciously branded your child, and thus rendered you liable for an infringement of the patent law.

"It is my opinion, madam, that an action for assault, and an action for libel will both lie against Mrs. Robinson, and that there is also ground for having her indicted for procurement of forgery."

Finally, after much further argument, the lawyer advised Mrs. Smith to apply to a magistrate and procure the arrest and punishment of Mrs. Robinson. Accordingly, Mrs. Smith applied to a magistrate, who, after vainly trying to comprehend the case, and to find out what was the precise crime alleged against Mrs. Robinson, compromised the matter by unofficially asking that lady to appear before him.

When both the ladies were in court, Mrs. Smith, prompted by the clerk, put in her complaint in the shape of a charge that Mrs. Robinson had feloniously branded the youthful Smith girl. The latter was then marked, "Exhibit A," and formally put in evidence, and both complainant and defendant told their respective stories. The result was that the court, in a very able and voluminous opinion, decided that nobody was guilty of anything, but that with a view of avoiding the penalty of infringing the patent law, Mrs. Smith must apply to Parliament for a special Act, declaring the child legally and regularly patented. If Parliament finds time to attend to this important matter, little Miss Smith will be the first girl ever patented, and the legal profession in all English-speaking countries will watch with unflagging interest the lawsuits to which in future any infringement of the patent may lead.

W. E. PARSONS.

Digitized by Google

A REGULAR MESS.

SOME six years back in the beautiful village of Minoge, an old lady kept the big tea-house of the place known as the "White Pine."

Minoge is situated at the base of the holy mountain Oyama, and during the months of August and September trade in Minoge was always brisk, on account of the influx of pilgrims from all parts of Japan, who came hither to perform the holy duty of ascending the mountain, and of paying their devoirs at the shrine of the Thunder-God, previous to making the grand pilgrimage of Fuji-Yama.

The old lady was well off, and her inn bore an unblemished reputation of possessing the prettiest serving-girls, the gayest guest-chambers, and the primest stewed eels—the dish *par excellence* of Japanese gourmets—of any hostelry in the country side. One of her daughters was married in Yeddo, and a son was studying in one of the European colleges of that city; still she was as completely rustic and unacquainted with the march of affairs outside as if she had never heard of Yeddo, much less of foreigners. At that time it was a very rare thing indeed, for a foreigner to be seen in Minoge, and the stray artists and explorers who had wandered there were regarded much in the same way as would have been so many white elephants.

It caused, therefore, no little excitement in the village when, one fine autumn evening, the rumour came along that a foreigner was making his way towards the "White Pine."

Everyone tried to get a glimpse of him. The chubby-cheeked boys and girls at school threw down their books and pens, and crowded to the door and windows; the bath-house was soon empty of its patrons and patronesses, who, red as lobsters with boiling water, and dishevelled locks and garments hastily bound round them, formed line outside; the very Yakunin, or mayor, sentenced a prisoner he was judging straight off, without bothering himself to inquire into evidence, so as not to be baulked of the sight, and every wine and barber's shop sent forth its quota of starers into the little street.

Meanwhile the foreigner was leisurely striding along. He was taller by far than the tallest man in Minoge, his hair was fair, and even his bronzed face and hands were fair compared to those of the natives. On the back of his head was a felt wide-awake, he wore a blue jacket and blue half-trousers (*Anglice*, knickerbockers), thick hose, and big boots. In his mouth was a pipe—being much shorter than Japanese smoking tubes—in his hand a stick, and on his back a satchel.

As he passed, one or two urchins, bolder than the rest, shouted out "Tojin baka" ("Foreign beast") and instantly fled indoors, or behind their mothers' skirts; but the majority of the villagers simply stared, with an occasional interjection expressive of wonder at his height, fair hair, and costume.

At the door of the "White Pine" he halted, unstrapped his bundle, took off his boots, and in very fair Japanese requested to be shown to his room. The old lady, after a full ten minutes' posturing, complimenting, bowing, and scraping, ushered him into her best guest-chamber. "For," she said, "being a foreigner, he must be rich, and wouldn't like ordinary pilgrim accommodation." And she drew to the sliding screens, and went off to superintend his repast. Although nothing but the foreigner's boots were to be seen outside, a gaping crowd had collected, striving to peer through the cracks in the doors, and regarding the boots as if they were infernal machines. One, more enterprising than the rest, took a boot up, passed it to his neighbour, and in a short time it had circulated from hand to hand throughout the population of Minoge, and was even felt and pinched by the mayor himself, who replaced it with the reverence due to some religious emblem or relic.

Then the hostess served up her banquet—seaweed, sweets, raw "tighe"—the salmon of Japan—in slices, garnished with turnips and horse-radish, egg soup with pork lumps floating in it, chicken delicately broiled, together with a steaming bottle of her choicest "San Toku Shiu," or wine of the Three Virtues (which keeps out the cold, appeases hunger, and induces sleep).

The foreigner made an excellent meal, eked out by his own white bread, and wine from a flask of pure silver, then, lighting his pipe, reclined at full length on the mats, talking to the old lady and her three damsels, O Hana, O Kiku, and O Riu (Miss Flower, Miss Chrysanthemum, and Miss Dragon). He was walking about the country simply for pleasure, he said—which astonished the women greatly—he had been away from Yokohama three weeks, and was now on his road to the big mountain.

The party were soon screaming with laughter at his quaint remarks, and at his occasional colloquial slips, and in a short time all were such good friends that the old lady begged him to display the contents of his satchel.

"Certainly," said the stranger, pulling it towards him and opening it.

A dirty flannel shirt or two didn't produce much impression—perhaps wares of a similar nature had been imported before into Minoge—nor did a hairbrush, tooth-brush, and comb; but when he pulled out a pistol, which was warranted to go off six times in as many seconds, and proceeded to exemplify the same in the air, popular excitement began to assert itself in a series of "naruhodas" ("really!")

Digitized by Google

Then he pulled a portable kerosene lamp (kerosene lamps are now as common in Japan as shrines by the road side) and the light it made, throwing entirely into the shade the native "andon," or oil wick, burning close by, raised the enthusiasm still higher. Lastly, he showed a small box of medicines, "certain cures," said he, "for every disease known amongst the sons of men."

The old lady and maids were enchanted, and matters ended, after much haggling and disputation, in the foreigner allowing them to keep the three articles for the sum of fifty dollars—about fifteen pounds sterling—which was handed over to him, after which who called for his bedding and went fast to sleep.

The first thing for the old lady to do the next day was to present herself and maids in full holiday costume with their recent purchases at the house of the mayor. The great man received them and their goods with the dignity befitting his rank, and promised that a public trial should be made of the pistol, lamp and medicines, at an early date, in order to determine whether they were worthy to be adopted as institutions in the village.

Accordingly, by proclamation, at a fixed date and hour, all Minoge assembled in the open space facing the mayor's house, and the articles were brought forth. The pistol was first taken and loaded as directed by the foreigner, by the boldest and strongest man in the village. The first shot was fired—it wounded a packhorse, standing some twenty yards away, in the leg; he took fright and bolted with a heavy load of wine tubs down the street into the fields; the second shot went through a temple roof opposite, and shattered the head of the deity in the shrine; the third shot perforated the bamboo hat of a pilgrim; and it was decided not to test the remaining three barrels.

Then the lamp was brought forth; the wick was turned up full, and the village man applied a light. The blaze of light was glorious, and drew forth acclamations of the crowd; but the wick had been turned up too high, the glass burst with a tremendous report, the strong man dropped the lamp, the oil ignited, ran about and set fire to the matting. In ten minutes, however, the local fire brigade got the flames under, and the experiments proceeded.

The medicine packets were brought forth. The first was a grey powder. A man who had been lame from youth upwards was made to limp out. The powder mixed with water, according to directions, was given him. He hobbled away in frightful convulsions, and nearly injured his whole limb in so doing.

The second packet was then unsealed—it contained pills. A blind man was called out, six pills were rammed down his throat, and he was left wallowing in a ditch.

The third packet, a small book containing sticking-plaster, was then introduced. A burly peasant, a victim to fearful toothache, was made to stand forth. The interior of his mouth was lined with the plaster, and when he attempted in his disgust to pull it off, away came his skin also.

The medicines were condemned *nem. con.*

The foreigner returned, asked how matters had gone, and was told in polite but firm terms that his machines were not suited to the people of Minoge. Wherefore he returned the fifty dollars to the old lady of the "White Pine," and went away laughing. Minoge subsided into its ordinary every-day groove of life, and it was not until some years after that the inhabitants became better used to pistols, lamps, and European medicines.

Frank Abell.

Over Five Hundred Hospitals

and kindred public institutions, including all the most important in the United Kingdom, are regular users of Bovril. Such a practical public endorsement is conclusive evidence of the absolute purity of Bovril, and of its great value as a *nourishing* stimulant in convalescence.

Digitized by Google

The Value of a £10 Note.

It was Saturday afternoon, and Mrs. Moore was tidying up the kitchen for her husband's return from the City. Their home was a small house in a narrow street, but the autumn sunshine beamed in at the little window through the broad, brown leaves and scarlet flowers of a begonia, and the table was spread with a snowy cloth; a green glass vase filled with crimson and yellow dahlias was in the centre.

Mrs. Moore was fond of bright colours and cheerful things. She was a pretty young woman, with large, dark eyes, thick, waving brown hair, and a firm mouth and chin. She had come, an orphan, from a country home to lodgings in the City and to a post behind the "fancy counter" in Messrs. Rawlins and Cosgrove's.

Going to and from her work she had met with strange regularity a certain fair young man with large blue eyes. She thought he looked as if he had come, like herself, from the country, and she grew to feel a friendly interest in him. The street seemed, somehow, empty in the chill morning hours if she did not see his tall figure swinging along. They met at the house of one of her friends—they had no relatives to counsel wisdom—and, after a brief wooing, they rushed into unconsidered marriage without much visible means of support.

He was bookkeeper to a wealthy druggist in the City, but his salary was small, and called for the closest economy. He would have liked to see his pretty, dainty wife in a suburban cottage among the flowers she loved and with congenial neighbours, but he could afford only the little house in Mendip Street. The neighbours there looked askance at the young couple, and shook their heads as they peeped in at the pots of flowers and the kitchen, so spotless with its hearthrug and easy chairs. They knew, poor souls, the depressing hand of poverty, and how courage ebbs, and dainty ways change to slatternly under its icy touch.

Mrs. Moore sang to herself that afternoon for she felt in good spirits. Jim had bought her a new dress and an autumn mantle, and he had planned to take her a trip to the seaside, for the doctor said she should have change of air.

She had just begun to dust carefully a little china dog that sat on the chimney-piece when a familiar step sounded on the cobble stones of the street, and Jim came in and clasped her in his arms. He was her lover still though he had been nine months her husband. She looked at him keenly; something was wrong. The instinct of love had noted a weariness in his step and something wanting in the greeting.

"Are you ill, Jim?" she asked anxiously. "What has happened?"

He flung himself into a chair with a smothered groan, his lips quivered under his fair moustache, and he rested his elbows on his knees and buried his face in his hands.

"The worst has happened, Grace," he said in a dreary tone.

She turned pale as death, for she was not strong, and the shock was almost too much for her; but she was a dauntless little woman, and the braver of the two, so she laid her hand on his shoulder, giving it an impatient shake.

"Tell me, Jim—tell me at once," she commanded. "I can bear anything but to see you give way like that."

And with sobs and broken words he told the tale. He had wanted so much to give her a treat of some sort. Life was so dull for her in that sordid street, but there was no money past the daily needs. A fellow in the shop had made a lucky speculation and could put him in the way to do the same if only he had the money.

A gentleman had come in to pay an account of ten pounds. He had been in a hurry, gave the bookkeeper the money, and would not wait for a receipt. Moore turned up the books to mark the bill paid, but by some strange oversight, probably in a brief absence of his, the account had not been entered. A sudden temptation seized him. Ten pounds would do so much—a new dress for Grace, and, if that tip of Morton's proved a hit, a seaside outing for her. He hesitated, listening for a moment to his better angel, and then—he pocketed the money.

As ill-luck would have it an old clerk of Mr. Haslam's had guessed the transaction. He hinted it to his master, and Jim had been sent for that morning. Mr. Haslam was a rigid, upright man, with a strong regard for money and an indisposition to lose it. His heart smote him a little as he looked at the young face, grown so deathly pale, and the weak, trembling mouth, but he spoke sternly:

"If you can produce that ten pounds by Monday morning you may return to the office, for it may be that you have succumbed to some sudden temptation; but if not, you are dismissed from my employment."

Mr. Haslam was a wise man. It was better to make him produce the money rather than make the matter public property in the police courts.

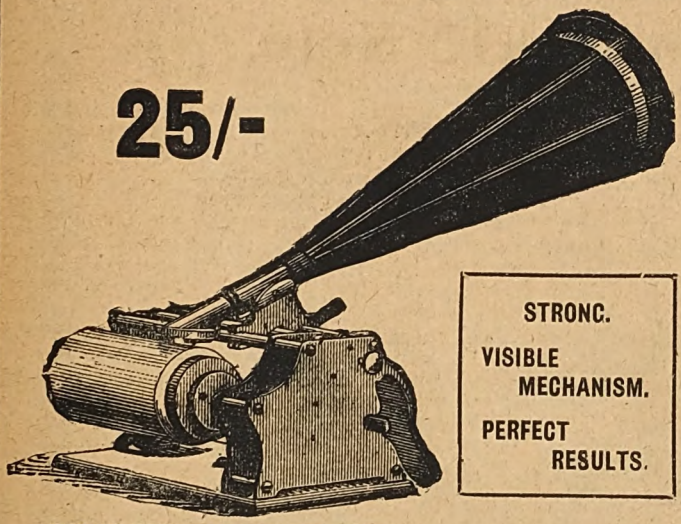
Slow, hot tears fell from Jim Moore's eyes as the story ended. There was silence in the little kitchen for a time save for the ticking of the gay gilded clock on the chimney-piece, a wedding present from Jim's friends in the shop.

"And so, Grace," he said at last, "you see we are ruined. Of course, I meant to pay it back by degrees; it was only a loan. I tried to tell him so, but he would not listen; he must have it back or I must go. It would 'prove a salutary lesson,' he said. Probably," he added recklessly, "the last I shall ever learn."

Digitized by Google

A GRAPHOPHONE FOR 25/-

25/-



Reproduces Same Records as all Small Cylinder Talking Machines.

Makes Music in the Home, and is an Inexhaustible Source of Amusement and Pleasure.

STRONG.
VISIBLE MECHANISM.
PERFECT RESULTS.

The pleasure in owning a Graphophone is largely increased by being able to make and reproduce your own records. The Graphophone will record your own voice as well as reproduce specially prepared records.

Graphophones are sold from 25s. upwards.

The Toy Graphophone for Children, 8s.

GRAND PRIX, PARIS EXPOSITION.

Send for Catalogue C. to

COLUMBIA PHONOGRAPH COMPANY, Genl., 122 Oxford Street, London, W.

TO STAMP COLLECTORS.

"S.S." PACKET. 125 STAMPS. POST FREE, 6½d.
Including Rare ORANGE RIVER COLONY, NEW ISSUE, ½d. GREEN, Surcharged on CAPE OF GOOD HOPE.
Western Australia (Swan)—New Issue, Jamaica, 1900 (View of Llandovery Falls)—U.S. of America (Warship)—Uruguay, 5 cents (Railway Engine)—Surcharged Siam—State of N Borneo, 3 cents (Tree)—Etc., etc.—ERNEST WOOD, Stamp Importer, Chorlton-cum-Hardy, MANCHESTER.

PIANO PLAYING BY EAR.

ARTHUR'S "HARMONIC INDICATOR."!!

This wonderful invention enables anyone, even if ignorant of music, to VAMP brilliantly on the Piano or organ to Songs, Waltzes, &c., in any key. No figures nor notes to learn! Beautiful effects. Everyone delighted! Post paid 1s. 7d.—C. E. ARTHUR, 7 Harrington Street, London, N.W.

2/9 CHALLENGE TO THE WORLD—OUR WARRANTED TIMEKEEPER, 2/9

With a guarantee to keep correct time for three years, will be sent to any address on receipt of P.O. or stamps value 2/9 and three stamps extra for postage. To every purchaser during this month we give with it ABSOLUTELY FREE a strong Mexican SILVER CHAIN. All we ask of you is to show them to your friends, as by doing so you advertise our business.
GENEVA WATCH IMPORTERS, 148 Old Street, London, E.C.

RUPTURE

Gentleman (cured himself) will send Free Particulars of inexpensive self-curative treatment. Stamped address.—(Box 49), 59 Castle Street, Carlisle.

VARICOCELE.

Every man suffering from Varicocele and the allied troubles, should send for treatise, describing their Causes, Symptoms, Results, and Successful and Painless Treatment without surgical operation or the use of cumbersome trusses and electrical appliances. Will be sent sealed, post free, three stamps.

S. S. MURRAY,
7, Southampton Row, London, W.C.

SULPHOLINE LOTION,

For clearing the skin from Spots, Blemishes, Redness, Roughness, giving a Beautiful Complexion and pleasing appearance.

SHILLING BOTTLES.

KAPUTINE

The Best & Safest Remedy for

HEADACHE.

NURSE HILL, of the London Association of Nurses, writes:

"I have seen Kaputine administered to many patients, and can truly say it is a remedy which should have a place in every household."

All Leading Chemists sell KAPUTINE, 1/-. Samples One Penny.

If your Chemist has not KAPUTINE send his name and address to KAPUTINE, HUDDERSFIELD, and we will send you a SHILLING PACKET FREE.

WORTH A CROWN A DOSE.

Digitized by Google

She stooped and kissed his burning brow.

"Why, Jim, we have each other, and we shall find a way out of this. You—you have some left, have you not?"

"No, Grace. I gave it to Morton, and now it seems this great hit of his is not going to come off for me."

"I am not sorry for that, dear. I would rather bear poverty than see you a gambler."

She looked round the kitchen. Her country training had imbued her with a horror of the pawn-office, but at all risks Jim must be saved.

"Paper, mem!" said a shrill voice at the door. It was the newsboy with the early edition of the halfpenny newspaper. She took it from him, giving it to her husband. He always read the news over his dinner, but he flung it aside now impatiently, and it fell on the floor.

She picked it up and folded it; she could not bear to see things lying untidily around. Her eye caught an advertisement in large type, and the fateful words "Ten Pounds." It was a notice of some sports, and one of Pearson's men was to be there with a Ten-Pound Note.

A sudden resolution seized her; she would put providence to the test. Her instinct was keen, and she thought it was a chance worth trying. She said nothing of it to her husband, it might be only raising false hopes; and, if it failed, there was still the pawnshop, and perhaps Mrs. Mooney would go there for her. Poor Mrs. Mooney, with nine children and a drunken husband, was no stranger to that friend in need.

Jim did not eat any of the appetising little dinner she had taken so much trouble to prepare, and when the cloth was removed he complained of a racking headache and went to lie down on the bed. He lay with his face to the wall like Ahab of old, and he took no notice of his wife putting on her outdoor garments. She was not one of those women who dress gaily before marriage and become slatterns after. Her pretty colour had paled, and her dark eyes looked strained and feverish, but her cloak was put on with care, and the little toque that rested on her bright brown hair was as becoming as her deft hands could make it.

Vehicles were rolling in a constant, noisy stream to the scene of the sports. She stopped at a news-shop and bought a copy of *Pearson's Weekly*. The tramcars were full, so she walked on till she reached the play grounds. She stationed herself at a post of observation where she could see all the passers in and out, and there she stood all the chill autumn afternoon.

People looked at her curiously. What was that pretty young woman doing there? they wondered. Waiting for her sweetheart coming out, no doubt. Ah, the old story.

One man, dressed like a gentleman, whispered in her ear. She blushed a burning blush, and a rush of tears came to her eyes. He had the grace to beg her pardon and pass on.

A stout farmer, with a long brown beard, stopped on his homeward way, and alighting from his spring-cart, stood watching the crowd.

"Come away, my dear," he said to her. "This is no place for one like you. I have girls of my own. Tell me where you live and I will drive you home."

But she thanked him gently in refusal. She had noticed several men, anyone of whom might have what she wanted, and she had been on the point of accosting them, but hesitated. She was getting weary and discouraged. After all, it was a wild-goose chase, and Jim would wonder what had become of her. Just then a man passed her among the crowd. He was in no wise remarkable, but some intuition told her to try him. She held out her paper in front of him.

"Have you the Ten-Pound Note?" she asked.

A burst of laughter from some boys near sent a crimson colour over her pale, tired face.

The man stopped, put his hand in his pocket, drew out something, and handed it to her.

She grasped it eagerly. It was what she had waited for. Jim was saved! A mist came before her eyes, and she felt as if she were fainting. The farmer had been watching her, and he came forward again.

"Now, you will let me drive you home."

She turned to him gratefully and he put her in his spring-cart, wrapping his rug round her knees. It was not his way home, but he was a man who counted it no hardship to do a kind turn to another. She told him as much of her need as she could without betraying her husband, and he wrung her hand so that she winced with pain as he helped her down at her own street. She would not let him drive to the door lest Jim should be frightened.

"Good-bye and good luck to you, missis," said her friend. "Ye're as plucky as ye're han'some, an' there's few men worthy of the like of you."

The strain over, she felt her knees giving way, and she could scarcely reach the bedroom door. She went softly for Jim might be sleeping, and she would not wake him. A low cry of horror burst from her as she thrust the door ajar. He was standing in his shirt sleeves in front of the little mirror that she had draped so neatly with muslin and pink ribbon bows. His eyes were wild, his face ghastly pale, and his throat was bared. In his uplifted hand he held an open razor. She rushed forward and dashed the razor from his grasp. He turned upon her angrily.

"Oh, Jim! Jim!" she cried. "Would you leave me so—alone?" and fell fainting at his feet.

There was panic and anxiety in the Moores' house that night. Mrs. Mooney came in with her motherly solicitude and large knowledge of such a crisis, and ere morning dawned a little life had come into this world of care and sin, flickered a moment, and gone back again to the world of light.

Jim Moore stooped over the little waxen form in the dainty cradle into whose adornment so many loving thoughts had woven themselves, and sobs shook his frame.

"Oh, Grace, darling," he cried, "you have lost your little baby, and I have killed him!"

"No, no. Don't fret, Jim," she said faintly. "I saved my husband."

And then Mrs. Mooney, with strong, common sense, came, and taking him by the shoulders, thrust him out of the room.

"Man, dear," she exclaimed, "where's your wits at all? Do ye mane to lose yer wife as well as yer wean?"

The ten pounds was paid in on Monday morning, and Mr. Haslam, who had some compunction in the matter, took the advice of his old clerk, a man who had himself known poverty and its temptations, and raised Jim Moore's salary. Mr. Haslam was an old bachelor, and he agreed crustily to the clerk's suggestion.

"If the fellow has been the fool to burden himself with a wife at his age," he said, "I need not run the risk of his robbing me to keep her up."

Evan Roberts.

Digitized by Google

THE John Noble

COSTUMES and MANTLES for Ladies and Children sent without delay by Parcel Post. Satisfaction given or money refunded.

MOURNING ORDERS sent off at one day's notice.

Model 256.

Made in John Noble Cheviot Serge or Costume Coating, consisting of smart Bodice with velvet revers, prettily trimmed Black and White. Plain fashionable Skirt with one box-pleat. Price complete, only **10/6**; carriage, 6d. extra. Skirt alone, **5/6**; carriage, 5d. extra.

10/6

Model 296.

Smartly made Dress in Cheviot Serge or Costume Coating. Bodice trimmed Ribbon Velvet and well lined. Full Tailor Skirt.

Lengths and Prices:

36	39	42	46	50 in.
10/-	11/-	12/-	13/-	14/- ea.

Carriage, 6d. extra.

Well-trimmed, **Felt Hat**, as sketch, **5/11**; carriage, 5d.

SMART SAC JACKET.

Special Value.

Model 274

Well-cut comfortable garment in good Black or Fawn Cloth, velvet collar. Length 30in. Price only **8/6**; car., 6d. Handsome **Toque**, as sketch, **6/11**; carriage, 6d.

8/6

Model 313.

Tailor designed Reefer Coat and full wide Skirt, in Cheviot Serge, or Costume Coating. Price **10/6**; carriage, 6d. Or the Skirt alone, **5/6**; carriage, 5d. Handsome **Toque**, as sketch, **8/11**; carriage, 6d.

10/6

PATTERNS of Cheviot Serge, Costume Coating, and any other fabrics desired, sent post free. **A FULL DRESS LENGTH** of Serge or Coating (6yds. 52ins. wide) for **7/6**; carriage, 8d.

COLOURS.—Black, Navy, Brown, Myrtle, Fawn, Khaki, Grey, and Royal Blue. **SIZES IN STOCK of Ladies' Costumes** are 34, 36, 38 in. round bust (under arms); Waists, 24, 26, 28 in.; Skirts being 38, 40, 42 in. long in front. Any other sizes made to measure, **1/6** extra.

MILLINERY AT WHOLESALE PRICES.

TRAVELLING HATS,
VISITING HATS,
DAINTY BONNETS.

Photo Price Lists sent post free.

SPECIAL VALUES in Corsets, Waterproofs, Children's Costumes, &c.

WINTER DRESS FABRICS.

A large box of Patterns of the latest Novelties and of Standard Dress Goods lent to choose from, and sent carriage free.

PHOTO PRICE LISTS SENT POST FREE.

Showing Costumes, Mantles, Waterproofs, Blouses, Laces and Fancy Handkerchiefs, **SUITABLE FOR GIFTS DURING THE FESTIVE SEASON.**

Kindly name "SHORT STORIES" when writing

JOHN NOBLE LTD.,

Dept. No. 46,
Brook Street Mills,

MANCHESTER.

Digitized by Google

PEARSON'S WEEKLY

FOOTBALL PICTURE PUZZLES.

2nd LIST. £100 IN PRIZES. 2nd LIST.

1st Prize - - £50 in Gold.

2nd Prize - - - - £10 Note | 6th to 20th Prizes - 15 Sovereigns
3rd, 4th, and 5th Prizes - 3 £5 Notes | 21st to 40th Prizes - 20 Half-Sovs.

Below will be found ten pictures; each picture representing the name of a well-known football player.

If you cannot find all the names, ask your friends to help you.

If you look at the picture in the margin you will see that the name is Maxwell. What are the other names?

All you have to do is to write underneath each picture, in the space provided, the name of the player you believe the picture to represent. Then keep the list by you until TWO other lists have appeared. We will tell you when to send them in.

Each set of four lists must be sent in separate envelopes, and will be considered as different attempts.

Only one solution is allowed under each picture.

Where two men bear the same surname, but different christian names, the christian name or initial is indicated in the picture.

Example.

Maxwell.

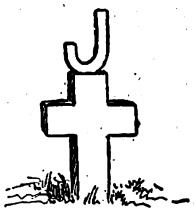
The prizes will be paid to the competitors from whom we receive the correct, or most nearly correct, solutions.

No more than one prize will go to any competitor.

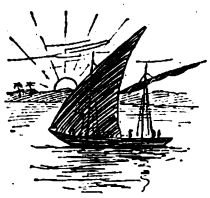
It must be taken as a condition of the competition that anybody competing therein agrees to abide by the Editor's final decision.

Intending competitors in the above would do well to procure a copy of "The Football Who's Who," which contains the names of about a thousand of the best known players. This book will be found of great service in discovering the names depicted. It only costs a shilling, and may be obtained of all booksellers, and post free for 1s. 3d. from the publisher, 17 Henrietta Street, London, W.C.

No. 11.....



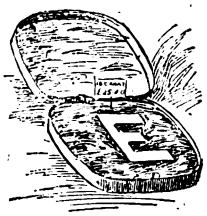
No. 12.....



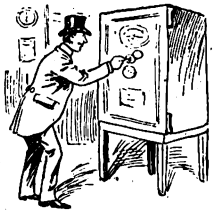
No. 13.....

No. 14.....

No. 15.....

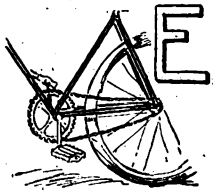


No. 16.....



No. 17.....

No. 18.....



No. 19.....

No. 20.....

I send in this coupon as a competitor for the prize advertised in this paper, and subject to the conditions printed on this page:

Name and address.....

THINGS TO REMEMBER.

1. Coupons may be sent either from "Pearson's Weekly" or "Short Stories."
2. Do not send in your coupons till we tell you.
3. All coupons are sent at senders' risk, and if they go astray, from whatever cause, we do not accept responsibility.
4. Competitors must attach their private address to their attempts. No prize will be sent to any post-office, refreshment rooms, or other places at which letters are called for. Attempts bearing such addresses will be disqualified.

Printed by Horace Cox, Bream's Buildings, London, E.C., and published by C. Arthur Pearson Limited, Pearson's Buildings, Henrietta Street, London, W.C.

Digitized by Google

SEND NO MONEY. WE TRUST YOU.

FREE.

£2 10s. £2 10s.
REAL SILVER.

We give you your choice of either of these handsome presents for selling NINE articles of Jewellery at 1s. 6d. each. (Regular price 2s. 6d.)

WE DO NOT WANT YOUR MONEY.

Just send us a STAMPED ADDRESSED ENVELOPE, and say that you will either sell the Jewellery or return it to us if you fail to sell it. On receiving your letter we will at once post you the Jewellery.

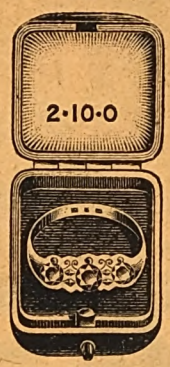
When sold, send us the 13s. 6d. you have received for same, and we will at once send you, **Absolutely Free**, our £2 10s. Real Silver Watch, with Chain, or the Gold Ring, whichever you desire.

A Written Guarantee for Ten Years sent with each watch.

You can sell our Jewellery in a few minutes at 1s. 6d. each article. We have thousands of testimonials as to the quality and value both of our Jewellery and Presents.

SEND NO MONEY. WRITE TO-DAY.

FREE.



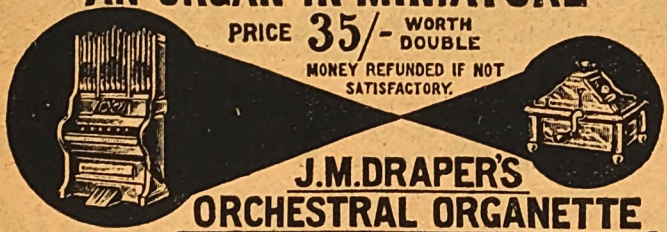
REAL GOLD AND REAL DIAMONDS.

BRITISH GOLDSMITHS' CO. (DEPT. 29), 48 GRAY'S INN RD., LONDON.

AN ORGAN IN MINIATURE

PRICE 35/- WORTH DOUBLE

MONEY REFUNDED IF NOT SATISFACTORY.



J.M.DRAPER'S ORCHESTRAL ORGANETTE

The "ORCHESTRAL" does all that a piano can do. Any and every tune can be played upon it, and it *requires no teaching or practice. A child can play it* at sight, and produce results that equal the efforts of *the most brilliant musician.*

Also Supplied on Easy Terms.

FREE TO YOU upon application our new *Buyers' Guide and Catalogue* of Watches, Jewellery, Plate, Cutlery, &c. Should be in every householder's hand.

Built upon the principle of the finest Cathedral Organs, and possessing 2 full sets of reeds and 3 beautiful stops, the "ORCHESTRAL" is an *ideal* instrument for home use, for parties and gatherings of all kinds. **J. M. DRAPER,** *DEPT.* 366, Organette Works. BLACKBURN.

ALL FAT PEOPLE

can safely **Reduce Weight and cure Corpulency permanently** by taking **TRILENE TABLETS** (Regd.) for a few weeks. They are small, agreeable, harmless, and never fail to IMPROVE both HEALTH and FIGURE without Change of Diet. An English Countess writes: *"Your Trilene Tablets act admirably."*

Send 2s. 6d. to **THE TRILENE CO.**, Sole Proprietors, **66 Finsbury Pavement, London.**

SAMPLES OF TESTIMONIALS.

Princess Liechtenstein writes from Landsberg, Austria: "Pray send your excellent tablets directly." Mr. Canham, 87 Alexandra Road, Norwich: "Tablets cured my wife of extreme stoutness; it has never returned." Mrs. H. Cox, 28 Watnall Road, Hucknall Torkard, writes: "The Tablets reduced me 1½ stone." Mrs. S. Alexander, 102 Dixon Street, New Swindon, says: "They reduced me 2lb., and I am cured." Mrs. Darnley-Smith, of Landscove Vicarage, Ashburton, says: "Tablets have reduced me very much." Mrs. Crossley, of Rose Hill, Torver, Comston, says: "I weigh much less and can breathe so much easier; I am delighted."

HAVE YOU TRIED KEATING'S LOZENGES FOR YOUR COUGH?

ANY DOCTOR WILL TELL YOU "there is no better Cough Medicine."—One gives relief: if you suffer from cough try them but once; they *will* cure, and they *will not* injure your health; an increasing sale of over 80 years is a certain test of their value. Sold in 1s½d. tins.

Free

From the Antexema Co., 83 Castle Road, London, N.W., if this paper is named, a booklet on the Skin and a **FREE SAMPLE** of

"Antexema."

It is absolutely the most wonderful Skin Cure that has ever been discovered. It gives immediate relief from itching and burning and cures all skin diseases and every form of

Eczema.

1/1½ BOTTLES, post free for 1/3.

A FREE GIFT.

500 40-EGG INCUBATORS.

Ladies and Gentlemen can greatly increase their incomes by **POULTRY BREEDING**, thus converting 1d. Eggs into 1s. Chickens. To encourage this industry we intend supplying each applicant during the next 28 days with one of our **40-Egg Incubators.**

Write for **Free Gift Form** to POULTRY-BREEDERS' APPLIANCE CO., 3 Clarence Road, SOUTHEND-ON-SEA.

POST FREE THREE STAMPS

A Treatise on the Modern and Successful Treatment of Nervous Diseases and Exhaustion, by local absorption.

Fully up to the advanced ideas on the subject.

THE MARSTON CO.,
59 and 60 Chancery Lane, London, W.C.

THE MOST NUTRITIOUS.

EPPS'S

GRATEFUL—COMFORTING.

COCOA

BREAKFAST—SUPPER.

ATLAS LOCKSTITCH MACHINE.

Works by hand or treadle. Guaranteed 4 years. Equal in quality and size to any machine. To ensure satisfaction, we will send machine on receipt of 5/- P.O. for **ONE MONTH'S TRIAL.** Balance can be paid **5/- Monthly.** Call or write for designs and Samples of work.

39/-

THE ATLAS SEWING MACHINE CO.,
184s High St., Camden Town, London, N.W.,
63 Seven Sisters Rd., N.; 14 High Rd., Kilburn.

FREE. FREE. **NO MONEY REQUIRED. WE TRUST YOU.**

Our £2 10s. Real Silver Watch (with chain), or **A Real Gold Ring** Set with REAL DIAMONDS and other stones.

SEND NO MONEY.

We give you your choice of either of these handsome presents for selling NINE articles of Jewellery at 1/6 each. (Regular price 2/6).

We do not want your money.

Just send us a stamped addressed envelope and say that you will either sell the jewellery or return it to us if you fail to sell it. On receiving your letter we will at once post you the jewellery.

When sold, send us the 13/6 you have received for same, and we will at once send you ABSOLUTELY FREE our £2 10s. Real Silver Watch with Chain, or the Gold Ring, whichever you desire.

A WRITTEN GUARANTEE for TEN years sent with each watch.

You can sell our Jewellery in a few minutes at 1/6 each article. We have thousands of testimonials as to the quality and value both of our Jewellery and Presents.

Send no money. Write to-day.

BRITISH PREMIUM SYNDICATE (Dept. 5).
282 CENTRAL CHAMBERS, GLASGOW.

Digitized by Google

HOW DO YOU SPELL

VELVETEEN?

Don't Forget this when you buy.

EVERY YARD IS STAMPED

L-O-U-I-S.

ZEBRA

Grate Polish

No Hard Work.

Height 12in. Width 7in. Depth 5in.

ALARUM CLOCK, 18/-

Brass Flag.

Carved Oak Battlement.

Enamel Dial.

"Hour," "Minute," "Seconds," "Alarum" HANDS.

Polished Brass Mounts

Real Oak Case.

A FREE TRIAL FOR 2/6

"THE COURT JOURNAL" says: "THE FORTRESS CLOCK sold by J. N. MASTERS LTD., RYE, is substantial, of original design, has a loud ALARUM, and is really a reliable clock."

Any reader of *Short Stories* can have one of these Alarum Clocks on monthly payments as follows:

YOU send us **2s. 6d.** with your name and address, and we will send you one on approbation.

IF you approve of it you send us **3s. 6d.** on receipt, and **2s. 6d.** each month for 5 months, making the full 18s. But

OUR-NETT-CASH-PRICE-WITH-ORDER IS 16/- ONLY.

IF you do not approve of it we will refund cash sent if the Clock is returned within seven days.

SPECIAL XMAS BOOKLET

This Presentation Booklet is now ready; it contains many pages of interesting matter, including illustrations of hundred of the latest and most suitable Christmas and New Year presents. It gives you full particulars of J. N. MASTERS Ltd. Cash Present to each customer, and Free distribution of 150,000 valuable pencil cases. May we send you a copy? If so, **your name and address**, please. We send it post free.

J. N. MASTERS Ltd., WATCHMAKERS, JEWELLERS, &c., **RYE**, SUSSEX.

Digitized by Google

GRAND CHRISTMAS DOUBLE NUMBER.

SHORT STORIES

A WEEKLY MAGAZINE FOR HOME AND TRAIN

No. 625. FOR WEEK ENDING DECEMBER 22ND, 1900. [TWOPENCE.

"Absolutely Pure therefore Best."

CADBURY'S

COCOA

"A PERFECT FOOD."

The Editor of THE LANCET, June 16th, 1900, says:

"We are glad to find that Messrs. Cadbury draw attention to the fact that there are strong grounds for objection to the addition to cocoa of certain foreign substances. This resource is quite unnecessary, and, indeed, pernicious, especially having regard to the fact that cocoa alone is an excellent food as well as a stimulant, having a salutary action upon the nerve centres."

CADBURY'S IS THE PURE COCOA.

Entirely Free from Drugs, Kola, Malt, or Hops.

Advertisements should be sent to "Short Stories" Advertisement Department, Henrietta Street, London, W.C.

Digitized by Google

Mr. Geo. R. Sims' Discovery
"TATCHO."

20,000 LARGE (4/6 SIZE) BOTTLES TO BE DISTRIBUTED.

"TATCHO" is a brilliant spirituous tonic, the colour of whisky, free from all grease. A sprinkle of a few drops on the scalp and five minutes with the brush daily works marvels with every head of hair.

"TATCHO" acts as an invigorating tonic. It stops the hair falling, creates a luxuriant growth, and imparts to it a bright and youthful lustre.

"When I discovered the preparation, I found that I had hit upon a remedy capable of working wonders," said Mr. George R. Sims to the representative of the *Daily Mail*. "Look at my hair now. Look at the colour. In time people got to know. Then the trouble began.

"Letters in thousands poured in to me from men and women in every quarter of the world, from all parts of the Kingdom, from America, India, Africa, China, and Australia. The work of answering the letters was enormous, and as far as possible the desired information was supplied; but it became quite evident that at the rate at which the demand was increasing I should very soon need a large staff of clerks to attend solely to the Hair renewer department of correspondence.

"In consequence, I said to myself. Why should this thing go on? If the public wants my hair renewer, the public shall have it; but the demand must be met in the ordinary business-like way. So I resolved to place the genuine article within reach of all, and with the assistance of a number of gentlemen, possessing the necessary commercial facilities, that has been accomplished."

THE GEO. R. SIMS' COMPANY HAVE DECIDED TO DISTRIBUTE

20,000 LARGE TRIAL BOTTLES OF TATCHO

to enable those who have not yet profited by Mr. G. R. Sims' discovery, to have the opportunity of doing so. The Company does this in the belief that such distribution will enable the preparation to become more widely known, and will introduce it to every home in a far more satisfactory manner than through unlimited puffing by advertisement.

COUPON. S.S. Dec. 22, 1900.

If you are desirous of participating in this distribution cut out this Coupon and send it to the Geo. R. Sims' Co., 81c Great Queen Street, London, W.C., accompanied by a postal order for 1/10. You will receive by return of post a plain package containing

A FULL SIZE 4s. 6d. TRIAL BOTTLE OF "TATCHO" POST PAID,

which will enable you to give TATCHO a fair trial and to satisfy yourself as to its merits.

Shilling packets
Kaputine "the" safe
Remedy for Headache

WARNING. *Instead of using the common White Headache Powders, which generally consist entirely of a crude drug, which has been condemned as dangerous by the medical papers, insist on having a bona-fide anti-quack remedy, recommended by such eminent medical authorities as Dr. RAMAGE, L.R.C.P., Dr. THURSTIN, L.R.C.P., late Dr. BOYD-WILLIAMS (Liverpool), the Editor of the Medical Journal, "Health," etc., etc. The name of this safe remedy is KAPUTINE.*

ALL LEADING CHEMISTS SELL IT, OR CAN GET IT FOR YOU IN A FEW HOURS.

Sold by BOOT'S, TAYLOR'S, DAY'S, WHITE'S and other Stores. Most Co-operative Stores sell it.

PACKETS, 1/-. SAMPLES ONE PENNY,

or KAPUTINE LIMITED, HUDDERSFIELD,
will send it FREE for 12 stamps.

WORTH A CROWN A DOSE.

ESTABLISHED 1851.

BIRKBECK BANK

Southampton Buildings, Chancery Lane, London.

2% on CURRENT ACCOUNTS, on the minimum monthly balances when not drawn below £100.

The BIRKBECK ALMANACK, with full particulars, post free.

FRANCIS RAVENSCROFT, *Manager*.

VARICOCELE.

Every man suffering from Varicocele and the allied troubles, should send for treatise, describing their Causes, Symptoms, Results, and Successful and Painless Treatment without surgical operation or the use of cumbersome trusses and electrical appliances. Will be sent sealed, post free, three stamps.

S. S. MURRAY,
7, Southampton Row, London, W.C.

FREE. FREE.

Our £2 10s. Real Silver Watch (with chain), or **A Real Gold Ring** Set with REAL DIAMONDS and other stones.

SEND NO MONEY.

NO MONEY REQUIRED. WE TRUST YOU.

We give you your choice of either of these handsome presents for selling NINE articles of Jewellery at 1/6 each. (Regular price 2/6).

We do not want your money. Just send us a stamped addressed envelope and say that you will either sell the jewellery or return it to us if you fail to sell it. On receiving your letter we will at once post you the jewellery.

When sold, send us the 13/6 you have received for same, and we will at once send you ABSOLUTELY FREE our £2 10s. Real Silver Watch with Chain, or the Gold Ring, which-ever you desire.

A WRITTEN GUARANTEE for TEN years sent with each watch.

You can sell our Jewellery in a few minutes at 1/6 each article. We have thousands of testimonials as to the quality and value both of our Jewellery and Presents.

Send no money. Write to-day.

BRITISH PREMIUM SYNDICATE (Dept. 6), 233 CENTRAL CHAMBERS, GLASGOW.

SEVEN PRIZE MEDALS.

C. BRANDAUER & Co's CIRCULAR POINTED PENS

These series of pens neither scratch nor spurt. They glide over the roughest paper with the ease of a soft lead pencil. Assorted sample boxes, 6d., to be obtained from all Stationers. If out of stock, send 7 stamps direct to the works, Birmingham.

Advertisements should be sent to "Short Stories" Advertisement Department, Henrietta Street, London, W.C.

Digitized by Google

Christmas Double Number.

SHORT STORIES.

No. 625.] For the Week Ending December 22nd, 1900. [TWOPENCE.

A Near Thing

By GERTRUDE PAGE.

Author of "There is No If," "The Night of the Ball," etc., etc.

WHEN a man has lost five hundred pounds through an unlucky speculation, has had his head-clerk set up for himself in opposition to him, and has heard that the old bachelor uncle, from whom he had expectations, is thinking of getting married, he is not likely to feel very jovial, even when starting on his holiday. All this, to say nothing of minor worries, had happened to Ted Hall in the week preceding Christmas, and when on December 24th, he drove through a cutting east wind to the station, his state of mind was neither amiable nor enviable.

"First single to Wilstead," he said gruffly at the ticket-office, regarding the clerk with a somewhat injured air, as if he were fixing a destination to please him, very much against his wish. Afterwards he looked at the ticket in much the same way.

"What the dickens Anderson wanted to choose a hydro for I can't imagine," he muttered. "Of all the idiotic places! He might just as well have gone to a lunatic asylum."

A girl hurried past him, and, catching her foot or skirt against his stick, knocked it down.

"Oh, I'm so sorry!" she exclaimed, stopping a second, and flashing a pair of bright eyes in his face. Then she rushed on after a porter.

"You must be sure and see it put in yourself," he heard her exclaim; "if I arrive to-night without my box I'm sure there'll be a tragedy."

"All right, miss, I'll see to it," the man replied laughingly, and the girl laughed, too. In fact, nearly everyone on the station was laughing more or less, for it was Christmas Eve, and even railway porters, and bustling travellers, and tired parents with babies generally manage to be cheerful on that auspicious occasion.

All except "Ted Halls," who have a whole list of grievances, and feel the world and everyone in it is against them.

"Silly idiot!" he grumbled. "I wish she'd look where she's going, instead of fussing so about her precious box. I'm certain to lose the silver cap now; it was loose before," and he examined his stick moodily.

The train was standing in the station, and after selecting a smoking compartment, and throwing his rug into a corner, he tucked his hands in his overcoat pockets, and strolled up and down.

Presently the bright-eyed girl walked briskly along the platform. As she passed him, she looked into his face, and Ted felt annoyed. He didn't actually scowl, but he felt very much inclined to. He looked sufficiently haughty, however, to tickle Jill Haslam's fancy, and when she had likewise placed her rug in a corner seat, she tucked her hands in her muff and strolled out on to the platform, with a vague idea of annoying him if possible, out of pure mischief. She wondered if he had taken a seat yet, thinking it would be rather fun if he got into her carriage without knowing it, as he was evidently very vexed with her for knocking his stick over, and very cross generally.

All rights reserved.]

Digitized by Google

When she repassed him, she resolutely looked in the opposite direction; but a few paces further on she turned suddenly, and found he had done the same,

"Thank you," she replied shortly, and placed the shilling on the seat beside her.

which was just what she wanted, as she felt certain it would irritate him.

He struck her as fancying himself very much, seeing he was exceedingly well-dressed and groomed, and very good-looking; and conceited men were Jill's pet aversion. She could never resist a possible opportunity of annoying them.

She was not able to give him any more of her attention however, as she was expecting two brothers to join her, if they could catch the train, and was eagerly on the look-out for them. When the guard came to see the tickets they had not arrived, so she was reluctantly obliged to take her seat and start without them.

Ted Hall thought she was rather forward to remain on the platform watching the passengers, and took his seat with a vague thanksgiving that there were smokers for men.

"I shouldn't wonder if she isn't going to the Hydro," he mused gloomily, "she's just the kind of girl one meets there. Can't think what Anderson was dreaming of. Wish I hadn't promised to join him."

He took out a letter and glanced at the end, where a sentence ran: "Wilstead's a grand place, you're sure to like it. Good dancing and excellent links. I know a very jolly girl going, who is the best dancer in Shrewsbury, and she is sure to know others."

"A nice lot they'll be I expect," he mused. "Beastly matrimonial agencies, that's what hydros are."

His ill-luck seemed to dog him, for at the first station they stopped at, four noisy youths got into his carriage, and made it impossible for him to read.

When they commenced singing comic songs he lost his patience and scowled at them. The train was then in another station, and on one of them making a personal and impudent remark, he calmly gathered up his belongings and stepped out, making for the nearest compartment, which happened to be Jill's. At the moment he had forgotten her, and his feelings were not soothed when he recognised his companion.

"He looks as cross as a bear," was Jill's mental summing-up, and she dived into her book again.

Now it happened Jill Haslam was not a very clever traveller. She was one of those passengers who always imagine they ought to be changing, or that they are in the wrong train, and, in consequence, she occasionally got a little flurried.

This was the case when she suddenly thought she heard a porter call "Lichfield." She had been told she might have to change there, and she was in a terrible fright that she had remained quietly reading when she ought to be getting out. She sprang up and looked from the window, but no one was at hand, so in her extremity she turned hastily to Ted Hall and said:

"Could you tell me if this is Lichfield?"

Hall was still feeling very ruffled, and he replied a little testily:

"I really don't know."

Just then a porter came along, and Jill was reassured, so with a cutting glance at her companion, who was now stolidly reading, she reseated herself with a feeling of bitter resentment because of his rudeness.

When the train stopped again, however, as if from a feeling of compunction, he remarked:

"Was it Redfield you wanted, because I think this is it?"

"No, thank you," she replied very haughtily, and the enmity became mutual.

But fate had not done with them yet, for at the next station a boy with a large truck of single cups of tea stood a few yards distant from their carriage. Hall opened the window and shouted for one. When the boy brought it, Jill quietly ordered another for herself, and Hall at once, though very stiffly, offered her his Jill hesitated, and then stiffly accepted it. When the boy brought the second there was no time to spare, and while she was trying to ask him how much it was, Hall gave him a shilling and held out his hand for the change.

"It's all right," said the boy, pocketing the shilling, and the train moved slowly away.

Jill glared at his retreating figure, and Hall scowled at his paper, but nothing could alter the fact that he had paid for her tea, and they had been taken as belonging to each other.

"I have only a shilling," she said frigidly, holding the coin out to him.

"I'm afraid I have no change," he replied, without meeting her eyes.

Jill grew exasperated.

"Then you must take it all," she said, still holding the coin before him.

He looked at her a moment, and was about to say it didn't signify, but wisely changed his mind.

"Perhaps I can change it at the next station," he said instead.

"Thank you," she replied shortly, and placed the shilling on the seat beside her, directly under his eyes.

Hall called the boy a fool under his breath and returned to his paper.

The next station chanced to be Lichfield, and they both alighted. To Jill's relief, a newspaper boy stood close at hand, so she was able to change the money herself, and hand him his sixpence, without any further need of speech, hurrying away directly.

"Of all the rude men!" she muttered, as she once

Digitized by Google

more settled herself in a comfortable corner and tucked her rug round her.

She was still thinking about him when she took her seat in the Hydro omnibus, and wondered a little why he was so cross. There were no other passengers, so she was congratulating herself upon getting away quickly, and possibly getting dressed in time for dinner.

But just as the coachman whipped up his horse, a porter shouted, "Hi! wait a moment! Passenger for the Hydro!" and as the 'bus stopped with a jerk, the door was hastily opened, and Hall scrambled in, the porter slamming the door behind him, and the horse starting off at a brisk pace.

Jill had a keen sense of humour, and her first impulse was to burst out laughing. But she was also very angry with him, and instead she carefully turned her head away and stared out into the night.

She would no doubt have congratulated herself warmly upon her action had she known he was inwardly remarking with disgust, "Of course—just the hydro class—as I thought!"

When they arrived, he sprang out first, because he was next to the door, and as the hall-porter stood waiting to take her wraps, he ran up the steps at once.

In the doorway a tall, fair girl stood watching eagerly, and when she saw Jill she exclaimed:

"Come along! How late you are! I've been watching ever so long. Where are the boys?"

"I waited on purpose for them," Jill replied, after greeting her, "and then the sillies went and missed the train. They won't get here until ten now; too late to dance. I wish I'd never waited."

"So do I; we've had such a jolly afternoon on the ice. But come along and dress; you'll have to hurry tremendously. We've got a lovely big room, and mother is just down the passage. We're going to have no end of a time."

"What a good-looking man that was who came up in the 'bus with you!" she continued, when they reached their room. "Do you know who he is?"

"No, and I don't want to, the rude thing! He got in at Shrewsbury. Did you ever see such a scowl? And he might be the Prince of Wales, the way he fancies himself. We travelled part of the way together; but I'll tell you about it afterwards. I shall have to hurry frightfully now."

"I suppose Will Anderson has come?" she said, as they went down the wide staircase together to the dining-hall.

"Yes, rather; and he's in great form. He came yesterday to help arrange the tableaux for Thursday. He's got a friend coming who is an excellent dancer; isn't it jolly? The floor is splendid; we tried it this morning."

At the foot of the stairs, one of two men who appeared to be making inquiries at the office, suddenly turned away and met the two girls face to face.

"Jill, by all that's good!" he exclaimed, coming forward with outstretched hand. "When did you arrive? and where are those scoundrels Phil and Gerald?"

"They missed the train," she replied, shaking hands warmly, "I wish I hadn't waited for them. I might have been skating here all the afternoon."

"Of course you might. The ice is simply glorious. We're going to have a grand holiday. Let me introduce my friend Hall to you. Here, Ted, old chap!" he called, "when you've done flirting with Miss Williams!"

Ted Hall turned at once, and a second later, he and Jill were bowing gravely to each other with icy formality.

"Miss Hayward, another perfect dancer," Anderson ran on in his usual gay fashion, "Mabel, let me introduce Mr. Hall to you."

Mabel Hayward was tall, slender, and very pretty, with just a suggestion of frailty, and a quiet, dignified manner. Jill, on the other hand, had glossy brown hair and laughing brown eyes and was full of life and spirits. She had seven brothers who all worshipped her and spoilt her, and she was in consequence a little impatient and quick-tempered, and very much upon her dignity when ruffled. This was why she chatted very fast and very merrily with Will Anderson at dinner, resolutely refusing to notice his friend more than she could possibly help, and then generally to administer a delicate snub. Not that Ted Hall minded in the least, as a matter of fact he was rather glad, as it fell to his share to entertain Mabel, whose quiet, deliberate manner was much more to his taste just then.

He was rather disappointed, however, when she excused herself from dancing with him. He had watched her round the ball-room with Anderson, and knew that his friend had not over-estimated her powers. He was a perfect waltzer himself, and rather particular whom he danced with, so that most girls regarded it as a direct compliment to be asked. Jill guessed as much,

"I am only dancing a very little," she replied coldly.

Digitized by Google

especially as he did not ask her until he had seen her performance, and she chose to think that he considered he was conferring a favour on her, and declined to accept it.

"I am only dancing a very little," she replied coldly to his measured request. "I am expecting my brothers shortly, and shall join them when they arrive."

He bowed formally and retired, and Jill had the two following with Will Anderson, who was rather at a loss to understand his good fortune.

For Will had long been an admirer of Jill's, and, though he never seemed to make much progress, he continued to hope on.

Ted Hall easily gathered as much from Mabel, and watched the pair with some degree of interest.

After Phil and Gerald had arrived, the Shrewsbury party met together in a small ante-room to have a little merrymaking on their own account. Hall sat quietly in an armchair, looking on, without taking much part, scarcely being noticed at all until Jill remarked sarcastically:

"I'm afraid Mr. Hall thinks we are very frivolous and childish."

"Not at all," he replied calmly, as she looked towards him. "In any case, it is always nice to be able to cheat the years."

Jill flushed angrily.

"True," she retorted; "but it's hard lines when it's no longer any use trying."

"Pass when collared, Jill," shouted one of her brothers, and her attention was instantly diverted by a silk handkerchief in her face, which she had only just time to throw back before Will Anderson hurled himself across the room towards her. Hall's lips meanwhile relaxed into a sarcastic curl just as Will tripped up and fell against Jill, pushing her on to the arm of his chair. She freed herself angrily, saying clearly:

"I beg your pardon. I hope we have not disturbed you. Mr. Anderson is so boisterous. You should be more careful, Will," she added, "Mr. Hall doesn't like being ruffled."

"Rot! He wants waking up," and Will aimed a cushion straight at his head.

Hall stopped it with his foot, and afterwards threw it back, breaking into a low laugh when it knocked a paper out of Will's hand from which he was holding forth.

"You're too bad, Will," said Jill coolly. "You forget Mr. Hall hasn't had his after-dinner nap yet."

When they all said good-night to each other outside Mrs. Hayward's door, she purposely overlooked him, and kept Will talking idly because his friend was waiting for him.

Later on, when she and Mabel were discussing the guests, the latter remarked:

"How quaint Mr. Hall is!"

"He's just eaten up with conceit," was Jill's quick reply, "and he's far too engrossed in himself to make conversation."

"I don't think so," Mabel answered thoughtfully. "Will would never care for a conceited man, and he thinks so much of Mr. Hall. He was telling me about him this morning. I should always trust Will's judgment."

"Oh! Will makes mistakes sometimes the same as others, though, of course, Mr. Hall may be all right with men; he's insufferable with women. I never saw such condescension," which made it evident that Jill's temper had not improved.

"I haven't noticed it," Mabel said rather shortly. "I think he's very nice; anyhow, he's a perfect dancer—better than Will, if possible."

Jill made no answer, but turned the conversation to the other visitors, and presently scrambled into bed and relapsed into silence. Her first evening had not been altogether a success, in spite of her seemingly radiant spirits. She had had a little too much of Will Anderson, for one thing. She had commenced by being unusually affable, in order to impress upon his friend how perfectly content she was without his company, and Will had not unnaturally taken advantage of her charming mood. He had become very lover-like indeed, and, as usual, Jill had grown bored.

"How are you and Will getting on?" Mabel asked presently.

In spite of all her efforts, and she had made them to please her brothers, she could not fall in love with Will Anderson. Directly he became ardent he bored her, so she had always decided that she had known him too long. But she had made fresh resolutions this Christmas, because she knew what a good, reliable fellow he was, and she was exceedingly fond of him. She really meant to let him have his way, and settle things.

But he was not her last thought that night. Before she went to sleep she told herself she wished he would not have such objectionable friends, and cast about in her mind for a possible opportunity of further snubbing Ted Hall on the morrow.

As it happened, however, Ted was one too many for her, and with a delicate skill that made it apparent only to herself, coolly avoided any contact with her whatever, both that day and the following.

Digitized by Google

On the evening of the second night, Mabel, who had had a great deal of his company, pronounced him charming, and was in a most annoyingly placid mood. Jill felt inclined to throw something at her, as she calmly brushed her hair and drawled it out. She, herself, felt all upside down and disturbed from end to end, so that it irritated her beyond everything. Both her brothers had spent most of their time with special friends of their own, and she had been drafted off perpetually with Will Anderson.

At first it had been all right, but later on the old boredom gained ground, particularly at the ball on Bank Holiday, when Ted Hall had purposely not asked her for a dance. She had laughed and talked very much on account of his constant proximity, but it had been a decided effort. He, on the other hand, beyond continuing depressed, had remained perfectly calm and unruffled; never looking in her direction, and seemingly unaware of her existence. At least he never looked when she could possibly perceive it, but at occasional moments, he shot a keen glance of scrutiny at her, because he was interested in her on account of her relations with Will Anderson, who had long been a great friend of his.

"How are you and Will getting on?" Mabel asked presently, with her back to the light.

"Much as usual," was the rather callous reply.

"You haven't settled anything?" with feigned carelessness.

"Certainly not; there's heaps of time yet."

Mabel was silent, and Jill pulled two buttons off her shoes in a fit of impatience.

Suddenly she picked one up and threw it into a far corner. "I won't marry Will," she exclaimed, and kicked the other one after it.

A slight flush coloured Mabel's pale face, but she still said nothing.

"It's absurd of anyone to wish it," Jill went on; "we're not in the least suited to each other. Anyone can see we're too much alike. Just think what a din there would always be in the house. He can't help laughing and chattering and I'm sure I can't. I want someone to listen to me, instead of always making jokes of their own. I know he's a good fellow"—she dug her small fist into the pillow as if it had done her an injury, by way of impressing her remark—"probably the best fellow I ever knew, or ever shall know, but I might as well marry my own brother Bob. I'm not sure I wouldn't rather, for Bob and I do fall out sometimes, but Will would be so eternally forgiving and patient with me, I should want to scream. I don't believe in marrying a man who lets you treat him anyhow. I like a man who requires a little managing, it's so much more interesting."

"I'm sure no one wants you to marry Will against your inclination," Mabel remarked quietly.

"No, but they want me to want to marry him," petulantly. "I'll tell you what, Mabel," with a sudden inspiration, "it's you that ought to have Will, not I. You'd make a perfect pair. I wonder why I never thought of it before."

Mabel flushed a sudden deep scarlet, and then gradually became deathly white, but she made no comment.

Long ago, at least it seemed long ago to her, she had learnt suddenly that Will Anderson loved Jill Haslam. There was nothing at all extraordinary about the news, but it meant for her that the love-dream of her life was over. She had made no plaint and she had not seemed to fret, but ever since she had cultivated that quiet, placid and seemingly passionless exterior. This Christmas she expected the engagement finally settled, and was prepared to be one of the first to congratulate Jill. When the latter expressed her opinion thus candidly, she was at a loss how to take her. One of her first thoughts was for Will himself.

"If you feel like that, why have you led him on so the last three days?" she asked presently. "It's rather a shame, I think."

Jill pouted a little. "I haven't," she said, after a pause. "I only didn't send him away. There was no object in being rude."

"No, but you have been distinctly more friendly than usual."

"Well, I tell you, I meant to settle things."

"Then what has made you change your mind? wonderingly,

"I don't know. I suppose I'm fickle. I'm sure I hate myself enough," dashing a blinding tear from her eye.

Mabel regarded her in mute amazement.

"Oh, you're out of sorts," she remarked, "you'll think quite differently to-morrow."

"It's all very well for you, you never do worry yourself, but I can't help being disappointed. Everything seems to be going wrong this year, because I expected it to be better than usual. I'm not enjoying myself a bit."

"Whyever not?"

"I'm sure I don't know, except that Bob's always off with Miss Webster and—and—oh, I don't know, but I wish we were going home to-morrow."

"Why don't you talk to Mr. Hall for a change? He's really very nice, only he's down on his luck about something, and it makes him quiet."

"He isn't," savagely, "he thinks we're all beneath his notice. I heard him tell a man he hated hydros. Why doesn't he stay away if he doesn't like it, instead of coming and giving himself such ridiculous airs."

Mabel turned away with a shrug of her shoulders.

"Oh, I give you up," she said, "you're really very unreasonable to-night."

Jill did not reply, but she hid her burning face in the pillow, and half wished she had never been born.

* * * * *

One of the principal arrangements of the Christmas week at Wilstead, was the golf handicap for visitors at the hydro, and the great event of it the scratch Foursomes.

On the morning of the day, a great rush was made for the notice-board, where the players were bracketed, as drawn. Jill was generally one of the first, but this year she walked up very leisurely towards the chattering, laughing group. As she passed her brother Bob and Miss Webster, she heard the latter remark with a little laugh, "How very curious, isn't it? Don't you think they ought to be allowed to exchange? I'm sure they'd all four be ready enough, and Jill can't endure Mr. Hall."

She passed on, wondering what she meant, and found her own name bracketed with Hall's, while just beneath were Mabel's and Will Anderson's.

She understood perfectly.

She turned away slowly to the door, and stood thoughtfully looking out. Supposing anything were said about an exchange, what should she do?

"They can't," she smiled; "it would be impossible."

Then she heard Mabel's voice behind her.

"I don't know whether she'll play with him," she was saying; "she won't if she's made up her mind not to."

Digitized by Google

"Well, I daresay we could arrange it all right," replied Will's voice. "We'll ask her."

A man had sauntered up and stood near her, leaning against a pillar idly smoking. She had been too engaged with her own thoughts to notice him particularly before; but now, as she half turned to meet Will and Mabel, their eyes met. It was Ted Hall, and she knew that he, too, had overheard. She tried to look at him defiantly; but she felt the blood creeping to her face, and turned her head away. He did not look quite the same, somehow; there was a little less self-assurance in his attitude and expression, and, instead of the usual gloom, just a shade of sadness.

As Will and Mabel came towards her he moved carelessly away, saying, as he passed them, that he had an appointment in the billiard-room.

Before he had finished his game Will came up to speak to him, standing aside while he completed his stroke.

"So she's made the exchange," he mused, with a vague feeling that it was very small of her, and turned to hear Will's information.

"I'm just arranging the times," Will said huriedly. "You and Miss Haslam play Whitehead and Miss Pearce at three o'clock. Don't be late, will you?"

"Miss Haslam?" he asked, in a momentary surprise.

"Yes, you were drawn together. Just your usual luck," he added, with a laugh; "she's quite one of the best ladies."

They walked to the ground together, talking casually on the weather and such-like uninteresting subjects.

They walked to the ground together.

Both felt a little constrained; but Jill showed it the most, probably because she was the most anxious to appear at ease. Suddenly the conversation turned upon dogs, and dogs happened to be Jill's hobby. It happened to be Hall's also, and they were soon so engrossed that they almost walked past the entrance to the links. They won their match easily, both first and second round, and Hall remarked that she had the best drive of any lady he had ever seen. Jill was pleased, but careful not to show it, merely remarking that she probably had a great deal more practice than the average girl.

All the players walked home in a party, and they did not meet again till dinner, when there was little cause to address each other.

But when they reached the ball-room he came and asked for a dance. Jill gave him one near the end, and spent the time meanwhile looking forward to it, though she would not for worlds have acknowledged it. Will Anderson found her decidedly absent-minded. He asked her if she were tired, and she seemed quite vexed at the mere suggestion. He looked unhappy, so she hastened to cheer him, asking him how he and Mabel had progressed at golf. Then she suddenly launched off into a panegyric of Mabel's charms, and finally flabbergasted him by remarking:

"You ought to marry Mabel, you know, Will. She's just the very girl for you. A little bit too good if anything," slyly, "but much too nice to think so."

Will's brow grew a trifle black, and he gazed moodily at his feet. "I'm just as fond of Mabel as you are," he said, "but I happen to be still fonder of someone else."

"Oh, it's your imagination," said Jill coolly. When she made up her mind about anything, she usually achieved it; and as often as not by sheer daring. She had no definite reason why she particularly wanted Will to marry Mabel, but the idea had taken her fancy, and she knew it would release her from certain qualms of conscience concerning her old admirer, and her beloved brothers' hopes. When Will looked up in dumb surprise, she only regarded him with a pair of half-laughing, half-serious eyes, and resting her hand a moment on his arm, said winningly: "I'm awfully fond of you, Will, and I adore Mabel. I want you both to be ever so happy, and I'm sure that's the simplest way."

"But my dear girl," he began remonstratingly.

"No, don't," she interrupted gaily, "just think it over."

"I absolutely refuse," he exclaimed stoutly. "Do you think I'm going to wait all this time and never so much as say a word? I want to marry you, and no one else; that's straight enough, isn't it?"

"Yes, but you're so rash, Will," soothingly, "we're not really a bit suited to each other."

Will got up looking a little stern.

"It is not a subject I care to speak lightly about," he said.

But she easily made him sit down again and listen to her. In the end, she made him understand clearly that it was no good going on waiting for her, and then, because he was very miserable, she chatted to him hopefully, and finally handed him over to Mabel, remarking that he had a bad headache and did not want to have to bother to talk to strangers.

Mabel smiled kindly and suggested refreshments, afterwards winning his gratitude by talking of Jill and then his friend Hall, so that when the dance was

Digitized by Google

over he was not nearly so wretched as he expected to be.

Meanwhile, Jill, after one sudden gulp of appreciation at her sense of freedom, gradually fell once more into the restless, unsettled state. She did not know why, and she felt very impatient with herself.

Her programme was as full as she wanted it; a convenient pier-glass told her that she was looking her best, and she could not fail to observe certain pairs of admiring eyes turned in her direction.

As the time wore on and the fifteenth dance approached, she cheered a little, and at the last became almost nervously excited. She knew that Hall was the best waltzer in the room, and she was eager for their dance. That was how she accounted to herself for her rising spirits, in spite of her avowed aversion to the man himself. When he approached her he looked grave, but remarkably calm. Apparently the similar expectation, which he was quite as entitled to, did not affect him. As they danced, neither talked much, the pleasure of the perfect motion was too delicious in itself. Afterwards, they sat down a little apart, and then, for some extraordinary reason, and perhaps for the first time in her life, Jill lost her self-assurance.

She could neither talk naturally, nor appear perfectly at ease, and the galling consciousness of it only increased her discomfort. Hall could not make her out, as she had always appeared to him the personification of life and spirits. He supposed she was still at enmity with him, and was surprised, after their pleasant golfing in the afternoon. He regarded her covertly with a keen, critical glance. He decided she was very pretty, perhaps as pretty as any girl he knew, and he thought she looked nice, too. He decided Anderson was rather a lucky fellow, and determined to try and make peace with her definitely, and pave the way for a pleasant friendship on Will's account.

"I hope you are not going to nurse your resentment indefinitely," he said presently. "I'll apologise for my rudeness, if that will make any difference."

Jill was taken by surprise, and hardly knew what to say.

"I thought we had mutually agreed to forget after this afternoon," she ventured, a little nervously.

"I hoped so," quietly.

He was studying some of the promenaders, and she turned to take a quick glance at his face. She thought it was a very strong one, and was glad that he wanted to be friends.

"That was my idea about it," she answered. "I am seldom angry for long. I get worked up at first, but it soon blows over. I admit I was pretty wild with you in the beginning," she added with a touch of her usual brightness.

"I know you were," he answered with a little smile. "I thought you were going to throw that shilling at me."

Jill laughed. "I wanted to badly," she said.

"I know you did. I can't think how you managed to refrain. I believe I had a vague feeling of relief that you wanted your tea too much to waste it."

The music struck up then, and they were obliged to rise.

"I suppose you haven't a dance left?" he queried.

"Yes, I think I have. I never quite fill my programme if I can help it at these impromptu dances."

"May I see it?" and he held out his hand. The two last spaces were vacant.

"Will you give me both as a token of forgiveness?" he asked.

Jill assented with a mischievous little smile, and suddenly all her moodiness vanished.

They enjoyed their two dances immensely, and sat chatting when the programme was finished.

"I hope we shall pull the match off to-morrow," he said, as they parted.

"Yes—rather!" she replied readily, "I think we stand a very good chance."

* * * * * *

"Yes," was his mental verdict the last thing, "Anderson is a lucky chap. He always was."

Then he fell into a sound sleep, and never stirred till he was called in the morning.

Jill would gladly have done likewise; but, instead, she tossed about half the night, and was only able to drop off to sleep when it was nearly time to get up. But she was willing enough to rise even then, for the golf match was before her, and the day full of joyful promise.

They won triumphantly, and carried off the prize in high glee, so far as Jill was concerned. Everything had gone well for both of them. The match had caused them to spend most of the day together, and though Anderson looked on moodily, neither of them took any notice.

Hall felt a trifle conscience-stricken, but he did not see that it was his fault; and decided, as he was leaving early the next day, it didn't matter, and Will could easily make up in the evening.

With this thought in his mind, he only asked for three dances, although her programme was, as yet, a blank, and Jill felt a chill of disappointment. There was not much etiquette observed on a last night like that, and she knew that many pairs would have as many as five together. She knew also that he had three with two other girls, besides an interval to smoke, and could

He took her to a small alcove and sat down beside her.

Digitized by Google

therefore easily have given her another without it seeming noticeable.

The first of their three passed very naturally; they danced it through without stopping, and then went to have refreshments. It did not quite come up to Jill's expectations, however, for though Hall was exceedingly

"Hi! wait a minute! You've got the wrong lady."

nice, he was very much the casual friend. So she looked forward to their last two still more eagerly, wondering how and where he would suggest meeting her again.

He was waiting about for her some little time before the dance began, and her heart beat quickly when he was at last able to come and claim her, and she saw a suggestion of glad expectancy in his eyes. When they sat out, however, he was very quiet and scarcely spoke at all, so that it was almost a relief to continue dancing, and her heart sank very low.

Afterwards he took her to a small alcove and sat down beside her. He bent forward and rested his arms across his knees, looking down with knitted brows at his hands. Jill leant back wearily and fidgeted nervously with her fan, for the silence grew constrained. She had never known a man to turn his back on her in this way before, or indeed do anything but show his pleasure at the chance of having a merry *tête-à-tête* with her. The whole situation was new to her, she could not even talk herself, and yet she liked him better, and was more anxious to please him, than anyone she had ever known. She raised her eyes and looked at him longingly—everything about him suggested strength—strength of mind, purpose, and body; it was easy to forgive him his unconventional lack of politeness.

"I suppose you are really going to-morrow?" she said at last.

"Yes, very early, before anyone is up. It is quite time too."

"Don't you like hydros?" quietly.

"I have always detested them, but I have enjoyed myself here."

"Then why are you glad to go?"

"I don't know that I am. I only know that I must."

He sat up and tucked his hands in his pockets, but he still looked away from her, with a cloud on his face.

"I wonder if we shall ever meet again?" she ventured.

"Oh, sure to," was the rather callous-sounding answer. "I go to see Anderson at Shrewsbury sometimes; it's a very good bicycle ride. I hope we shall get another game of golf together some day."

Jill did not reply, but lowered her eyes to her fan and a little, tired droop lingered about her mouth.

Hall turned his head without her knowing and watched her a few moments. He thought she had never looked so entirely winsome and charming before.

Then suddenly he got up.

"Shall we look for the others?" he said abruptly.

She rose, and with a slightly cold and formal air took his proffered arm. A merry group in the hall hailed them gladly, and they were quickly separated among the others.

When everyone prepared to say "good-night" he sought her again. "I must say 'good-bye' now," he said, "as I shall not see you to-morrow."

"Good-bye," she answered quietly. "I hope you will try our Shrewsbury links some day."

When she and Mabel were alone she tried to chat briskly of the day's doings; but when they were both in bed and the light out, she lay staring blankly into the blackness about her.

"I wish I had never met him," she said, with clenched hands, struggling to keep back the tears. "I was so happy before, and now everything is spoilt. How can I ever get through weeks of dances and gaieties without him?"

She bit her teeth together hard.

"How can I ever get through the long years without him?" she finished.

* * * * *

When Ted Hall got into the homeward-bound train the next morning, he was, if anything, more depressed than when he had started the previous week.

"I was a fool to go," was his mental comment. "I might have known something would go wrong," by which it will be seen that a new grievance had been added to the rest, to vex his already over-wrought soul.

"I won't see her again until they're married," he finally concluded, "and then it will be different, but I wish I had never gone. It was just my luck to meet her, too late to even have a chance."

* * * * *

"Hullo! glad to see you're still alive," and Will Anderson vaulted a low gate, and crossed a lawn to where Hall was idly lounging with a cigar in his mouth. "Four whole blessed months, and never a word of you! You might have vanished off the face of the earth for all I could tell. What on earth have you been doing?"

"Busy," was the cool answer; "awfully glad to see

Digitized by Google

you, though. Come into the house, old chap. Have a brandy and soda and help yourself," throwing his cigar-case on the table.

"You must be coining money, you beggar," said Will. "I wish you'd teach me the trick."

"I should need to get up early to teach you anything," Ted replied laughingly. "Had a gay winter?"

"Yes, all right. Things went a bit wrong at Christmas, but they've cheered up since. I've come over to tell you a piece of news and be congratulated."

"So I imagined. I'll get a bottle of champagne and we'll drink good luck to you."

"Who on earth told you?" exclaimed Will, in amazement. "I only knew myself the day before yesterday."

"A little bird and this," tapping his forehead as he went indoors.

He caught his foot in the carpet, and nearly fell headlong, which caused him to mutter a short but expressive monosyllable, all the stronger because of his suddenly disturbed state of mind.

"I knew it would come; what a fool I am to care!" he muttered angrily, as he descended the cellar steps, glad of an excuse to get away and overcome the first shock of the news. "But she was so different to the rest."

When he had filled their glasses, he raised his, and said, with assumed cheerfulness:

"Here we go, then! A long life and wedded bliss to my old friend Will and his charming *fiancée*, Miss Haslam."

"Hi! wait a minute!" exclaimed Will hastily, but laughing in spite of himself; "you've got the wrong lady."

Hall stared at him, thunderstruck.

"You don't mean——" he began at last.

"Yes, but I do, my dear fellow," jovially; "Jill and I decided we weren't very well suited. She told me I should be much happier with Miss Hayward, and, right or wrong, I'm happier than I ever was in my life before. So start again, old man, and give me my own mate this me."

When Hall had overcome the shock of the news, he again raised his glass, and the second toast was noticeably warmer than the first.

"It was at Christmas, you know," Will went on. "I hoped to get engaged to Jill then, but she was awfully sensible about it, she always is. I felt very down on my luck for a time, but Mabel turned out a brick, and now I wouldn't give her up for anyone in the wide world. I'm awfully happy, old man—ever so happy—take my tip and get engaged."

Hall smoked on silently for a few moments.

"I understood at Christmas that Miss Haslam was already privately engaged to you," he said at last.

"Oh, no, she wasn't, but it was a near thing."

A sudden light broke in upon Will, and he looked up sharply.

"If you hadn't thought that?" he began.

"But I did think it, so never mind," put in Hall.

"But I do mind. By Jove! this is grand, I see it all now; couldn't make you out before."

Hall tried to stop him, but he was incorrigible, and raising his glass exclaimed, "Go in and win, old fellow, here's good luck to you. She's one of the prettiest and nicest girls in the county, and Mabel Hayward is the other."

"You are jumping to conclusions very hastily," Hall said a little coldly. "Miss Haslam and I are mere acquaintances at present."

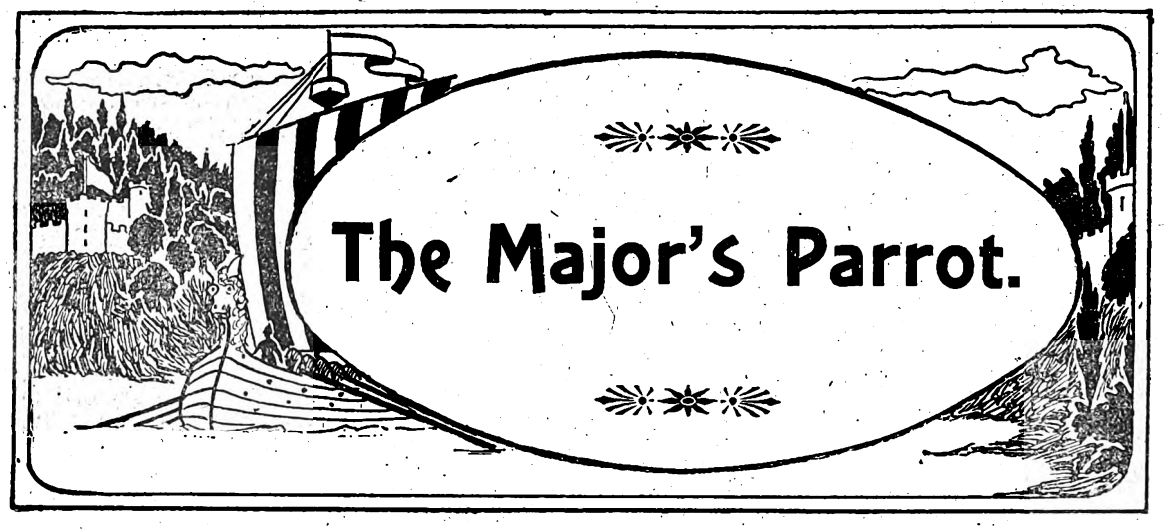
"Rats! I know better. Why, we haven't any of us known what to make of Jill, she's been so quiet this winter. And all the years I've known you, you've never gone four months without coming over before. You must come back with me to-night for a few days and make up for lost time. There's no atom of use in waiting."

Hall quite agreed with him, and before the week was over, a great health-drinking and congratulating took place one evening in Shrewsbury.

The four happy recipients of the honours finished up with a quiet ten minutes in the hall together, when Will remarked, with a wicked twinkle in his eyes:

"By Jove! but it was a near thing all round, wasn't it?"

Digitized by Google



The Major's Parrot.

WEI-HAI-WEI is going to become the fashionable summer resort in the Far East, so some people say. In the winter it is a dreadful wilderness, great blocks of ice, and cold, biting winds. It is late before the snow disappears, and the many spring flowers kept warm beneath it begin to show their gay little heads. Then the breezes blow soft from the summer sea, the wonderful blue of the Far Eastern blue sky is unclouded with grey, the officers of the Chinese regiment feel themselves once more within reach of the world, a few more troops come over from Hong Kong, and Wei-hai-wei becomes frivolously frisky.

Already little bungalows, in a row, each with its small garden, have sprung up on the sea-front, and the proprietor of the one hotel is dreaming of electric light and telephones. The men of the Chinese regiment are tall, finely-made men and look very neat in their smart uniform. Their pig-tails are wound up and tucked away under their service caps or helmets, they march well and they are not at all a bad imitation of our old acquaintance, Tommy Atkins.

The inhabitants of Wei-hai-wei talk of the "season" as a solid fact, and really a good many people from Hong Kong and Shanghai have begun to go there, though neither Cook nor Gaze yet condescend to number it among their cheap excursions or conducted tours.

Last year, a major in the Army Service Corps, quartered at Hong Kong, decided to spend his leave at Wei-hai-wei; firstly, because he had not enough money to take him home; secondly, because it would seriously decrease his small remaining amount of funds, even if he only went so far as Japan; thirdly, because Wei-hai-wei was said to be very cheap; fourthly and lastly and chiefly, because a lady, on whom Major Roslyn had long cast a covetous eye, had announced her intention of passing the hot months of the summer at this new resort.

The lady was called Miss Sophia Mac Tavish, she had come out from Scotland to adorn the home of her brother, a merchant in Hong Kong; but the brother was wickedly ungrateful, he did not appreciate the presence or the outspoken counsels of his elderly sister, and, adding insult to injury, had married two months before our story opens, a poor, pretty Irish governess.

When the engagement was announced to Miss Sophia, she stiffened her virtuous backbone in speechless wrath —she said nothing at all. Mr. Mac Tavish was pleased at this and thought, poor man, that his family affairs would arrange themselves peacefully. He proceeded to propound his plans for re-furnishing his bungalow for his bride. But he was not allowed to talk for long.

"Alexander," said Miss Mac Tavish, in a voice that caused the very flies to shiver, "whatever may be your plans for the reception of this godless and forward person, you need not repeat them to me. You have had an opportunity vouchsafed to few, of hearing the words of truth, and of associating with an unblemished member of the Scottish Church. If from this you can turn away, and lower yourself to the company of a low class Papist, all I can say is, I wash my hands of you, Alexander, from this day forth."

So she washed her hands of Alexander, for he showed no signs of turning from the pleasant paths, that diverged from the Scottish Church—and led to the Irish governess.

Miss Mac Tavish had a substantial income of her own, she was by no means dependent on her brother, report gave her eight hundred pounds a year, but report doubled the facts, as it often does.

She removed herself from the desecrated home of the Hong Kong Mac Tavish, appropriately named. Braemar, and she took rooms on the second floor of the Grand Hotel, which, as everybody knows, stands on the wide road bordering the harbour and looks straight across to Kowloon.

Here she found it very dull; very few of the friends she had made as mistress of her brother's house, came to see her in the hotel. She had made the acquaintance of Major Roslyn some time before and looked upon him with mild approval.

I scarcely like to say it of so discreet an elderly maiden, but in her own mind, she had settled to marry him if possible; to bestow her fortune, her counsels, her severe grace of religious character, on a mere follower of an unhallowed profession. The truth was, she did not wish to return to Dundee, like a cask of undesired goods; she had gathered from Major Roslyn's conversation that he was not too well off, though she did not know he had absolutely nothing but his pay, and many debts besides.

But lately, the Major's attentions had fallen off in a very marked way! Why was this? The truth was, he

Digitized by Google

had had a small remittance from home, so he enjoyed himself and put off the evil day. He had a sort of vague idea that Miss Mac Tavish was the evil day—he did not wish to lose the chance of a joint partnership in a possible eight hundred a year, but he felt that his outlook must be black indeed, before he could put up with Miss Sophia. So he trod the primrose ways of dalliance, and enjoyed himself very much so long as his money lasted.

But it soon went, alas, and not only did it vanish away, but quarter-day arrived, and with it a pile of bills. Two days before, Miss Sophia had asked him tenderly where he meant to spend his leave, and had quite casually said that she herself was going to Wei-hai-wei. The Major had given some indefinite answer then; but now, when his servant, Ah Chung, brought in this little array of blue long-shaped envelopes with his early tea, (one looked extraordinarily like a summons), Major Roslyn made up his mind at once.

To Wei-hai-wei, he would also go. He told Ah Chung to pack up while he had breakfast. Ah Chung was never discomposed, and proceeded to the next room at once, to begin.

"I'll take the parrot, too," called out the Major through the folding doors.

"Yessir," said Ah Chung, but he shook his fist at the parrot's cage and murmured under his breath, "Bird of Satan, accursed one."

The parrot surveyed him quietly and seemed to wink. It was a new purchase of the Major's and showed an unusual aptitude for talking. Also it seemed to understand the meaning of remarks made to it, in a wonderful way. The Major called it Nebuchadnezzar; it was a grey parrot with red tail-feathers.

Nebuchadnezzar was not always quiet under Ah Chung's insults; on the contrary, he often commenced the fray by calling Ah Chung, "Son of a pig." On other days he would only look at Ah Chung gravely, and solemnly wink with enjoyment at having betrayed his immovable enemy to a show of resentment.

Ah Chung would have liked to drop the cage with the parrot in it, to the bottom of the China sea; but this he did not dare to do. On the voyage to Wei-hai-wei, Nebuchadnezzar enjoyed himself very much and learnt several new and choice expressions from the sailors. One peculiarity he had, that the Major could not cure him of, he would not speak a single word if any woman were near; he would chatter away to the Major or any other man, but as soon as a woman approached he would stop, fluff out his feathers angrily, and no inducement could make him speak another word.

After a few days of fine weather, they encountered a moderate typhoon, the sea rose mountains high and flung the ship first on one side and then on the other, down, down so low, it seemed as if she could never recover herself. Nebuchadnezzar clung wildly to the sides of his cage and his language left nothing to be desired, from a sea-sick person's point of view. But they soon got out of the choppy white-crested waves, and as they got under the lee of the land, near Wei-hai-wei, the sea became beautifully calm and blue. The newly-made forts gleamed white on the grey rocks.

First, on landing, the Major went to the hotel, but it was not very comfortable and it was expensive; so, as he had three months leave, he thought it better to look out for lodgings. He was recommended to try the row of bungalows, I have before mentioned, on the sea-shore.

After dinner one evening, he walked down there, and as they were practically the only houses to be let in the place, he was scarcely surprised to see Miss Sophia Mac Tavish emerging from the gate of one. He lifted his hat and greeted her civilly. Miss Sophia simpered; her charms then had drawn the Major so quickly after her!

"Let me see, he must have started within a day or two after I left Hong Kong," she said to herself.

Still his manner was not so warm as one might have expected. She entered into the question of lodgings with much interest and strongly recommended the row of little bungalows by the sea. She herself was installed in one, and she believed the one next door to hers was to let. They inspected it together. Two sitting-rooms on the ground floor, a wide verandah looking to the sea, and above, two large bedrooms and another verandah. What could be better? The rent, too, was very moderate and included necessary plate and linen.

So Major Roslyn took it, and the next day moved down from the hotel, accompanied by Ah Chung and Nebuchadnezzar. Ah Chung speedily found a Chinese cook, and the household was then complete.

The Major passed his time very comfortably, he often dined at the fort, or at the Chinese regiment's mess, of which he was made an honorary member, on other nights a man, or sometimes two men, dined with him.

Then he had Nebuchadnezzar, to whom he talked a great deal. The bird would sit on the arm of his chair with a very human expression in its wicked round eye, nodding its head and exclaiming at intervals, while its master detailed his grievances.

It was a funny thing to do with a parrot, but it was a great relief to Major Roslyn; his creditors were becoming unpleasantly pressing and the shadow of Miss Sophia loomed darkly on his mental horizon. So he told Nebuchadnezzar all his worries, and that wise bird croaked sympathetically, and would hop from the chair to his shoulder, and rub his head thoughtfully against the Major's face.

Ah Chung used to hear the talking, and became more firmly convinced than ever, that the parrot's body was the abode of an evil spirit. Next door nothing could be heard, for each bungalow stood in its own garden.

So two months passed, and Miss Sophia was by no means pleased with the state of affairs. Major Roslyn's attitude towards her was no more definite than in Hong Kong; true, he often accompanied her on her evening walks and had adopted an air of proprietorship when arranging her shawl, brought as a defence against the night air; but this was not enough

Could it be?—and Miss Mac Tavish shuddered with horror at the thought—could it be that he was trifling with her elderly affections, that he had no serious intentions at all? It required the whole strength of a mind endowed by the wisdom of the Scottish Church, to bear up against such treachery.

No, it could not be! Perhaps he was shy, poor man!—he certainly was a little younger than herself.

That was it, he was diffident, no doubt—a charming trait in these days of unblushing effrontery. So Miss Sophia redoubled her smiles and leant more tenderly on the Major's arm as they returned from their evening stroll.

"Do you know, dear Major," she murmured softly, "I have never inspected the interior of your charming bungalow since you have come to live there. I should so much like to," she insisted with childish grace."

The Major shuddered.

"I am afraid I have no lady to receive you," he said rather grumpily, "and I'm afraid a bachelor's quarters are, hm—hm——"

Digitized by Google

"Oh, not at all, dear Major," insisted Miss Sophia, gushingly, "I adore simplicity, and anywhere you live, must gain interest in my eyes."

"Good gracious," said the Major to himself, "I must be careful, by Jove."

Aloud he said:

"My dear Miss Mac Tavish, you are too kind. If you really will excuse my deficiencies, I shall be only too happy if you will honour me by coming to tea one day this week."

"How delightful," cried Miss Sophia, "you dear man, indeed I will come. Shall we say Saturday, at four o'clock?"

"That will suit me capitally," said the Major, "I will expect you then, at four o'clock."

They had now reached the lady's garden gate and stopped to say "Good-night." She pressed his hand lingeringly, and turned, with an audible sigh, up the path to the house. Poor old thing, she was very lonely, you know.

That night the Major dined alone, with only the society of Nebuchadnezzar, to whom he confided the singularly pressing state of his affairs. He sat for a long time on the verandah after dinner, with the parrot on his shoulder, and felt as if he were really talking to a friend.

Ah Chung received notice of the entertainment, and the feast was prepared, also the Major invited three extra people, a naval lieutenant and a captain in the Chinese Regiment with his wife. Fruit and cakes, and tea and cream, all were set out invitingly on little tables in Ah Chung's best style; the chairs were dusted, the wood polished, everything wore a festal air.

It was a remarkably fine day, so the long windows were wide open on to the verandah, and the fresh sea-breeze blew crisply in.

At four o'clock, the guests began to arrive—the naval lieutenant first, then Captain and Mrs. Venner, last but not least, Miss Sophia Mac Tavish. She swept in, arrayed in her best visiting clothes, a good and solid grey silk poplin, white China crape shawl, and a most festive-looking pink bonnet.

Poor Mrs. Venner sat appalled by such magnificence, she had on only a white shirt, a blue skirt, and sailor hat. Miss Sophia was gracious but distinctly patronising; in fact she was dreadful altogether, her host felt it more than all.

Nebuchadnezzar looked on with distinct disapproval. Why were all these people eating here? while he was offered nothing, and, an additional insult, even shut up in his cage. He was very rarely so now, but the Major was afraid he might fly at his guests, as two of them were women.

Nebuchadnezzar hated women, as I have said before.

Mrs. Venner said: "What a nice parrot you have, Major Roslyn, does he talk? Pretty Polly!" and she held out to him a piece of cake.

Nebuchadnezzar turned his back on her with scorn, Major Roslyn laughed.

"I'm afraid he'll have nothing to say to you, Mrs. Venner," he said. "Nebuchadnezzar hates ladies and will never say a word while any are in the room. I'm afraid I spoil him; I've got into the habit of talking to him in the evening as if he were a friend, a regular old bachelor's habit, and he seems to understand all I say."

"You call him Nebuchadnezzar?" said Miss Mac Tavish sternly, "do you not think it irreligious to give such a name to a heathen bird?"

Nebuchadnezzar's eye had been for some seconds fixed on Miss Mac Tavish's pink bonnet, and when she spoke in her usual rather grating voice, he gave a start, then he ran up and down his perch and gave a preliminary croak.

"Oh, hush, hush," cried Mrs. Venner eagerly, "he's just going to speak," and Nebuchadnezzar spoke with clear and awful distinctness.

"If somebody doesn't pay my debts soon," he said plainly, "I shall have to marry that infernal old woman next door."

Then he was silent, but he had said enough.

The Major's face was scarlet, the naval lieutenant was purple as if with apoplexy.

Miss Mac Tavish rose from her seat, she fixed her eyes on the Major's guilty countenance—then without a word she did the only thing possible, she rustled out of the room, her very poplin skirt seeming to shake off the dust of such society.

So she went, and the others were too taken aback with astonishment even to open the door. As she went through it, the Major sprang forward, but she waved him back with gesture worthy of a Bernhardt.

In the room she left there was an awkward silence; then all the others rose simultaneously to say "Good-bye."

The Major shook hands mechanically, then through the window he watched them going through the garden, simply doubled up.

"I can never show my face in Wei-hai-wei again," he said to himself.

Then he looked at the friend who had betrayed him and laughed bitterly.

Nebuchadnezzar winked in a confiding way.

"You have ruined me," said the Major with angry reproach.

"Just my beastly luck," said Nebuchadnezzar.

SADI GRANT.

MRS. GREENE: "Charles, I was astonished at the way you devoured that salad to-night. You know you always said you detested salad."

Mr. Green: "Yes, love, but I didn't know that there was another way of making it than yours."

"GREAT heavens, man!" exclaimed Bogg's old friend. "Do I find you reduced to playing a cornet at the street corner to make a living?"

"I ain't doing this to make a living. My wife won't let me practise in the house," Boggs replied.

UNCLE JACK returns from a long walk, and, being somewhat thirsty, drinks from a tumbler he finds on the table.

Enter his little niece, Alice, who instantly sets up a cry of despair.

Uncle Jack: "What's the matter, Allie?"

Alice (weeping): "You've drinked up my 'quarium, and you've swallowed my free pollywogs."

A GENTLEMAN touring in Scotland happened to be in the bar of a wayside inn partaking of some refreshment. While proceeding to light his pipe he was about to use a wax-light out of his box, when an old Scot, who was having his "half," handed him the box of matches lying on the counter, saying:

"Dinna use yer ain, maister; hae these—it's the only discount ye get in a public-hoose."

Digitized by Google

THE LION'S WARS

I.—THE NETHERLANDS WAR.

1793—1795.

CONSIDERING how universally we have been reviled on the Continent for our selfishness and rapacity, it is nothing less than astonishing that we should have allowed ourselves to be persuaded into joining the confederacy which sprang into existence against France after the death of Louis XVI, especially as no arguments derived from the balance of power could be invoked to defend the policy we adopted.

The execution of the French king no doubt excited the deepest indignation in this country, but that was no reason why we should join other Powers in depriving France of her conquests, especially as the dismemberment of France would not have enriched us.

Yet on March 25th, 1793, we signed a convention with Russia for the prosecution of hostilities against the French until they should relinquish all their conquests. As soon as it transpired that Britain was to play its old familiar *rôle* of plucking the chestnuts, the great Continental powers expressed their willingness to shed the blood of their soldiers in the cause of punishing revolutionary France, provided we paid the expenses.

Having worked themselves into a state of high moral fever, they also declared that as Britain would provide the sinews of war, it was only fair that she should be allowed to control its operations.

As we were to pay all expenses, the allies of course furnished extremely large armies.

Austro-Sardinia provided 55,000, the Spaniards 50,000, the Austrians 66,000 on the Lower Rhine, and 33,000 more between Meuse and Moselle, and there were 112,000 Russians and Prussians on the Middle Rhine.

In 1794, Pitt stated in the House of Commons that His Britannic Majesty had agreed to pay the Emperor William of Prussia £50,000 to enable him to carry on the war, with an additional £100,000 per month for forage, £400,000 cash down to put the army in motion, and £100,000 on its return.

As these sums proved insufficient we actually agreed to pay all expenses Prussia incurred provided reliable vouchers were produced. Needless to say this proviso caused no difficulty, Germans supplying Germans led to our being beguiled out of some sixty millions before the war was over.

War being declared, a British force under the youthful Duke of York sailed for the Netherlands and, landing, joined the Hanoverians. On the 7th of May, 1793, we quitted our cantonments near Tournay and marched to Maulde, a village in Belgium, where some Prussians and Austrians were posted.

To make head against her foes the French Convention had ordered a levy of 300,000 men, so there was a goodly array of Frenchmen at St. Amand on the Scheldt when we attacked. The Prussians on our left, after some hours of fighting, became so hardly pressed that the Duke of York had to send the Guards to their assistance.

The Duke of York was not a great strategist, but, accustomed to the atmosphere of courts, he was not unacquainted with the gentle art of flattery. On arriving

Digitized by Google

at the point where the Prussians were being badly cut up, the Duke said. "I reserve for the Coldstream Guards the honour, the special glory of dislodging the French from the intrenchments our allies have failed to carry. As British troops you have only to show yourselves here and the French will retire."

Tommy must have liked this style of oratory for it is said that he loudly cheered His Royal Highness. But perhaps the words were not ill chosen, for the position was so strong as to require a supreme effort to capture it. To get at the French it was necessary to negotiate a ditch which was found to be so broad that they were compelled to use the village bridge. This exposed them to a most destructive artillery fire. Although we lost half our men we fared better than the Prussians. They, too, lost half their force and at the finish had to retreat, whereas we managed to get to the other side.

But the French were too strongly posted to permit of their intrenchments being stormed, although we made several desperate efforts to capture them. One headlong charge brought us within twenty yards of our goal. But we were driven back, the fire being too heavy. The night was closing in when we retreated. The French contemplated harassing our rear but a sharp repulse caused them to change their minds.

The French claim St. Amand as a decisive victory, which is strange considering that, shortly after, Conde was blockaded.

Before we could attack Valenciennes it was necessary to reduce the fortified camp at Famars. The French offered a desperate resistance, but the Austrians, coming up, a redoubt was captured, Famars fell and Valenciennes was beseiged. The siege operations were intrusted to the Duke of York, who used his artillery with such effect that half the town was destroyed before it surrendered.

Before the town capitulated the French people were desirous of making peace, but they rallied as one man the moment they learnt that the Duke of York had taken possession in the name of the Emperor of Germany.

The siege over, the Duke of York marched to the assistance of the Dutch, who had been driven by the French from Lincelles. The 1st Coldstreams, and the 3rd Guards were sent forward, but the Dutch, having retreated, the British, in their hurry to bring them back, took the wrong road, and presently found themselves confronted by a large French army.

General Lake at once prepared to retire, greatly to the disgust of our men who clamoured to be led against their old antagonists. So the orders were countermanded and Lake, sending word to the Duke of York to hurry up reinforcements, boldly attacked the French. The Dutch onslaught had been so lacking in fire and determination, that the French reckoned on an easy victory.

In fact, they burst out laughing, when the puny proportions of our force were revealed on its coming into the open. But their mirth was not of long duration. They purposely allowed us to approach within twenty yards in order to surround and capture the entire force, but before they could extend their lines, we had dashed into their midst.

The charge threw them into the greatest disorder. The centre was cut in two, one half being hurled against the left wing, and the other being precipitated on the right.

The French officers made frantic efforts to reform their men, but our soldiers rushed up and down the columns with such intrepidity that at last the French became thoroughly frightened and bolted from the field. We took two stands of colours and captured all the guns the runaways had taken from the Dutch. This battle is worth recalling if only on account of the gallantry exhibited by the regiments of Guards who to this day carry Lincelles on their colours.

Early in 1794 we again took the field, on coming out of our winter-quarters, against the French. Our neighbours have never liked us. To the French revolutionists we were especially objectionable. In 1794 their hatred led them to promulgate the following order:

"England is capable," ran this precious document, "of every outrage on humanity and every crime towards the Republic."

After enjoining the commanders of their forces to destroy the wounded, and shoot all prisoners, it closed with these remarkable words: "Shoot the British slaves and Europe will be free."

Whether the French thought it probable that any attempt to carry out these infamous orders would lead to reprisals, it is impossible to say, so it must be set down to the credit of the French generals, that they disregarded the barbarous edict of the Republic. The Duke in a counter-order reminded the men "that mercy to the wounded was the brightest gem in the character of the soldier."

In the campaign of 1794, the allied generals again demonstrated their incapacity by so dividing their forces that it was impossible to strike a decided blow anywhere.

The French, as was their wont, took up positions in the neighbourhood of woods, which served the double purpose of concealing their numbers and securing a safe retreat.

We managed to drive them from an intrenched position close to Landrecies, which we were besieging, but the success was temporary, for three days later they drove back the Prince of Coburg with great loss.

Encouraged by this success the French then boldly attacked the Austrians, and, knowing the value of concentration, brought such huge numbers to bear on the enemy that victory would have been certain had not Sir Robert Lauri and a brigade of cavalry taken them in flank and forced them to retire.

This audacious movement on our part so enraged the French that, reinforcements arriving, they were able to concentrate a most imposing force at Cambay. Their chances too, which suffered nothing from the vigour and initiative they displayed, were still further increased by the bickerings of the allies. The only subject on which the allies were unanimous throughout the war was that Britain was not being bled sufficiently.

The French having completed their preparations for a big coup, crossed the Selle at Saalzoir. The Duke of York sent orders to General Otto and his division to attack. Otto reconnoitred, and, finding the enemy stronger than he expected sent for reinforcements; but as the messenger lost his way, Otto had next morning to assault a force far exceeding his own in numbers.

Why the French did not attack would be inexplicable save for the circumstance that they (except at Waterloo and one or two other battles) invariably acted on the defensive when encountering us. They never hesitated to advance against any of the armies of the Continental Powers, but with us they preferred, as a rule, the shelter of the trenches.

For all his deficiency in numbers, Otto managed by repeated charges of cavalry to drive back his antagonists.

Digitized by Google

[Lawson Wood.

[Drawn by

One of these onslaughts resulted in our capturing eight pieces of cannon. Maddened by this reverse the French made a supreme effort and recaptured five. It was an expensive attempt for it cost them two whole battalions.

The courage displayed by the 15th Hussars at this battle won even the admiration of our allies, greatly as they disliked us. In 1800 the Emperor of Germany (the head of the Austrian Empire) sent through the Earl of Minto, Minister at Vienna, the Cross of the Order of Maria Theresa to Colonel Aylett and seven other officers for the gallantry they had displayed.

But the French were far from being dismayed by what they had undergone at the hands of General Otto. A few days later they furiously assailed the whole of the Duke of York's force. They did their very best to win, for that sinister body in Paris, the Committee of Public Safety, had intimated that any further reverses would be treated as crimes. General Chapius suggested waiting, but the Committee would not listen, so he attacked with his entire force, consisting of 3,000 cavalry, 25,000 infantry, and 75 pieces of cannon. One division of 10,000 men was sent to Ligny, where it attacked the redoubt at Troisvilles defended by Colonel Congreve. The second column was marched to Beausois, but fear of the Committee proved too strong, so it wheeled about and rejoined its companions.

General Otto, who had been carefully watching the disposition of the French, having ascertained that their flank, which rested on the village of Caudry, was only defended by 2,000 infantry and 500 dragoons and six guns, decided to fall on this weak wing with his horse.

General Mausel with 1,450 British cavalry, a division of Austrian cuirassiers, and a body of the Archduke Ferdinand's Hussars, bore down like a torrent on the village of Caudry.

After slaughtering the small force in charge, the British turned their attention to the main body of the French army.

Mauser rifles and quick-firing guns were unknown in those days, the sword being the usual weapon. It did rare execution amongst the serried ranks of the French that day. General Chapius sent down a regiment of Carbineers to check our progress.

The Austrian horse hung back, but the British, shaking themselves clear of the French foot, went pell-mell at the French horse and sent them flying.

This battle seems to have consisted of nothing but charges.

The rashness we displayed was so supremely ridiculous that the French would most certainly have annihilated us had they retained their presence of mind.

After disposing of the Carbineers our men descried some cannon posted on an eminence. There were fourteen fully-manned guns confronting us and the road to these led across a ravine exposed to a murderous fire. The Austrians were asked to join, but pleaded that their horses were tired.

So the British went alone. They trotted in open order till the ravine was cleared, then they closed their files and broke into a canter.

Although the French were firing grape we made straight for the guns; a good many saddles were emptied during that memorable ride, but not a single artilleryman escaped alive.

This decided the day.

The victory was greatly magnified in this country. The *Evening Mail* of May 14th gravely asserted that the French lost in killed alone 14,000 men, which is hardly likely. Fifty pieces of artillery were captured, of which forty were claimed by us.

Had the Duke of York brought his infantry up, we should probably have captured the entire French Army.

Whatever may have been the merits of the Duke of York as a strategist, he had none of the dulness so often found in the Georges. To stimulate the prowess of his men in the battle of Caudry he offered prizes in money for all munitions captured. In a General Order dated May 12, 1794, the following sums were offered for captures. "For each cannon or howitzer £20. For each pair of colours £10. For each tumbril £10. For each horse (alive) £12." No wonder the Duke was known in the army as the "Soldier's Friend."

On May 18, 1794, the Duke of York was surrounded at Turcoine by large bodies of French. Our men offered a desperate resistance, but they somehow got so muddled up that even a charge was impossible. The consequence was that French took 1,500 prisoners and guns. Badly as we were handled the capture of our artillery cost the assailants 4,000 men.

Our brave fellows retrieved this disaster a few days after at Pont-a-chin, where Pichegru, the French commander, after declaring that our repeated victories over the armies of France had been owing to a foolish superstition, scorned a defensive battle, and fell on us with a splendidly equipped army of 100,000 men. In this battle the Duke of York had insisted that the allies should do their fair share of fighting.

To their credit be it recorded that the Prussians and some of the Austrians fought well from 5 a.m. to 3 p.m. After this they began to waver.

The Duke, seeing this, sent up some British infantry.

Our men only fired one volley and then rushed forward, never stopping until they landed in the middle of the enormous French army. Nothing more was seen of them for half-an-hour. The flight of the French at length revealed them.

They were guarding fifty pieces of cannon they had captured, in the hopes that the prizes which had been given for war material would be continued.

At this time the Reign of Terror was in full force, and Europe shuddered at what would happen if the power of France were not quickly checked.

On the approach of winter the French entered Amsterdam, and, the Zuyder Zee being frozen over, the singular spectacle was presented of a fleet being captured by a land force.

The Duke of York, having to return to England, had handed over the army to General Walmoden who, on the advance of the French, retreated to Westphalia.

The public at home now clamoured for the recall of the army, which, coming to the ears of the allies, led to their perpetrating the most shameful barbarities on our sick and wounded. Those of our men, and alas! they were but few, who had borne up against the rigour of the winter, kept our friends at bay till we reached Bremen, whence in March, 1795, the troops sailed for England.

The war of the Netherlands is not one we have any reason to be proud of, although we did nearly all the fighting.

Some of the battles fought in this war showed the British soldier at his best; but we could not prevent the endless quarrelling which went on amongst the allies. It was internal dissension which eventually led to the triumph of the French.

Digitized by Google

Mr. Bowser's Tribulations.

XXXI.—HE LEVELLED ALL DISTINCTIONS, AND A TRAMP LEVELLED HIM.

Mr. Bowser had come home not exactly mad, but he was in that state of mind known as "techy." He found Mrs. Bowser so pleasant, the dinner so good and the house looking so well that he couldn't find fault with anything until he sat down to his evening paper.

He hadn't been reading more than five minutes when he burst out with:

"By George, I have always said it would come to this, and here it is!"

"Has another king been assassinated?" asked Mrs. Bowser without much interest.

"No, there hasn't, but there has been something nearly as bad. Just listen to this: A millionaire who got on a 'bus for a short ride found himself alongside one of his employés. What do you suppose he did?"

"Bowed to him and offered to pay his fare probably."

"He did, eh? That's all you know about it. It so happens that he called the conductor and had the employé put off. He said he didn't propose to ride along with the riff-raff. My goodness, how I'd like to have been there! Because the man had accumulated a few thousand pounds he looked upon common humanity as so much dirt. He wouldn't even ride with a man who had to earn his daily bread by the sweat of his brow."

"It was silly for him to make such an exhibition of himself," said Mrs. Bowser, "but there is no call for you to get a stroke of apoplexy over it."

"But don't you see all this helps to preserve the aristocracy in this country—don't you see it?" he shouted as he waved the paper on high and brought the cat out from under the sofa to see what the row was about.

"Well, what of it? Why should you care?"

"I care because all men were born free and equal; because one man is as good as another; because money don't make the man. That's what ails the poor man to-day. We are trying to class him with the animals of the field. It's this shoddy aristocracy drawing its skirts away from the labouring man that makes socialists and anarchists. Because we happen to have a few thousand pounds in the bank are we better than our washerwoman or the man who clears away the rubbish?"

"I haven't heard of your inviting them to dinner or sitting down to tell stories."

"Then, by thunder, you will, and this very night too!" he roared as he kicked over a chair and started to stamp about. "The people of this country want to know who are the snobs. I'll soon prove to which class I belong!"

He started for the front hall and had his hat on before Mrs. Bowser could ask him what he was going to do. Without replying to the question he passed out of doors, and from the parlour window she saw him halting by the gate and gaze earnestly up the road.

"My friend, you are a man."

He didn't have to wait there long. A tramp who had been loafing at the corner and accosting a score of persons in vain for money to get a bed soon came shuffling along. He was debating whether to ask or not when Mr. Bowser observed:

"My friend, you are a man."

"I expect I am," was the reply.

"And as a man you are just as good as I am. Because I happen to be better off in this world's goods than you are I have no right to look down on you."

"Say, old man," remarked the tramp as a grin spread over his face, "unless you are drunk you are talking uncommon good sense. I like to hear it."

"I am neither drunk nor a snob," continued Mr. Bowser. "I say you are a man born free and equal. As a man, you are entitled to my respect, whether you are a millionaire or a labouring man."

"And you don't set yourself up as being above me?"

"No, sir."

"And I'm as good as you are?"

"Just as good."

Digitized by Google

There was a row in which the dining-room was almost wrecked.

"Shake hands, old man! You don't know how you encourage me. If I'm as good as you are, then mebbe—mebbe——"

"Come in and have dinner, and after that we'll talk. There'll be no aristocracy in this country soon if a man of my size can prevent it."

"You ain't goin' to git me in there to give me the boot?" asked the tramp as he hung back and wondered over his good luck.

"I am going to treat you as an equal. Come along."

The man was taken to the dining-room and the cook ordered to give him his dinner. She looked in wonder and astonishment and demurred, but Mr. Bowser insisted, and she reluctantly complied.

When the fellow had got well to work, Mr. Bowser went upstairs to explain what he had done and what was to follow, but Mrs. Bowser had gone to her room. He was minded to call her down and ask her to play the piano, but on second thoughts he decided not to rush the business too much at first.

After twenty minutes he went down, but the tramp was still going strong with knife and fork. He had asked for something to wash it down, and the cook had put on a bottle of claret, with which he was making free. Mr. Bowser winced a little, but gave him a quarter of an hour more.

At the end of that time there was still a piece of the second loaf of bread left, and it was about ten minutes more before the tramp had finished. A cask of food and a bottle of wine had restored the gall of the "equal" to its pristine glory, and shoving back from the table at last with a sigh of contentment, he pounded on the board with his knife and called to the girl:

"Hey, slavey, bring hither one of the old man's perfectos and let the wrapper be speckled!"

"How dare you talk that way to me?" demanded the indignant cook.

"A perfecto, pot wrestler, or out you go!"

Mr. Bowser heard from the head of the stairs, and his hair began to rise.

Running down, he said:

"Look here, ain't you rather over-doing this thing?"

"Not at all, old bird," was the smiling reply. "We are both men and equals. You have the splosh and I'm dead broke. It's your business to divide. How are you situated for cash?"

"I'll show you how I'm situated. There is the door! I want no more of your society!"

"But you can't turn me off that way old man—oh, no! My name is Jim the Sticker. When I gets a good thing, I hangs on. Don't go back on what you said about all men being equal."

Mr. Bowser again ordered him out, but as he refused to go he was taken hold of to be assisted.

He didn't propose to drop the equality business without a struggle. and there was a row in which the dining-room was almost wrecked and Mr. Bowser was badly knocked about.

By the time the cook had brought a policeman and Mrs. Bowser and the cat had got down stairs the tramp had filled his pockets with knives, forks and spoons and got away. Nothing could be said to the man left lying on the floor on his back. He had levelled all distinctions and been levelled himself.

M. Quad.

[Next Week.—*He Does a Bit of House-cleaning while Mrs. Bowser is Away.*]

A - SPLENDID - NOVEL.

Now Ready, Cheap Edition.

THE INVISIBLE MAN.

By H. G. Wells.

Author of "The Time Machine," "The War of the Worlds," etc.

Price 6d.

POST FREE 8d.

"The story is told with that fertility of imaginative resource which has made Wells conspicuous in this domain of fiction."—*Daily Chronicle.*

"Written in the author's merriest and most provoking mood."—*Sunday Times.*

"The tragedy is always on the brink of farce until we reach the last page and a piece of wholly pathetic tragedy. The hunted terror of society is caught at last, and most pitiful is the re-entry he makes into the invisible world he left so boldly."—*Saturday Review.*

At all Bookstalls, Booksellers, and of C. A. Pearson Ltd., Henrietta Street, W.C.

Digitized by Google

PAST THE POST.

"I TELL you the beast must be pulled!"

The slightly-built man, who looked little more than a lad, fixed a pair of sad, hollow eyes upon the ground between the pointed toes of his boots, and listened to his companion's imperious directions in mute despair.

"It's done every day for much less than this affair means to either you or me," the other urged. "It means beggary to me and prison to you if the beast get's home. If it doesn't, you shall have that unfortunate cheque together with a hundred pound note the evening following."

"I never pulled a mount yet, Mr. Hall, and I'm hanged if I do now," the jockey ejaculated through his set teeth.

"It will mean prison for you, then."

"I dare say it will," cried the jockey in a shrill voice. "You kept that cheque until you knew it was too late for me to prove I didn't forge it, and now you come and threaten me with it unless I do your dirty work. I won't do it, prison or no prison, so I tell you straight; Besides, who told you I'm riding Merrymay?"

"Do you take me for a mole?" said Mr. Hall. "I know you have been asked to ride the beast, and if you refuse or fail to pull him—well, you know how unpleasant will be the consequences."

"I suppose you've got on to The Baker for all you're worth," Sillings said thoughtfully.

"That's none of your business. The Baker's got to win, that's all you need worry about, and if you pull Merrymay, all will be well."

"For you—yes: I don't doubt it. But what about Lord Shannon? P'r'aps you don't know that he backed my mount for all he's worth, and that Merrymay is relied upon to pay off the mortgage on his estate? A win to The Baker would be absolute ruin to his lordship."

"More fool he! I can't be expected to drop all my money because a friend has backed the horse to win. Now look here, Joe; don't let us have any more words about the matter. Will you or will you not ride and pull?"

"No."

"Tut! Confound you! What do you think Miss Mastman will say when you're thrown into gaol, and branded a felon? What will she say when she knows that you have been courting her with the crime of a forgery upon your conscience, such a high-minded young woman as she, too?"

"She'd think less bad of me than if I pulled Merrymay," Sillings returned in a hushed voice.

"Well, put it another way. How can you marry her after three or four years in prison? You may not get 'beefy' in gaol, but your skill will be spoilt, your name will be ruined, your career, which at present promises to carry you into the first rank of jockeys, will be cut short. In a word, you will be hopelessly ruined!"

"Surely the Prince of Tempters might come to you for hints!" the jockey hissed. "But even if Merrymay loses, The Baker may not win. He may go all wrong within the next three days. Then where will you be?"

"Fool! I have not backed The Baker; I have laid against Merrymay. If The Baker turns up fit on the course, then I may back him. But that is quite beside the point."

There, apparently, was Joe Sillings' last hope gone. No compromise between him and his tempter was possible. He had to choose between prison and ruins the loss of the girl he loved and degradation in her eye, which was perhaps even worse than losing her, and the mere tightening of a rein.

"Which will you do?"

"I'll think it over, and you shall see," the jockey replied weakly.

"Can't you decide now? Think what 'No' means to you."

"Can't you decide in your own mind what I shall do when the time comes?" Sillings replied doggedly.

"Yes, I think I can, Joe," said Mr. Hall, smiling quietly. "You're a wise man, Joe. The *pros* are out of all proportion to the *cons*."

"Have you anything else to say?"

"No, I don't think so."

"Then get out of my paddock, Cuthbert Hall."

Mr. Hall knew he had succeeded in his mission, and therefore took this insult with better temper than he would otherwise have done.

He went away without a word, but with a smiling face and a light heart.

Sillings watched him disappear, and groaned.

He was in the hollow of the man's hand, and how could he surrender a successful career, a life's possibilities and a life's love to race-course ethics. Yet was it merely a question of race-course ethics? Was it not rather an ephemeral effort which would be reflected by his conscience through all his life; an effort which would ruin many a home, and wreck many a life?

On the other hand there was no certainty in horse-racing and those men who had backed, or would back, Merrymay to win knew they might lose; and if he

Digitized by Google

pulled the horse, and the world knew why, would not his reason justify him before all except those who had lost by this act?

He wandered through his stables, his heart lonely and sick within him, debating with himself which course he should take; and it suddenly occurred to him that if he could discover the whereabouts of his old friend, John Grainger, all would yet be well; John could prove that he never committed the forgery.

But where was John? Perhaps a thousand miles away, perhaps in the very next town. He had not heard anything of him for three years, and knew no one who had. John might be dead. Still there was hope in this idea. He would endeavour to find John before the day of the race, and if he failed—then, he would have to choose.

* * * * *

Late in the evening of the following day Cuthbert Hall was hurrying about his chambers in Sloane Street, preparing everything so far as he could to enable him to get down to Epsom early, without the necessity for rising before his usually late hour.

He was in high feather, flushed and not absolutely sober. He was looking for the morrow as a day that would see his making, a day of events which would wipe out his financial difficulties and put a handsome fortune in his pocket, and a day too which would ruin for ever the chances of his friend Lord Shannon redeeming his fortune sufficiently to marry Clair Dudley.

Mr. Hall was not the man to play half any game; he laid a plot to enrich himself, and developed it to ruin his rival. He had schemed for months to reach these ends, and he had omitted nothing which could further either object.

He had even forged a note to meet a creditor, whom he could easily have paid, to husband for a day or two a few hundred pounds which he would lay to his own gain. Then he would redeem the note, he decided, and wipe the matter out.

It was all planned to the finest point, and he was naturally elated. It was the honey of satisfaction to him to prepare for the eventful morrow.

At last when all seemed done, he paused and pondered to know if there were nothing else he could do to anticipate the next day. Then he sat down at his writing table, and took a cash-box from a drawer. From the cash-box he extracted a folded cheque.

He satisfied himself that it was the one he wanted, took a sheet of plain note-paper and, pinning the cheque to it, wrote, "The B.N. follows to-morrow." He folded the two up, slipped them into an envelope which he closed, addressed and stamped.

"He shall have the hundred to-morrow," he said, glancing down at the letter upon the blotting pad, as he rose and lit a cigarette; "meanwhile I can make four or five of it. I will take this with me, post it at the station on my return to town, and he will see I am a man who keeps his word in either way."

He smoked the cigarette half through in restless meditation, and, then, as if struck by a sudden thought, went out of the room, picked up a hat and stick from the hall rack, and passed out of the building.

He had not been gone three minutes, when his man entered the room. His heavy eyes wandered over the room from one object to another until they rested upon the letter.

Picking it up, he read the superscription apathetically, and he glanced at the clock on the mantelshelf.

"Juggins!" he muttered calmly. "I thought he was a bit wavey to-night. Two minutes to twelve. I can just catch it, and if I don't, I suppose I shall catch it—in another way."

Reluctant to cross the muddy road in his indoor shoes, he made a detour to a crossing and posted the letter at the box opposite the chamber buildings. He returned by way of the crossing, availed himself of the lift and entered the flat just behind his master who had used the staircase.

"Been out, Pink?" Mr. Hall inquired.

"Posted your letter, sir."

"Posted—my—! You blithering idiot!" cried the master, white with fear and rage. "Where did you post it?"

Pink told him and followed him down the stairs, three steps at a time, and across the road.

With fumbling fingers, Mr. Hall struck a match and looked at the little enamelled plate which indicated the time the box would next be cleared.

"Eight-twenty! The box is cleared. Oh, you vast fool!" he cried, turning passionately upon Pink.

He sprang into a hansom and drove to the district sorting office, with all possible haste.

"By mistake a few minutes ago my man posted a letter in the pillar-box at Camden Street corner," he said to an official who came forward. "It is of vital importance that it should not be delivered. It was addressed to Mr. Joseph Sillings, Darcy Lodge, Epsom. The box has been cleared."

"Are you sure it was posted?"

"Absolutely."

"Then I cannot help you; once posted the letter belongs to the Postmaster-General until it is delivered at the address of the addressee."

"But I must have it, man!"

"Out of the question, sir."

It was useless to argue; the official was obdurate.

"What time will it be delivered?" Hall asked anxiously.

"Epsom, you say? Between eleven and twelve—about eleven."

And Joe Sillings would not be on the course until one or two o'clock! He would probably get the letter before leaving home. Why, in that case, should he pull Merrymay?

Hall strode out of the office in a frenzy of rage and despair.

Somehow he must draw Sillings away from his house before the letter arrived there and keep the letter from him till after the race. But how?

"Pink," he said, when he had got back to his chambers, "I want you to send a telegram for me."

"Sillings, Epsom. Meet me Leatherhead Station eleven sharp, Wednesday. Important. John Grainger," was how he worded the message.

"That will draw him if nothing else will," Hall said, as he affixed a sixpenny stamp.

But even when this was posted he was uneasy in his mind; he knew Sillings would be at Leatherhead Station at the time appointed, that he would wait anxiously for the appearance of Grainger, and that the chances were a thousand to one against Sillings returning home before the race was run.

But there was the bare chance that the prematurely-posted letter would get to Sillings' hands in some way before Merrymay was paraded, and Hall could do nothing to obviate this contingency.

Next morning, however, refreshed by sleep and no

Digitized by Google

longer muddled by drink, Hall was perfectly sanguine. On his way down to Epsom, he had sent a telegram to Sillings' head groom to ask where his master was, and at Epsom telegraph office he found awaiting him a reply to the effect that Sillings had gone early to Leatherhead to meet a friend.

This was good news indeed, but opened an ugly doubt for Hall.

Sillings' groom was almost certain to attend the race, and the letter must already have arrived at Darcy Lodge; and might not the groom take it to his master? It was a torturous doubt.

By chance, however, Hall met the groom just outside Epsom station, and satisfied himself that the man had not brought the letter, which had not arrived when Sillings left home, and that no one else was coming from Darcy Lodge to the meeting.

Lounging about the paddock some considerable time later, Hall caught sight of Sillings out of the corners of his eyes.

The jockey's face was pale and haggard, and there was a hard, sad look about his mouth.

"What a fool the man is," Hall said to himself. "One would imagine he was required to do murder."

Shortly afterwards Merrymay passed by where Hall was standing. Sillings was up in his purple and white silk.

Instinctively he turned his head, and as he caught sight of Hall, he gave him a look of mute despair. But Hall did not see it.

He was running his eye over The Baker and admiring the horse's wonderful condition, which so impressed him that he moved off and laid every penny he had with him upon the animal.

By the time he had edged himself into a good position for viewing the race the starters were already off. He could just make out the coloured jackets of the jockeys bobbing along in the distance.

The Baker was third to get off and Merrymay was running in a batch of five of the field behind the first three.

"How-d'ye-do, sir," said a voice over Hall's shoulder.

Hall turned and blanched as he recognised the sunburnt chubby face of John Grainger.

He could find no words to speak in his surprise and alarm.

Fate was surely trying to unhinge his mind; first by the hideous mistake about the letter, and now by John Grainger, the vanished man, turned up at such a time. If he had seen Sillings the day was lost, the lifetime ruined!

"I only arrived from South America last night, sir, but seeing my old friend Joe Sillings was up on a favourite in the big race I was bound to come down." Grainger explained.

"Have you seen Sillings?" Hall inquired hoarsely.

"Not to speak to, but I've put a pony on his mount, you may be sure."

Hall turned his head away and shuddered. Fate had played a waiting game with him, he thought, but luck was all on his side.

There, behind him, breathing in his very ear was the one man on earth, who, by a few moments conversation with Sillings, could have ruined his masterly schemes, and snatched Sillings out of his net; and he had come too late.

Twice in twenty-four hours Hall had been in an ace of ruin, and had been saved by chance.

There was a roar, and a pushing forward of the crowds that lined the course, as the horses swerved round the bend and began to come down the straight.

"Marcus!" roared half the crowd, "Haresfoot!" yelled the other half as two horses broke from the leading five and challenged each other.

There was a panting pause, then a roar that made the blood tingle in Hall's flushed cheek.

"The Baker!" shouted the crowd together, as another horse overtook Marcus and Haresfoot and showed them his heels.

A moment later a fluttering patch of white and purple seemed to leap forward.

It flashed past Marcus and Haresfoot, and began to overhaul The Baker.

"Merrymay does it! Merrymay!"

Inch by inch Merrymay drew down upon The Baker. The shadow of the favourite's nose flickered on The Baker's thigh, then upon its flank, ribs and shoulder, and then The Baker's nose began to fall back from the level of Merrymay's shoulder, to its thigh; when suddenly Merrymay seemed to pick himself up and leap forward a hundred yards—two hundred yards, and Merrymay had won.

* * * * *

Half-an-hour later Hall, white, haggard, and aged by many a year, too desperate to hurry from the scene of his ruin without an understanding with Sillings, met the jockey face to face.

Sillings was no less pale and hardly less haggard than Hall, but there was a triumphant light in his face which was naturally wanting in Hall's.

"You blackguard!" Hall hissed, half-raising his stick.

"You can't honestly call me that," said Sillings quietly. "Not now, at least; I've given all my world to keep faith with Merrymay's backers, and I gave you the chance to hedge. I know what it means to me—ruin, unless I can find John Grainger."

"To hedge?" Hall ejaculated.

"Aye; I sent you a telegram to tell you that Merrymay was not as fit as might be, but if the horse could win he should."

Hall turned and slunk away.

He crept to the station, into a train. He crawled to his chambers by back streets to avoid meeting acquaintances.

Pink greeted him.

"There's a telegram for you, sir," said Pink. "It came a few minutes after you'd gone."

Hall snatched it up and read:

"Merrymay none too fit. But if can win shall.—Sillings."

Hall groaned.

* * * * *

At precisely the same moment Sillings at Darcy Lodge was burning a cheque he had found waiting him.

He watched it crumble away in the flames, and smiled up at John Grainger who stood by, watching him.

C. Randolph-Lichfield.

FUN ON THE BILLIARD TABLE.

A Collection of 75 Amusing Tricks and Games, with Photographs and Diagrams.

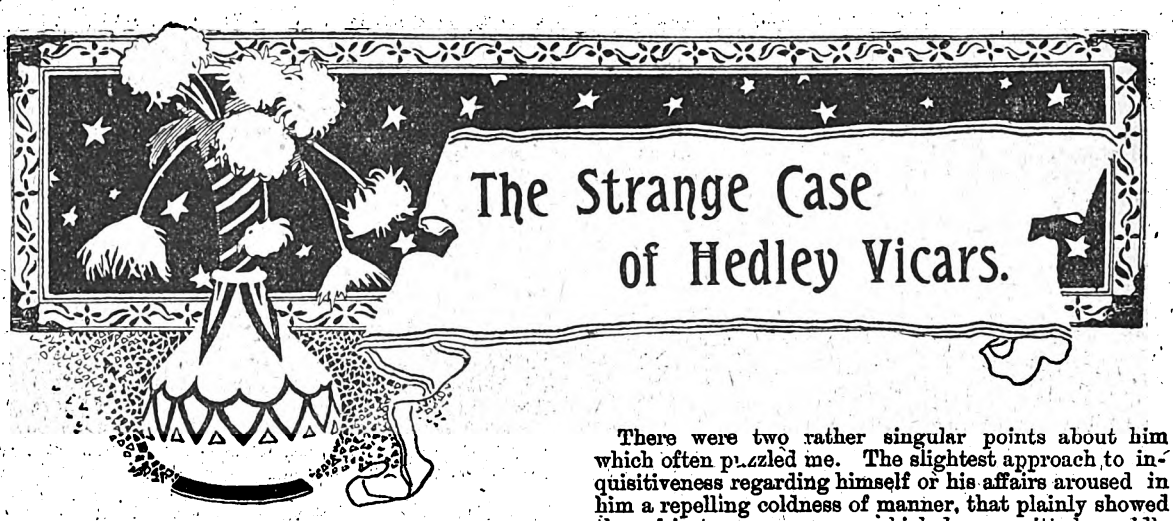
By "STANCLIFFE."

Crown 8vo, Cloth. Price 2s. 6d.

"To say that no billiard-room should be without this joyous and ingenious little volume is nothing; there is no player, amateur or professional, who would not get his moneysworth out of it."—Sportsman.

C. Arthur Pearson Ltd., Henrietta Street, W.C.

Digitized by Google



The Strange Case of Hedley Vicars.

If one looks down upon a peaceful valley, where a blue wreath of smoke curls upwards from some quiet homestead, and notes the tranquility, the air of repose which surrounds the dwelling, it is hard to realise that under such a roof there may be lives, that jar, aching hearts, hatred and discord.

And yet such is not infrequently the case.

So, too, is it in the lives of some of those around us. Outwardly they may appear calm and unruffled, yet, unsuspected by their closest friends, a consuming fire may be raging within.

The ever-present, torturing memory of some dark tragedy in the past is often cloaked from the world under a smiling exterior.

Some such reflections as these always come uppermost in my mind when I think of the strange case of Hedley Vicars.

Few knew Vicars as well as I did; fewer still had the remotest suspicion that there was any hidden mystery in his life. To have even hinted at the possibility of such a thing would doubtless have provoked an incredulous laugh, for he was one of those men upon whom fortune had showered her favours with a lavish hand.

A bachelor with an income that ran well into four figures, devoid of extravagant tastes, his lot was one which most people would have envied.

If you add to this that he was in full enjoyment of vigorous health—a fine specimen of an athlete, in point of fact—good-tempered, generous, and popular with his fellows, there seemed to be no room in his life for care of any kind.

Though he had abundant opportunities of doing so, Vicars was not the man to make many friends.

Indeed, even among those who knew him best, close intimacy was out of the question. He held you at arm's length at first, and it was only by slow degrees that you succeeded in penetrating his reserve. Even then there was a point at which you were brought up as by a dead wall.

What lay beyond, what thoughts or memories were stored in that hidden quarter, none could tell. In his company, when I had got to know him pretty well, an irksome sense of that impassable barrier in his nature was ever present to my mind.

There were two rather singular points about him which often puzzled me. The slightest approach to inquisitiveness regarding himself or his affairs aroused in him a repelling coldness of manner, that plainly showed the subject was one upon which he permitted no idle curiosity.

Then, if you happened to be with him in public, he had a strange way of whisking round suddenly and peering into the crowd behind him, as if he recognised the tones of some particular voice.

Moreover, though he had a fine musical ear, a woman's singing, no matter how enthralling to others, seemed to jar upon him as if it were nothing but a medley of harsh and discordant notes.

It was in the summer of '92 that a curious incident of this kind occurred. Vicars had a houseboat on the Thames, which he was wont to inhabit for a month or two every year.

I had run down from town to spend the week-end with him, and talk over a contemplated trip up the Nile during the coming autumn.

One evening we were lounging along the banks of the river in our flannels. The splash and ripple of the stream, the drowsy hum of insects, and the imperceptible shading away of day into night produced a quietude of mind, a tendency to meditation, that such scenes alone can evoke. That peculiar fresh-water smell was in the air; occasionally a skiff glided by with a scarcely audible sound of oars, or a distant peal of laughter came from some merry boating party.

Vicars was strolling along slightly in advance of me. Suddenly, to my surprise, I saw him stop short in the midst of a stride, turn his head towards the river, and appear to listen with the utmost intentness. I paused—held my breath for a moment—but all I could hear were the faint, far-off strains of a woman's voice, which were wafted down to us through the still, hot air.

I stepped up to my companion and looked at him. I was so little prepared for what I saw that it struck home to me like a shock. Even in the waning light I could see that his face was ghastly white. His eyes were fixed in a wild, unearthly stare, and his whole aspect that of a man stricken by some sudden and appalling terror.

"Good Heavens! Vicars, what is the matter?" I cried, clutching him by the arm.

Without a word he shook off my hold, swung round on his heel, and was off to the houseboat with long, swinging strides. I followed hastily, but he had disappeared below before I got back. As I stood for a moment on the bank I caught the gleam of light in his room, the window of which was open. Stooping down,

Digitized by Google

I glanced inside. Vicars was striding up and down there, swinging his arms about in a wild and frenzied manner, and clapping his hand to his head every few seconds.

I saw no more of him that night.

* * * * *

Early in the following September we started for Egypt, intending to make a short stay in Cairo before proceeding further upon our journey. It was there that the next scene of this singular drama took place.

We were returning rather late from the house of an English resident, with whom we had become acquainted on board ship.

It was a simply perfect night, I remember—still, sultry, with a brilliant moon riding high in the heavens. The black, sharply-defined shadows of the houses cut across the white glare that flooded the streets.

As we strolled along towards our hotel, puffing our late host's excellent cigars, we both seemed rather disposed to silence. Vicars was strolling on the inside, and I noticed that his eyes were bent thoughtfully on the ground. For myself, the strange jabber and chatter that came from dark corners engrossed most of my attention, and I vainly endeavoured to distinguish the dusky forms of the speakers as we moved past.

At the other side of the street, which was in the shade, an open window, with a glow of light streaming from it, caught my eye. Why I should have noticed it I cannot say, except, perhaps, there might have been some hazy thought floating through my mind as to whether the occupants of that particular house were regular inhabitants of the city, or strangers like ourselves.

As we approached the spot, the mellow chords of some stringed instrument floated out to us through the open window.

The next moment the full, rich, thrilling notes of a woman's voice seemed to fill the deserted street with a burst of melody.

Instinctively I paused to listen, facing round towards the house, and oblivious to all else save the ravishing strains that poured forth into the night.

Never in my life have I listened to such a song! The power, the pathos, the intense and vivid emotion, thrilled to the very depths of my soul. It seemed to lift you out of yourself, to transport, to bear you away to the realms of the spiritual. To this day I have no recollection of the words, but I hung upon every note of the song in breathless ecstasy.

As the voice died away into a low, melancholy cadence, like a parting wail, I suddenly became conscious of a sound behind me as if someone was scratching at the plaster of the wall. With a quick foreboding of something wrong, I turned sharply on my heel. Good Heavens! to my last day I will never forget that sight.

Vicars was leaning back against the wall, his hat and his reeking cigar lying at his feet.

The ghastly look in his eyes was appalling, his ashen features were quivering, and he moaned feebly from time to time as if in the clutch of some overpowering horror. His hands, hanging by his sides, kept clawing spasmodically at the wall, until the tips of his fingers were torn and bleeding.

I sprang towards him, for his body was slowly inclining to one side, and his legs seemed about to fail him.

My touch appeared to galvanize him. He started upright, grabbed me by the arm, and literally dragged me away from the spot. I had barely time to stoop and pick up his hat before we were hurrying off down the street at a rapid pace.

Not until we had turned the corner did he seem to recollect himself. Then he took his hat from my hand, jammed it on his head, and strode off without looking to right or left.

When we got back to the hotel, he parted from me abruptly in the hall, went straight up to his own room, and locked himself in.

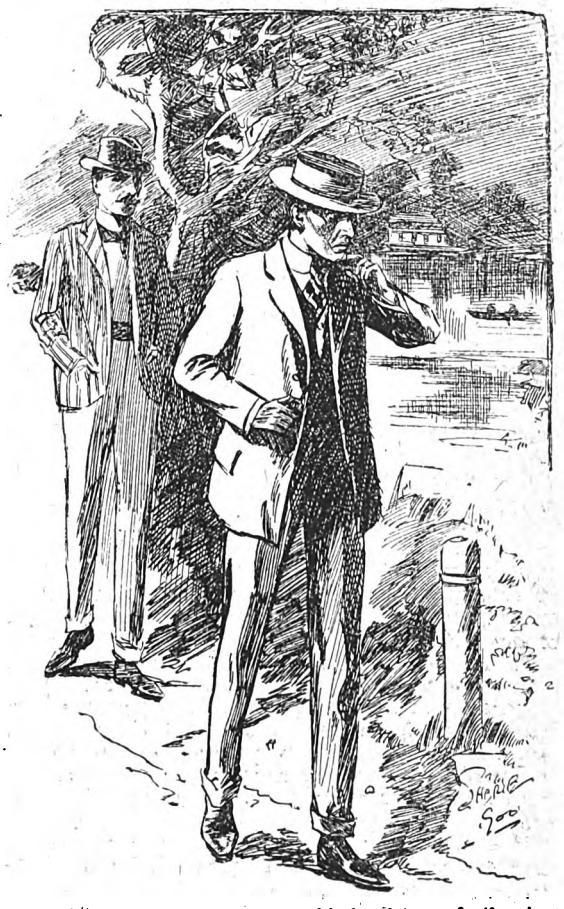
All through the night, whenever I awoke—and my rest was by no means tranquil—I heard him pacing his floor.

Not until long after daybreak did that monotonous tramp tramp in the next room cease.

The following morning he came down rather late, his face white and drawn, and a restless, scared look in his eyes. It was plain that he had received a shock the night before, and a bad one too. When I joined him in the hall he was giving instructions to have his luggage dispatched to the Nile steamer forthwith.

"What! tired of Cairo already?" I said, in a bantering tone, for I did not wish him to think I suspected the cause of this sudden departure.

"Yes, sick of it!" he answered, avoiding my eye. "I am off up the Nile. Will you come?"



I saw him stop short, and turn his head towards the river.

Digitized by Google

Vicars was leaning back against the wall, his hat and cigar lying at his feet.

"Of course I will," I replied. "I think we have pretty well exhausted the attractions here, and the sooner we hear the roar of the cataracts the better."

Not until we had put a hundred miles or so between us and Cairo did Vicars begin to pluck up heart a little and seem to take any interest in his surroundings.

Still, a marked change had come over him; he was subject to long fits of depression, of brooding melancholy, from which he would start up suddenly, and gaze around him with wild, horror-stricken eyes. It was plain that the old morbid fancy regarding a familiar voice at his elbow was stronger in him than ever.

Sometimes, in the hush of evening, as we sat alone under the awning on deck, he used to jump from his chair, hasten to the side, and stand there in the attitude of one who was straining his ears to catch some distant sound.

"Did you hear anything?" he would ask, in an awed whisper.

"No; not a sound. Did you?"

"I thought—I fancied—it seemed to me as if there was someone singing—over there, on the opposite bank. I could have sworn I recognised the voice, too."

"Imagination, my dear fellow," I answered, dragging him back to his seat. "Pure imagination!"

This sort of thing went on day after day, night after night.

To tell the truth I was by no means sorry when we put about, and headed down stream again.

These strange fancies of Vicars' were rather trying to one's nerves.

A voice—a woman's voice—the same which we had heard in Cairo no doubt—seemed to be perpetually ringing in his ears. It haunted him early and late; it sometimes brought him to my berth in the small hours of the morning with the eager questions, "You heard it? Surely you heard it just now?"

In six weeks, much to my relief, we were back in England.

Upon reaching London I parted from my companion, and saw little of him during the winter months. I rather fancy he was anxious to avoid me, for whenever we met there was a certain constraint on both sides, a consciousness on my part and on his, that the thoughts of each went back to that scene in the moonlit streets of Cairo.

* * * * *

In the following spring, just as I got back from a short trip to the South of France, I was surprised to receive a note from Vicars, begging me to come round to his rooms that evening.

Not having seen or heard of him for months, this sudden summons revived my interest in him, and I began to wonder how he had employed himself in the interval.

Vicars occupied a roomy flat in a quiet West End street. As I knocked at his door that evening, it suddenly occurred to me that if the woman's voice still haunted him, he might possibly have broken down under the strain.

But I was little prepared for the actual reality. As I entered his room I found him stretched upon the couch, hollow-cheeked, shrunken in face and figure, with wild, glittering eyes, and the look of a man who had some abiding horror ever before him; a mere ghost of his former self, in fact.

He greeted me in an abstracted manner, as if his mind were running upon something else, and motioned me to a seat near him. No sooner had I sat down, than he leant towards me and said:

"Fenwick, she is here—in London."

"Who?"

"That woman."

"Whom we heard in Paris?"

"Yes."

He dropped back on his cushions, turned away his head, and groaned aloud.

I was much distressed at his condition, shocked by the terrible change in him, but scarcely knew what to say.

"Fenwick," he went on, presently, facing round towards me again, "I regard you as a friend. That time in Egypt you displayed a consideration, a delicacy of feeling, which I am not likely to forget. If I tell you a strange story, you will, I am sure, keep it strictly to yourself. I *must* open my mind to someone, or this solitary brooding day after day will drive me mad."

He paused, and with a trembling hand wiped the cold moisture from his forehead.

"It is close this evening," he murmured, "and the room seems to be rather stuffy. Would you mind opening the window a little?"

I rose and crossed the room for this purpose. Just as I raised the sash, I happened to glance across the street. On the other side, directly opposite the house, two women were standing, surrounded by a little knot of curious passers-by.

Digitized by Google

One, the younger, wore a thick veil, or sort of mask that reached half-way down her face. Her tall, stately form was in striking contrast to the short, squat figure of her companion. Both were gazing up at the window where I stood.

Suddenly, without the slightest warning, the taller of the two began to sing.

Good Heavens! Was it any wonder that I started? There was no mistaking those clear, rich notes; it was the same voice that I had heard in Cairo!

* * * * *

A shriek from Vicars made me close down the window with a crash and hurry across to his side. He was quivering—gasping—his head rolling from side to side, the frenzy of madness in his eyes. I tried to take his hand, to soothe him, but he waved me back.

"Keep off! Keep off!" he shrieked, flinging his arms into the air. "Don't touch me!"

Glancing helplessly round the room I fortunately discovered a bottle containing an opiate. I measured out a draught, and handed it to Vicars. He swallowed it eagerly.

By this time the singing outside had ceased, and I heard the shuffling of many feet on the pavement as the crowd moved away.

With a weary, long-drawn sigh Vicars closed his eyes, and presently dropped off into a restless, fitful slumber.

Sometimes he woke up with a start, sometimes muttered incoherently about an island, the name of which I could not catch.

I sat with him throughout the greater part of that long tedious night. Day was already breaking when he awoke.

At his request I summoned his servant, who had remained in attendance during the night in an adjoining room.

The man soon had a fire blazing in the grate and got us some strong coffee.

"It was very good of you, Fenwick, to stay with me," said Vicars, when we were alone again. "You deserve my confidence, and you shall have it. Do not disclose my wretched story at present. That is all I ask.

"Some four or five years ago," he went on, "I was wandering about the West Indies. Something—Fate, I suppose—took me out of the beaten track, and I visited several of the smaller islands of the Windward group.

"At one of these—the name does not signify—I made rather a long stay. My headquarters were at a little town on the coast, but I spent most of my time in exploring the interior.

"The luxuriant tropical plants, the rich foliage, and the rare birds that flitted about overhead, all had a charm for me. The solitude was profound; it almost seemed as if no foot but my own was ever planted in those forest depths.

"One day I penetrated further than usual, and got into a thick tangle of giant plants, shrubs, and tall grass. I was pushing my way through this dense growth, when a sound reached my ears which brought me to a dead stop. It was a few stray chords of music, coming somewhere from the other side of the leafy screen which surrounded me.

"I listened intently—breathlessly. The music ceased abruptly; but presently, in the intense stillness a burst of glorious melody was wafted to the spot where I stood.

"A woman was singing—pouring out her whole soul in harmony, it seemed. As I hung upon those entrancing notes, I believe they produced much the same effect upon me as they did upon you in Cairo; for it was the same voice—the same woman.

"When the song ceased I hurried forward, and in a few minutes emerged into an open space. In the centre stood a picturesque little cottage, something after the style of a bungalow, with a verandah running round it. There, reclining gracefully in a wicker chair, was the singer—a beautiful girl, who seemed to typify the warm, rich loveliness of the West Indies.

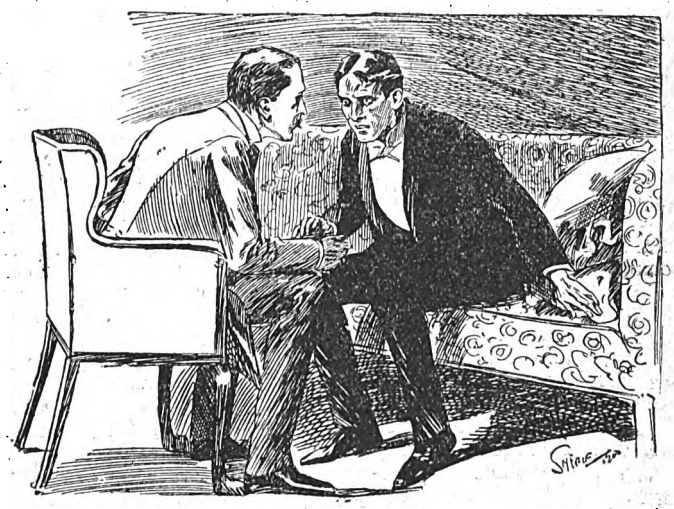
"As she caught sight of me, she sprang to her feet with a startled cry. I stammered out an apology for my intrusion; and by degrees, as if my presence was a welcome break in the monotony of that seclusion, she drifted into conversation. Standing above me on the verandah, her lovely face, and the graceful pose of her figure, formed a charming picture. I noticed that she kept glancing somewhat uneasily into the room behind her, where I fancied I caught the sound of voices.

"From that hour my destiny was sealed. Day after day my steps were directed to this secluded spot. The girl, I found, was a Miss Roupell, the daughter of a wealthy West Indian planter, but now an orphan. The household, so far as I could make out, consisted of herself, one or two negro servants, and a Mrs. Holt, an elderly, taciturn woman, with a face like a rock.

"The few people with whom I had become acquainted on the island could give me little information regarding this Miss Roupell, or why she chose to bury herself in the depths of that solitude.

"That such a lovely creature, who was fitted to shine in any society, should voluntarily lead the life of a recluse, was certainly most strange. Young, accomplished, wealthy, it was difficult to understand why she cut herself off from the world in this way.

"That, however, troubled me little at the time. It was enough for me that she was there. Day after day, week after week, I lounged at her side on the verandah, or we roamed together through the forest shade. Her gentle, loving disposition, her charm of manner, and the



He leant towards me and said: "Fenwick, she is here—in London."

Digitized by Google

unconscious grace which distinguished her, took my heart captive. I adored—I worshipped her.

"Need I tell you how the matter ended? I lingered on from month to month; and then, one glorious morning, I asked Ina—that was her name—to become my wife.

"Though this could not have come as a surprise to her—she must have anticipated it from my

Standing above me on the verandah, she formed a charming picture.

manner—she appeared startled and troubled nevertheless.

"For several days she would give me no positive answer. She seemed to be struggling with herself, fighting some battle apparently. At last she gave in, and I won her consent.

"But even then there were times when the same troubled, shrinking look returned. It almost seemed as if she felt there was some insuperable barrier between us.

"She had strange fancies, too, in some respects; for instance, whenever I was with her, she appeared always anxious to roam about outside, instead of remaining in the house.

"One evening, when I had set out upon my return to the coast, I suddenly remembered that I had forgotten to give her a trinket, which I had brought with me that day. I hurried back to the house for this purpose. It was already dusk, and a lamp had just been lighted in one of the lower rooms.

"Feeling sure that Ina was there I sprang upon the verandah with the intention of entering through the window and taking her by surprise.

"Just as I set foot upon the verandah, my mind filled with joyful anticipations, there was a scream of rage in the room, a tumult—an uproar and the sound of heavy blows. The whimpering of a woman—evidently one of the negro servants—and her frantic appeals for mercy, thrilled me with horror. I sprang to the window, and I saw—I saw—oh, merciful Heaven!"

He dropped back on his couch, his breath coming in short, quick gasps, his eyeballs distended. I hastened to get him a stimulant. When he had gulped it down he turned to me again.

"Fenwick," he said, "I have been in many strange lands, and have beheld sights that appalled, that shocked me.

"Once, in South America, I stooped down to pick up out of the grass what I imagined to be a beautifully-marked, rounded stone. Before I touched it, it moved; and I saw that it was the head of a deadly, venomous serpent.

"Strange as it may appear, this very incident flashed through my mind as I stood on the verandah, looking into that room. She—that girl—that beautiful creature—was there, but she was transformed into a tigress, a fiend.

"With blazing eyes, her whole form quivering with rage, she held a stick in her hand, which descended again and again with a horrid thud upon the back of an unfortunate negro girl, who was crouching at her feet.

"Appalled—horrified—I stood there, as if my limbs had been robbed of their power. The next moment Mrs. Holt rushed in, flung her arms round the enraged girl, and dragged her from the room. The negress followed, sobbing bitterly.

"How I got away from the house, how I managed to reach the coast, I cannot remember. Early next morning I was on board a vessel bound for Porto Rico, and from there made the best of my way back to England.

"A year passed. The remembrance of that last dreadful scene I had witnessed was fading away when it was suddenly brought back to me with startling vividness.

"One night in passing a house here in the West End I heard a woman singing in a room on the second floor. I stopped—gasped—and reeled against the area railings. It was her voice!

"Since then it has haunted me. In Brussels, in Venice, in Rome, I have heard it. Go where I might, there was no escape from it. At the very moment that I deemed myself most secure it suddenly burst upon me. On each occasion it brought vividly before me that whole ghastly tragedy in my life; my love for that girl, the happy dream in which I had indulged, and the awful awakening. The thought of it all went through me like a knife.

"From time to time, too, I have received warning from her, all to the same effect. Letters, containing a

Digitized by Google

ingle slip of paper, have constantly reached me. On hat slip, these words were always written:

The end is not yet.—I. R.

"And now, in face of it all, I ask myself—what will the end be? How, and when, will it come?"

Poor fellow! he little knew how near it was—on his very threshold, as it were. I left him, promising to look round again in the evening. When I did so, I was shocked to hear that he was dead. That very afternoon, while his servant was out, someone had entered his room and stabbed him to the heart.

* * * * *

The singular story which I had heard from Vicars' own lips made a profound impression upon me. Many and many a time, in the solitude of my own room, I went over it again.

I tried to piece it together, to weave these disjointed incidents into something tangible and coherent, but without success.

How account for that sudden and extraordinary change in the girl?—that transformation from a gentle and winning creature, such as Vicars described her, into a being of fierce and ungovernable passion, and eventually, as seemed only too probable, into a murdress.

In all probability the connecting link would have been for ever lost to me, but for the fact that, about a year afterwards, a friend of mine, Ronald Farquharson, came home on a trip from the West Indies. I gave him the outlines of poor Vicars' story, and he promised to look into the matter on his return.

Six months later I received the following letter from him:

My Dear Fenwick,—

Since I got back here I have made diligent inquiries regarding the Roupell family, and have picked up one or two rather remarkable facts, which ought to throw some light upon that tragic affair you spoke of when I was in England. The history of these people, so far as I have been able to ascertain it, should make good reading for those who hold to the hereditary theory. Here it is:

Old Anthony Roupell, the planter, was a bad lot by all accounts. Cruel, heartless, vindictive, there were about as many evil passions stored up in the man as it would have been possible to squeeze into any one human being. His wife, strange to say, was the very opposite; a gentle, lovable sort of woman, always doing good in her own quiet way. Anthony spent most of his time in flogging and ill-treating his niggers; his wife in bathing and dressing their wounds when he had done with them.

This ill-assorted couple had two daughters—twins. They were so alike that it was almost impossible to tell them apart. Both were gifted with rare musical talent—sang divinely, I hear. But there the resemblance ended, abruptly and finally. In character and disposition they were as widely separated as the North Pole from the South.

Irene, the elder, took after her father, inherited all his bad passions, and I rather fancy must have picked up one or two more on her own account. Ina, the younger, was simply a reproduction of her mother. A noble, true-hearted girl she was—at least, so I have been told. You should hear the niggers speak of her! They fairly idolized her.

After the death of their parents, Miss Irene began to make things lively all round. One day she set to work with her dagger upon a Creole girl, and that little ebullition of temper got her into trouble. In short, she was compelled to fly. Ina, brave girl as she was, would not desert her—stuck to her through thick and thin.

I have been to the island where they sought refuge. It seems that, soon after their arrival there, the elder sister grew so outrageous that for the most part they were compelled to lock her up in her own room. Probably her evil passions, now that they had no vent, boiled within her to such an extent as to drive her to frenzy.

The people there tell how an Englishman—doubtless your friend Vicars—came along one day, and fell desperately in love with Ina. Poor girl! her heart seems to have gone out to him from the very first. That was the one bright period of her existence, but it was quickly followed by the darkness of despair. His sudden and unaccountable desertion came as a death-blow to her. I verily believe it broke her heart. From that hour she drooped, pined away, and died.

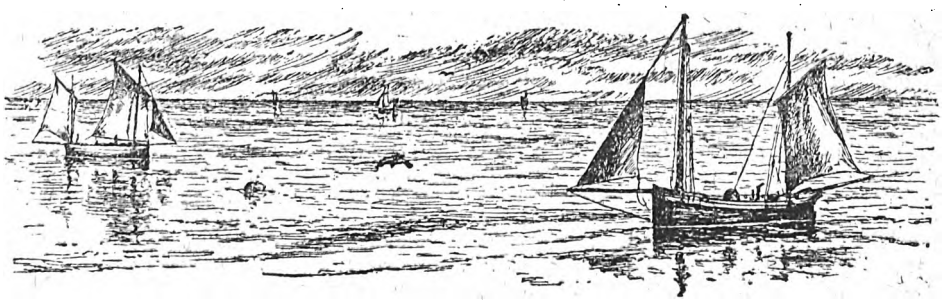
Irene Roupell had one good trait in her character at any rate: that was, a blind and passionate devotion to her younger sister. When she got to know all about Vicars, she vowed to enact a terrible vengeance.

With that purpose in view she controlled herself, curbed her fiery passions, and set out in search of him.

She was accompanied by a woman, an old servant of the family, who was almost as much bent upon the business as the girl herself. You know the rest.

That is the whole of the story. Curious isn't it?

J. L. Hornibrook.



Digitized by Google

LOST WORD COMPETITION.

1st Prize, £2 2s. 2nd Prize, £1 1s.
3rd and 4th Prizes, 10s. each.
Ten Consolation Gifts of Penknives.

BELOW is a story from which some of the words are omitted. The words to fill up these blanks will be found represented in the pictures given, and competitors are required to find out the words so as to complete the story.

The above prizes will be awarded to the competitors who send in the correct, or most nearly correct, solutions. In the event of more than one person being absolutely correct, the prize will be divided.

Write the words in tabular form (the number against each) on one side of a sheet of notepaper, together with your name and address, and then cut these pages out and pin all together.

All competitors must enter on the understanding that the Editor's decision is final.

All attempts must arrive not later than Monday, December 31st, in envelopes addressed: "Lost Word, *Short Stories* Office, Henrietta Street, Strand, W.C."

THOSE in the besieged town who knew him, were convinced that old Jeffrey was alone in the world. Years ago he had taken up his quarters at the (1)——— by the (2)———, and there he had lived the life of a hermit, spending his time chiefly in cultivating the (3)——— for which his abode had become famous.

Not a soul was known to visit him save the (4)——— (5)——— who called him grandfather, and he seldom ventured beyond the (6)———, where he could usually be seen watching his little friends pass to and from (7)——— or (8)———, and making a (9)——— for them to approach him, when he would greet them with endearing words, and pleasant smiles, then throw into their outspread (10)——— the (11)——— which they so much loved.

Among all his pets there were none who had such claim to his affection as a little girl whose name was (12)——, and a (13)——— whose name was (14)———.

These (15)——— were his greatest joy, but above all, the girl, for there was an undescribable something about her face and manner that reminded him of (16)——— who had been more dear to him than all the world, and whom he longed to see again.

But although old Jeffrey had a great trouble at his heart, he would have found solace in his pets were it not for the fact that those cruel days of siege often deprived him of their company.

At times only the most daring would trust themselves in the open, while those more timorous through infancy or age, sought the shelter of a friendly (17)——. And old Jeffrey, not caring to brave the dangers presented by (18)——— and (19)——, deemed it advisable to remain for the most part within (20)———.

Thus it happened that after a day of persistent assault by the enemy, he sat within the (21)——— of his abode tending the (22)——— and (23)——— of a favourite (24)———. The occupation so thoroughly engrossed him that he soon lost thought of the dark (25)——— which hung over the town, its people, and himself. He even forgot the sorrow which had so long been blighting his existence, until, looking up, his eyes rested upon a portrait at the far end of his room.

And as he continued to gaze upon it, tears trickled down his cheeks, while he cried half-aloud, "Mabel! shall I never see you more? Was it not enough that death should rob me of your mother, without my declining years being spent in solitude, to mourn the loss of you, now dead to me, though living?" And, laying his head upon his hands, the old man wept until sleep relieved him of his sorrow, and he slumbered on.

Soon there was a hissing sound, then a loud (26)——, followed by a crash which startled old Jeffrey to wakefulness. He (27)——— hastily, threw aside the (28)——, and looked anxiously out of the (29)———.

A shell had crashed through the roof of an adjoining (30)——, and, satisfied that nothing more serious had happened, he returned to his (31)———, completed his task, and then retired for the night.

It was reported next morning that a twenty-four hours'

Digitized by Google

truce had been agreed to by the enemy, and most of the townspeople took advantage of this by indulging in a little out door exercise, of which they were so much in need. The children, too, were about, and old Jeffrey determined to take the opportunity of looking after his many pets.

So with anxious (32)——— he passed through the (33)—— of flowering creepers at his door, afraid each moment to find his garden ruined by the bursting shells that had fallen in close proximity to the cottage during the past few days. But he was delighted to find that all was safe. The (34)——— and even the (35)——— seemed glad at his approach, and while examining some of them, the child who held first place in his heart, came tripping up.

Soon they were sitting side by side under a canopy of fragrant (36)——, the old man looking happy and contented, the child nestling close to him. Suddenly, she looked up at him and said:

"Grandfather!"

"Yes, child."

"She will come to you one day."

He started, for her words brought to mind his reflections of the night before. Then, looking her full in the face, he saw there a vision of his long lost daughter. "Yes! yes!" he cried, "she will come one day to me. I am sure she will."

"Yes, mamma promised me this morning that she would come, for I have so often asked her, and I am sure you will love her, she is so good. But since poor father died she has been sad, so very sad."

When next old Jeffrey looked at her there were tears in his eyes, and the child exclaimed:

"Grandfather, are you ill?"

"No, child; once I had a little one like you, but when grown up, she left me, and I long to have her back again."

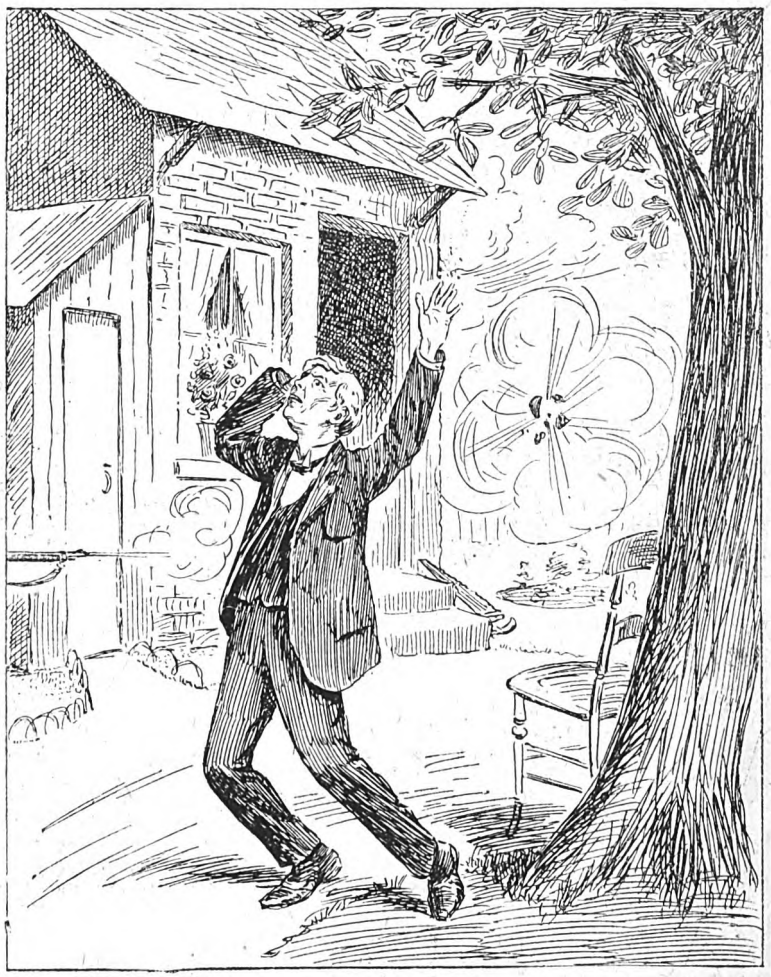
"Oh, mamma will do! I'm sure she will, I must bring her to you to-day."

And saying good-bye, she tripped off again.

He followed her along the (37)——, and stood watching till she disappeared behind the hill. Then returning, he seated himself upon a large (38)———, buried his face in his hands, and wept.

There was a sudden flash, a rumbling sound like thunder, then a fierce (39)———, and the old man fell senseless to the ground.

The truce was broken.



Now, some time after this mishap, a party of school-children returning from an outing, happened to peep into the garden, and were horrified to see "Grandfather" lying there apparently dead. They hurried away to give the alarm, and the news spread rapidly. Assistance was soon obtained, and by willing (40)——— the old man was tenderly lifted from the (41)———, and borne by strong (42)——— into the (43)———.

They laid him on a lounge, and used a soft cushion to (44)——— his head. While (45)——— went in search of a doctor, and another for (46)———, a third endeavoured to revive him with brandy. But he showed no (47)——— of returning consciousness.

At a signal from one of the bystanders, all stood aside, for they evidently (48)—— someone of importance coming. It was a doctor, and following was "Grandfather's" favourite, pulling at her mother's skirts to hasten her on.

"Grandfather, grandfather!" cried the little one, "I have brought her, it is mamma."

But the doctor insisted on seeing the patient before anyone else should approach. And having made an examination, he assured those present that there was no danger. Then leaving instructions, he departed.

The child now rushed to the old man's side, and the mother followed. But no sooner did her eyes rest upon him, than she shrieked out: "Father!" and sank upon her knees before him.

He slowly opened his eyes, a smile lit up his face, and from that moment he revived.

Soon, by careful nursing, his long lost daughter brought him round to full recovery.

Digitized by Google

LITTLE QUEEN MAB.

THE stage-manager was in despair; at his wit's end, in fact. Here was Boxing Day within appreciable distance, only a few hours off, and the fairy queen, the topmost glory—actually, not alone figuratively—of the most brilliant transformation-scene his house had ever produced, ill, and likely to be worse.

The original representative of Titania was a clever child, born in the profession. Her appearance might, perhaps, not quite realise one's idea of the light and delicate beauty associated generally with the sovereign lady of the fairies, but as a set-off there was to be considered her undoubted precocity and self-assurance, which made her both "safe" and reliable.

Mr. Lindus knew all this—who better—and groaned in the spirit.

"Tommy," he said to Tom Tolliday, the clown, the morning of Christmas Eve, the two being on the stage watching the test-working of the scenery. "Tommy, whatever am I going to do about supplying Kitty Green's place. I haven't anybody sharp enough to speak the lines or who could be trusted on that top iron in the transformation."

"Yes, it's a nuisance," replied Tommy. "You'll have to find somebody, that's a cert. Wouldn't Mother Finnigan's grand-daughter do?" (Mother Finnigan was the wardrobe-woman.) "She's likely-looking, though she is rather big for the part."

"Big! I should think she was—a tall, gawky, awkward hussy. No, she won't do," and Manager Lindus walked excitedly up and down in front of the "T" piece and muttered strong expressions, not loud but deep.

The pantomime being *Cinderella* it will be quite understood that there was good cause for the manager's tribulations, as the representatives of the fairy queen and fairy godmother were identical.

At the moment when Mr. Lindus had worked himself up to the point of hair-tearing and into a state bordering upon semi-lunacy, something happened. He had turned from the O.P. side to resume his restless "sentry-go" when from the wings opposite a child—she could not have been more than ten—tripped out and across to where the clown, Tommy Tolliday, was standing absorbed in the setting of one of the comic scenes. Always a taciturn man, with no trace in his appearance or manner of the bubbling fun that had made him famous, he seemed more than ordinarily so this morning.

"Daddy!" came in a silvery shout, and echoed clearly across the footlights right through the dreary-looking, deserted theatre. One or two women cleaning at the back of the dress-circle heard it, and stopped to listen for a repetition of it.

Daddy had caught the soft, fair-haired little vision in his arms, smiling over her, and saying such loving "fooleries" that the whole man seemed to be transformed. But the supreme effect of the little lady's unexpected advent was to be seen in the undisguised agitation of Stage-Manager Lindus.

"Tommy, who's the kid? Is she yours? Didn't know you had one; but, then, you're so precious close. She'll do, my boy, she'll do. She shall have anything more a week, in reason, that you like to name."

Tom Tolliday did not respond to this generous offer in the way expected of him. He stood leaning against a "practicable" pillar-box, the child in his arms, her curly head lying on his shoulder.

The other exhibited impatience, at a loss to understand the clown's quiet hesitation.

"Of course you'll let her come. Mark my words, she'll make a big success. I know talent when I see it, at least I ought to."

"No, Lindus, you can't have her. Don't ask me for a reason; I can't tell you anything, for—well, there's nothing to tell. My Queen Mab's a home-girl, isn't she?" he added, patting the child's cheek tenderly, in return for which she raised her head and kissed him again and again until she nearly took his breath away.

"Oh, but I say, Tommy, it's all nonsense, you know. I must have her—I really must. You don't want to 'crab' the show, do you? Well, you will if you don't let me have her for the run of the panto. Don't be an idiot; you'll let her come?"

"No, I tell you. I'm going now. Come on, Queen Mab, I want my dinner. I shall be back in the afternoon to go through that second 'comic' again. So long."

Possibly, but for one of those little things which turn and influence the current of events and the destinies of human life, the pantomime at the Metropolitan Theatre would have been a failure, the run short, and everybody, from manager to call-boy, discontented and disheartened.

"Daddy," said Queen Mab as her father turned to depart, "I'd like to if you'll let me."

"There," triumphantly exclaimed Lindus, "you can't go against that. The child's got more sense than you, Tommy."

The clown looked the little creature wistfully in the face, and said almost in a whisper.

"You wouldn't hurt daddy, would you?"

"No, but I'd be so good if you'd let me—just this once. Will you, daddy dear?"

"If you refuse now after that you're as hard as a stone," said the stage-manager.

"You think so, but I—well, I know more than you, and think differently. Perhaps if I were to give you my reasons for refusing, you'd not press me."

"But you'll not refuse. The child's willing and eager to undertake it, aren't you, my dear?"

"Yes, sir, if daddy'll say yes."

"There, what can you say now?"

"Look here, Lindus, if I consent—and it seems you mean me to whether I will or no—it's but for this once. Never again as I'm a living man."

The clown was evidently so earnest and sincere that Lindus could not but be impressed.

"Very well, that's your business," he said with visible satisfaction. "Only let me have her for this once and the future may take care of itself. Now you must bring her with you this afternoon, and I'll coach her. I'll wager she'll not only be letter-perfect by Thursday, but will do credit in every way to you, to me, and the Metropolitan."

Tom Tolliday was not of the ordinary professional type. A thoughtful man, apart from his stage duties, he took no interest in the chit-chat, the shop-gossip of the theatre. Years before—nearly eleven now—he had married a beautiful girl, a Russian, and a leading coryphée at London's most famous variety house.

Passionately devoted to his wife, she on her part had entered into the contract in that indifferent spirit so

Digitized by Google

hard to define yet so common among the denizens of stage-land. It might have been dissimilarity of temper and disposition, or it might have been the difference in their nationality; but, whatever the cause, the fact remained that husband and wife, unsuited, unhappy, agreed to separate. Incompatibility in all sorts of forms furnishes unnumbered instances of the same kind daily, and though Tom Tolliday might have been naturally distressed, seeing that his affection was the greater, there was nothing out of the ordinary in the arrangement.

A few days, however, before she left her home, Tom Tolliday discovered that "La Zareska," as she was professionally known, had never really cared for him, but that she was in some mysterious way linked in with a Russian singer, at that time in London for the Italian Opera season. Three days after the opera shut its doors, and on the fourth Tom had reliable information that his wife, throwing up her engagement at the big house in Dudley Square, had left for St. Petersburg about the same time as the singer aforesaid.

Tom now set himself to forget. He had his little Mabel—his Queen Mab—and the whole soul of the man went out to the child. The two were inseparable except when Tom was at the theatre. There he would not take her, either by day or by night. Too many memories were called into life by any thought of a possibility of Mab's becoming bitten with stage fever. He knew that of course good, true, faithful women abounded in the profession, but Mab with his consent should not adopt it. It might be illogical and unreasonable, but if it rested with him it should not be.

Until that morning, when Queen Mab, against all paternal wish and command, had found her way on to the stage of the Metropolitan, the child had never been inside a theatre, and although Tom was vexed at the breaking through the rule, he could not be angry in the face of her delighted curiosity and eager interest in everything connected with "behind the scenes."

Nobody seemed to know how she got there. The stage-doorkeeper said he never saw her go by him, and that she was a veritable fairy, and had touched him with her wand. Her own account was that she wanted daddy, was tired of being alone, and had asked a nice boy she knew to take her to the door. Once there the rest was easy. Daddy was inside, and with him the danger and the difficulty would be forgotten.

After this things moved forward famously. There was plenty of hard work, and nearly all Christmas Day was occupied in final preparation. Tom's fears were not so much for that part of Mab's performance which would keep her on the floor of the stage; his great anxiety was when, in the transformation scene, the child was perched high up on the topmost point of all, that she might lose her head. The very thought of it made him sick, and he knew that he should have no peace of mind until, the run of the piece over, Queen Mab retired into private life again and resumed her sole position as the light of his heart and home.

Boxing Night, not quite so important a theatrical occasion as of yore, was yet sufficiently so to bring together a big crowd that made the narrow thoroughfare which surrounded the theatre on three sides almost impassable. The doors opened, the pit and gallery were crammed to standing-room point in less than ten minutes. From the latter a sea of closely-packed faces looked down upon nearly empty stalls, while a roar of voices, raised in song, in chaff, and in altogether deafening if indistinct conversation, testified to the lung power at least of the play-going plebs.

From the first everything went splendidly. Little Mab made a wonderfully effective fairy godmother, and spoke her lines with a distinctness that carried them to the rearmost seat of the great gallery. As fairy queen she was equally successful, and more than one impressionable schoolboy lost his heart that night to the golden-haired child actress.

At last the transformation scene was in sight, and behind the gauze clouds the clown, in all the glory of bismuth and vermilion, was testing the strength of the iron frame that in less than five minutes was to support his darling. All seemed right, and Tom descended to floor level again, took the dainty little figure in his arms, and held her until the signal for placing her on the frame.

The signal given, he placed her tenderly and carefully in the cradle, and saw her ready for hoisting to her dizzy elevation. The clouds rolled up and away, and as section after section of the beautiful spectacle was disclosed the applause increased with each development. Then from behind a glittering bed of golden lilies and rose-pink flowers of fairyland rose the figure of the queen of this garden of beauty.

Tom, ready to bound on to the stage with the traditional salutation, watched the gradual elevation of the child. She smiled delightedly as if thoroughly enjoying her position as the cynosure of all eyes. A crash from the orchestra, a sudden jerk as the frame reached its limit, a child's shrill shriek, followed by a man's cry of despairing horror, and down through the crowd of suspended fairies, down through flowers and lights and canvas clouds, fell like a heavy snowflake a little mingled mass of muslin and soft white flesh.

When Stage-Manager Lindus saw poor Tom on one knee, with the form of Queen Mab on the other, he bitterly reproached himself for his own part in persuading to that which had brought about so great a calamity and so great a sorrow for the unhappy father.

She was alive, but neither moaned nor moved. "Alas, poor Yorick!" Tom, the hot tears coursing down his painted cheeks, at last gently raised her and carried her out.

It was impossible to prevent the thing from becoming known to the audience, who, the curtain being dropped and a brief official explanation being made, quickly dispersed.

* * * * *

Far away from the atmosphere of London theatrical life, in a quite country place not many miles from a great Midland town, there live a happy couple, happy because between them reigns perfect love.

On fair, sunny days in summer, when the hedgerows are gay with leaf, berry, and blossom, a thoughtful-faced man, with eyes of almost womanly tenderness of expression, wheels an invalid chair along the quiet lanes and by the river which runs through the loveliest country in all England.

His companion is a girl of about fifteen, pale, and evidently a hopeless cripple. Still, the smiles she gives in answer to that of the man speak content and happiness.

Tom Tolliday wishes for no other occupation than that of tending Queen Mab—little Queen Mab, the fairy-sovereign of his home—while she takes all he gives, and forgets her sorrow in the joy of daddy's love.

It would indeed be hard to recognise in these two simple souls the one-time famous clown and the Queen Mab, who made her first and last appearance five years before.

RALPH ENDERBY.

Digitized by Google

NEW SERIAL STORY. STARTS TO-DAY.

By Louis Tracy.

Author of "The Final War," "An American Emperor," etc.

CHAPTER I.

"Last Seen at Victoria!"

Lady Delia Lyle puckered her handsome forehead into a thoughtful frown as she drew aside the window curtains of her boudoir and tried to look out into the opaque blackness of a November fog.

Behind her was cheerfulness—in front uncertainty. Electric lights, a nice fire reflected from gleaming brass, the luxury of carpets and upholstery, formed an alluring contrast to the dull yellow glare of a single lamp in the outside obscurity.

But Lady Delia was a strong-minded woman. There was no trace of doubt in the wrinkled brows and reflective eyes. She held back the curtains with her left hand, buttoning a glove at the wrist with the other. Fog or no fog, she was going out, and she was already dressed for the occasion, in tailor-made costume and winter toque.

She was annoyed at the weather, but not disconcerted. Too long had she allowed herself to take things easily. The future was as murky as the atmosphere; the past was dramatically typified by the pleasant surroundings from which she resolutely turned her face. Lady Lyle was quite determined as to her actions, and a November night was a most unlikely agent to keep her from following the course she had mapped out.

Moving to the light again, she took out of her pocket a long, closely-written letter. Its details were familiar to her, but her face hardened as she hastily ran through it in order to find a particular passage.

At last she gained her object—to make quite sure of an address. Then she replaced the document, stood undecided for a moment, and touched an electric bell.

"James," she said, to the answering footman, "I am going out."

"Yes, milady."

"Sir Charles is not at home?"

"No, milady."

"I am going to Richmond—to see Lady Gwendoline Talbot. I shall probably not return in time for dinner. Tell Sir Charles not to wait for me."

"Shall I order the carriage for your ladyship?"

"Will you listen to me and remember what I have said?"

"Yes, milady."

James ran downstairs, opened the door, bowed as Lady Lyle passed into Portman-square, and then confidentially informed Buttons that "the missus" was in a "rare old wax" about something. "She nearly jumped down my bloomin' throat when I asked her if she would have the carriage."

Her ladyship's mood did not soften when she drifted from the fixed tenure of Wensley House, Portman-square, into the chaos of Oxford-street and fog at 5.30 on a November evening.

Though not a true "London particular," the fog was chilly, exasperating, tedious. People bumped against each other without apology, 'buses crunched through the traffic with deadly precision, pair-horse vans swept round corners with magnificent carelessness.

In the result, Lady Delia, who meant to walk, as she was somewhat before the time she had fixed upon for this very important engagement, took a hansom. In her present mood slight things annoyed her. Usually, the London cab horse is a thoughtful animal; he refuses to hurry; when he falls he lies contented, secure in the knowledge that for five blissful minutes he will be at complete rest. But this one flew as though oats and Lucerne grass awaited him at Victoria Station on the Underground Railway.

He raced down Park-lane, skidded past Hyde Park-Corner, and grated the off-wheel of the hansom against the kerb outside the station within eight minutes.

In other words, her ladyship, obeying the directions contained in the voluminous letter, was compelled to kill time.

As she stepped from the vehicle and halted beneath a lamp to take a florin from her purse, a tall, ulster-wrapped gentleman, walking rapidly into Victoria-street, caught a glimpse of her face and well-proportioned form.

Instantly his hat was off.

"This is an unexpected pleasure, Lady Lyle. Can I be of any service?"

She bit her lip, not unobserved, but the law of Society forced her features into a bright smile.

"Oh, Mr. Brett, is it you? I am going to see my sister at Richmond. Isn't the weather horrid? I shall be so glad if you will put me into the right train."

Mr. Reginald Brett, barrister, with clean-cut, clever features, and dark, deep-set eyes, knew that she would have been much better pleased had he passed without greeting. Like the footman, he wondered why she did not drive in her carriage rather than travel by the Underground Railway on such a night. He guessed that she was perturbed—that her voluble explanation was a disguise.

He reflected that he could ill afford any delay in dressing for a distant dinner, that good manners oft entail inconvenience, but of course he said

"Delighted. Have you any wraps?"

Digitized by Google

"No, I am just going for a chat, and shall be home early."

He bought her a first-class ticket, noting as an odd coincidence that it bore the number of the year, 1900, descended to the barrier, found that the next train for Richmond passed through in ten minutes, fumed inwardly for an instant, explained his presence to the ticket-collector, and paced the platform with his companion.

Having condemned the fog, and the last play, and the latest book, they were momentarily silent.

Among the newspaper placards on Smith and Son's bookstall, large type in red and black announced that a "Great Society Scandal" was on the tapis. "The Duke in the Box" formed a telling line, and the eyes of both people chanced on it simultaneously.

Thought the woman: "He is a man of the world, and an experienced lawyer. Shall I tell him?"

Thought the man: "She wants to take me into her confidence, and I am too busy to be worried just now by some small family squabble."

Said she: "Are you much occupied at the Courts just now, Mr. Brett?"

"No," he replied; "not exactly. My practice is more consultative than active. A lot of people seek my advice about matters of little interest, never thinking that they would best serve their ends by acting decisively and promptly themselves."

Lady Delia set her lips. She could be both prompt and decisive. She resolved to keep her troubles, whatever they were, locked in the secrecy of her own heart, and when she next spoke of some trivial topic the barrister knew that he had been spared a recital.

He regretted it afterwards.

At any other moment in his full and useful life he would have encouraged Lady Lyle rather than the reverse. Even now, a few seconds too late, he was sorry. He unbent so far as to try to bring her back to the verge of explanations, but he failed, for her ladyship was a proud, self-reliant personage—one who would never dream of risking rebuff.

A train came, twith "Richmond" staring at them from the smoke and s eam of the engine.

"Good-bye!" he said.

"Good-bye!"

"Shall I see you again soon?"

"I fear not. It is probable that I shall leave for the South of France quite early."

And she was gone. Her companion rushed to the street, and almost ran to his Victoria-street chambers. It was six o'clock. He had to dress and drive all the way to Hampstead for dinner at 7.30.

* * * * *

At ten minutes past nine Sir Charles Lyle entered Wensley House. A handsome, quiet, gentlemanly man was Sir Charles. He was rich—a Guardsman until the baronetcy devolved upon him, a popular figure in Society, esteemed a trifle fast prior to his marriage, but sobered down now by the cares of a great estate and a vast fortune.

His wife and he were not well-matched in disposition.

She was too earnest, too prim, for the easy-going baronet. He respected her, that was all. A man of his nature found it impossible to realise that the depths of passion are frequently coated over with ice. Their union was irreproachable, like their marriage settlements; but there are more features in matrimony than can be disposed of by broad seals and legal phrases.

Unfortunately, they were childless, aud were thus deprived of the one great bond which unites when others may fail.

Sir Charles was hurried, if not flurried. His boots were muddy and his clothes splashed by the mire of passing vehicles.

"I fear I am very late for dinner," he said to the footman who took his hat and overcoat. "But I shall not be five minutes dressing. Tell her ladyship——"

"Milady is not at home, Sir Charles."

"Not at home!"

"Milady went out at half-past five, saying that she was going to Richmond to see Lady Gwendoline Talbot, and that you were not to wait dinner if she was late in returning."

Sir Charles was surprised. He looked keenly at the man as he said:

"Are you quite sure of her ladyship's orders?"

"Quite sure, Sir Charles."

"Did she drive?"

"No, Sir Charles. She would not have the carriage when I suggested it."

The baronet, somewhat perplexed, hesitated a moment. Then he appeared to dismiss the matter as hardly worth discussion, saying, as he went upstairs:—

"Dinner almost immediately, James."

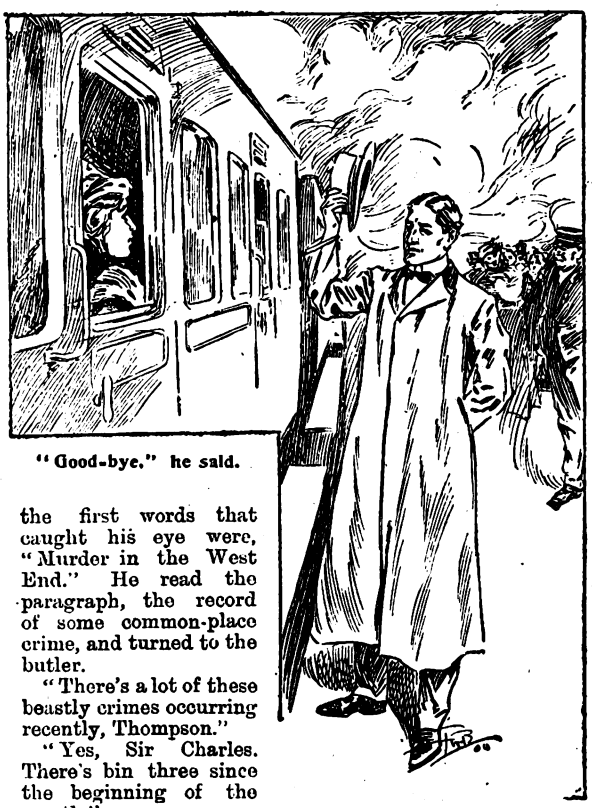
During the solitary meal he was pre-occupied, but ate more than usual, in the butler's judgment. Finding his

She held back the curtains with her left hand, buttoning a glove at the wrist with the other.

Digitized by Google

own company distasteful he discussed the November Handicap with the butler, and ultimately sent for a paper.

Opening it, a copy of the Second Extra *Evening News*,



"Good-bye," he said.

the first words that caught his eye were, "Murder in the West End." He read the paragraph, the record of some common-place crime, and turned to the butler.

"There's a lot of these beastly crimes occurring recently, Thompson."

"Yes, Sir Charles. There's bin three since the beginning of the month."

After a pause—"Did you hear that her ladyship had gone to Richmond?"

"Yes, Sir Charles."

"Do you know how she went?"

"No, Sir Charles."

"I wanted to see her to-night, *very* particularly. Order the brougham in ten minutes. I am going to the Travellers' Club. I shall be home soon—say eleven o'clock—when her ladyship arrives."

The baronet was driven to and from the club by his own coachman, but on returning to Wensley House was told that Lady Lyle was still absent.

"No telegram or message?"

"No, Sir Charles."

"I suppose she will stay with her sister for the night, and I shall have a note in the morning to say so. Just like a woman. Now if I did that, James, there would be no end of a row. Anxiety, and all that sort of thing. Call me at 8.30."

An hour later, Sir Charles Lyle left the library and went to bed.

At breakfast next morning the master of the house rapidly scanned the letters near his plate for the expected missive from his wife. There was none.

A maid was waiting. He sent her to call the butler.

"Look here, Thompson," he cried, "her ladyship has not written. Don't you think I had better wire? It's curious, to say the least, her going off to Richmond in this fashion, in a beastly fog, too."

Thompson was puzzled. He had examined the letters an hour earlier. But he agreed that a telegram was the thing.

Sir Charles wrote: "Expected to hear from you. Will you be home to lunch? Want to see you about some hunters"; and addressed it to his wife at her sister's residence.

"There," he said, turning to his coffee and sole. "That will fetch her. We are off to Leicestershire next week, Thompson. By the way, I am going to a sale at Tattersall's. Send a groom there with her ladyship's answer when it comes."

He had not long been at the sale-yard when a servant arrived with a telegram.

"Ah, the post-office people are quick this morning," he said, smiling. He opened the envelope and read:

"Want to see you to-day.—Dick."

He was so taken by surprise at the unexpected nature of the message that he read the words aloud, mechanically. But he soon understood, and smiled again.

"Go back quickly," he said to the man, "and tell Thompson to send along the next telegram. This is not the one I want."

A consignment of Waterford hunters was being sold at the time, and the baronet was checking the animals' descriptions on the catalogue, when he was cheerily addressed:

"Hallo, Lyle, preparing for the shires, eh?"

Wheeling round, the baronet shook hands with Reginald Brett.

"Yes—that is, I am looking out for a couple of nice-mannered ones for my wife. I have six eating their heads off at Market Harborough now."

Brett hesitated before he said: "Will Lady Lyle hunt this season, then?"

"Well, hardly that. But she likes to dodge about the lanes with the parson and the doctor."

"I only asked because she told me last night that she would probably winter in the South of France."

"Told you—last night—South of France!" Sir Charles Lyle positively gasped in his amazement.

"Why, yes. I met her at Victoria. She was going to Richmond to see her sister, she said."

"I am jolly glad to hear it."

"Glad! Why?"

"Because I have not seen her myself since yesterday morning. She went off mysteriously, late in the afternoon, leaving a message with the servants. I am naturally glad to hear from you that she got into the train all right."

"I put her in the carriage myself. Have you not heard from her?"

"No. I wired this morning, and expect an answer at any moment. But what is this about the South of France? We go to Leicestershire next week."

"I can't say, of course. Your wife seemed to be a little upset about something. She only mentioned her intention casually—in fact, when I asked her if we should soon meet."

The other laughed, a little oddly in the opinion of his astute observer, and dismissed the matter by the remark that the expected message from his wife would soon clear the slight mystery that attended her movements during the past eighteen hours.

The two men set themselves to the congenial task of criticising the horses trotting up and down the straw-covered track, and Sir Charles had purchased a nice half-bred animal for forty guineas when his groom again saluted him.

"Please sir," said the man, "here's another telegram, and Thompson told me to ask if it was the right one."

Sir Charles frowned at the interruption—a second horse of a suitable character was even then under the hammer—but he tore open the envelope. At once his agitation became so marked that Brett cried—

"Good heavens, Lyle, what is it? No bad news, I hope?"

The other, by a strong effort, regained his self-control.

Digitized by Google

"No, no," he stammered; "it's all right, all right. She has gone somewhere else. See. This is from Lady Gwendoline. Still, I wish Delia would consider my natural anxiety a little."

Brett took the proffered flimsy and read:—

I opened your message. Delia not here. I have not seen her for over a week. What do you mean by wire? Am coming to town at once.—Gwen.

The baronet's pale face and strained voice betrayed the significance of the thought underlying the simple question.

"What do you make of it, Reggie?"

Brett, too, was very grave. "The thing looks queer," he said; "though the explanation may be trifling. Come, I will help you. Let us get to your house. It is the natural centre for inquiries."

They hailed a hansom and whirled off to Portman-square. They did not say much, as each felt that the affair might not end so rapidly and satisfactorily as he hoped.

CHAPTER II.

Inspector Winter.

Lady Delia had disappeared.

Whether dead or alive, and if alive, whether detained by force or absent of her own unfettered volition, this handsome and well-known society woman had vanished utterly from the moment when Reginald Brett placed her in a first-class carriage of a Metropolitan Richmond train at Victoria Station.

At first her husband and relatives hoped against hope that some extraordinary tissue of events had contributed to the building up of a mystery which would prove to be no mystery, but a fortuitous combination of circumstances.

Yet the days fled, and there was no trace of her whereabouts.

At the outset the inquiry was confined to the circle of friends and relatives. Telegrams and letters in every possible direction suggested by this comparatively restricted field showed conclusively that not only had Lady Delia not been seen, but no one had the slightest clue to the motives which might induce her to purposely leave her home.

So far as her distracted husband could ascertain she did not owe a penny in the world. She was a rich woman in her own right, and her banking account was in perfect order.

She was a woman of the domestic temperament, always in close touch with her family, and those who knew her best scouted the notion of any petty intrigue which would move her, by fear or passion, to abandon all she held dear.

The stricken baronet confided the search only to his friend Brett. He brokenly admitted that he had not sufficiently appreciated his wife whilst she was with him.

"She was of a superior order to me, Reggie," he said. "I am hardly a home bird. Her ideals were lofty and humanitarian. Too often I was out of sympathy with her and laughed at her notions. But, believe me, we never had the shadow of a serious dispute. Perhaps I went my own way a little selfishly, but at the time I thought that she, on her part, was somewhat strait-laced. I can now appreciate her merits when it is too late."

"But you must not even yet assume that she is dead." The barrister was certain that some day the mystery would be elucidated.

"She is. I feel that. I am certain that I shall never see her on earth again."

"Oh, nonsense, Lyle. Far more remarkable occurrences have been satisfactorily cleared up."

"It is very good of you, old chap, to take this cheering view. Only, you see, I know my wife's character so well. She would die a hundred times if it were possible rather than cause the misery to her people and myself which, if living, she knows must ensue from this terrible uncertainty as to her fate."

"Scotland Yard is still sanguine." This good-natured friend was evidently making a conversation.

"Oh, naturally. But something tells me that my wife is dead, whether by accident or design it is impossible to say. The police will cling to the belief that she is in hiding in order to conceal their own inability to find her."

"A highly probable theory. Are your servants to be trusted?"

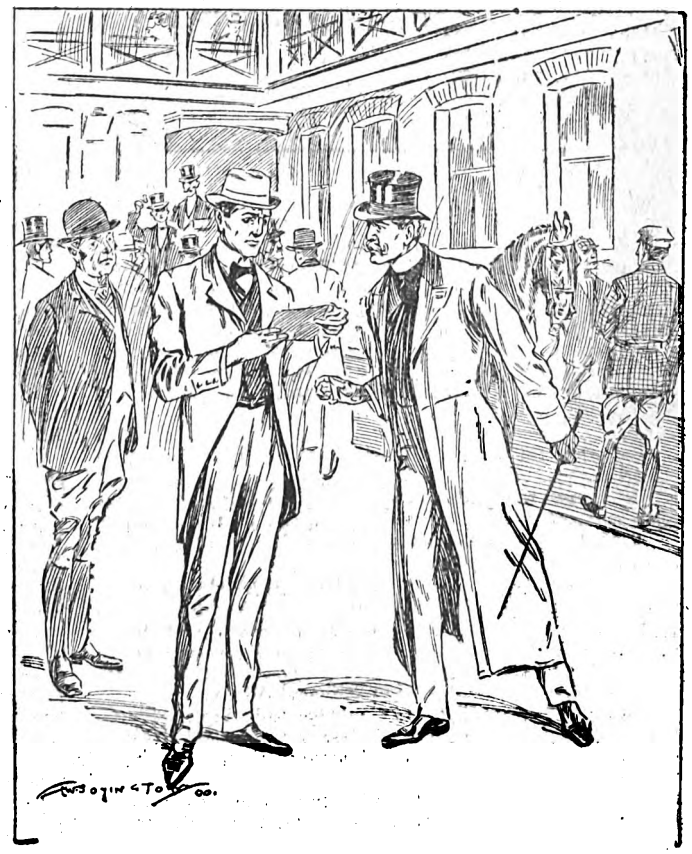
"Y-yes. They have all been with us some years. Why do you ask?"

"Because I am anxious that nothing of this should get into the papers. I have caused paragraphs to be inserted in the fashionable intelligence columns that Lady Lyle has gone to visit some friends in the Midlands. For her own sake, if she be living, it is best to choke scandal at its source."

"Well, Brett, I leave everything to you. Make such arrangements as you think fit."

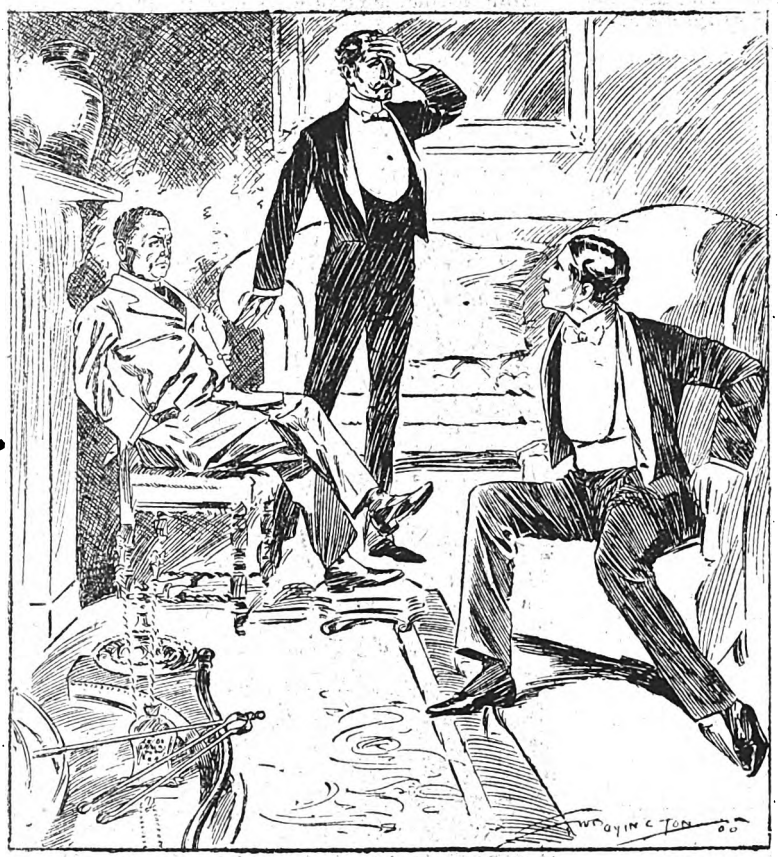
The barrister's mobile countenance softened with pity as he looked at his afflicted friend.

In four days Sir Charles Lyle had aged many years in appearance. No one who was acquainted with him in the past would have imagined that the loss of his wife could so affect him.



"What do you make of it, Reggie?"

Digitized by Google



"Heavens, Brett, how did you learn all this?" cried the baronet.

"I have done all that was possible, yet it is very little," said Brett, after a pause. "You are aware that I am supposed to be an adept at solving curious or criminal investigations of an unusual class. But in this case, partly, I suspect, because I myself am the last person who, to our common knowledge, saw Lady Lyle alive on Tuesday night, I am faced by a dead wall of impenetrable fact, through which my intellect cannot pierce. Yet I am sure that some day this wretched business will be intelligible. I will find Lady Lyle, if living; I will find her murderer if she be dead."

Not often did Reginald Brett allow his words to so betray his thoughts.

Both men were absorbed by the thrilling sensations of the moment, and they were positively startled when a servant suddenly announced:—

"Inspector Winter, of Scotland Yard."

A short, thick-set man entered. He was absolutely round in every part. His sturdy, rotund frame was supported by stout, well-moulded legs. His bullet head, with close-cropped hair, gave a suggestion of strength to his rounded face, and a pair of small bright eyes looked suspiciously on the world from beneath well-arched eyebrows.

Two personalities more dissimilar than those of Reginald Brett and Inspector Winter could hardly be brought together in the same room. People who are fond of tracing resemblances to animals in human beings would liken the one to a greyhound, the other to a bulldog.

Yet they were both masters in the art of detecting crime—the barrister subtle, analytic, introspective; the policeman direct, pertinacious, self-confident. Brett lost all interest in a case when the hidden trail was laid bare. Mr. Winter regarded investigation as so many hours on duty until his man was transported or hanged.

The detective was well acquainted with his unprofessional colleague, and had already met Sir Charles in the early stages of his present quest.

"I have an important clue," he said smiling with assurance.

"What is it?" Sir Charles Lyle was for the moment aroused from his despondent lethargy.

"Her ladyship did not go to Richmond on Tuesday night."

Inspector Winter waited for Brett to speak, but the barrister nodded, with the air of one who knew already that Lady Delia had not gone to Richmond.

Mr. Winter continued. "Thanks to Mr. Brett's remembrance of the number of the ticket, we traced it at once in the clearing office. It was given up at Sloane Square immediately after the Richmond train passed through.

Brett nodded again. He was obstinately silent, so the detective questioned him directly:

"By this means the inquiry is narrowed to a locality—eh, Mr. Brett?"

"Yes," said the barrister, turning to poke the fire.

Mr. Winter was sure that his acuteness was displeasing to his clever rival. He smiled complacently, and went on:

"The ticket-collector remembers her quite well, as the giving up of a Richmond ticket was unusual at this station. She passed straight out into the square, and from that point we lose sight of her."

"You do, Mr. Winter, eh?" said Brett.

"Well, sir, it is a great thing to have localised her movements at that hour, isn't it?"

"Yes, it is. To save time I may tell you that Lady Delia returned to the station, entered the refreshment room, ordered a glass of wine, which she hardly touched, sat down and waited some fifteen minutes, left the room, crossed the square, asked a newsvendor where Raleigh Mansions were, and gave him sixpence for the information."

His hearers were astounded.

"Heavens, Brett, how did you learn all this?" cried the baronet.

"Thus far, it was simplicity itself. On Wednesday evening, when no news could be obtained from Lady Lyle's relatives, I started from Victoria, intending to call at every station until I found the place where she quitted the train. The railway clearing-office was too slow, Mr. Winter. Naturally, the hours being identical in the same week, the first ticket-collector I spoke to gave me the desired clue. The rest was a mere matter of steady inquiry."

"Then you are the man whom the police are now searching for?" blurted out the detective.

"From the railway official's description? Possibly. Pray, Mr. Winter, let me see the details of my appearance as circulated throughout the force. It would be interesting."

Mr. Winter was saved from further indiscretions by Sir Charles Lyle's plaintive question:—

"Why did you not tell me these things sooner, Reggie?"

"What good was there in torturing you, Lyle? All that I have ascertained is the A.B.C. of our search. We are at a loss for the motive of your wife's disappearance. Victoria,

Digitized by Google

Sloane-square, or Richmond—does it matter which? My belief is that she intended to go to Richmond that night. Why, otherwise, should she make to the footman and myself the same unvarying statement? Perhaps she did go there?"

"But these houses, Raleigh Mansions. What of them?"

"Ah, there we may be forwarded a stage. But there are six main entrances and no hall porters. There are twelve flats at each number, seventy-two in all, and all occupied. This means seventy-two separate inquiries into the history and attributes of a vastly larger number of persons, in order to find some possible connection with Lady Delia and her purposely-concealed visit. She may have remained in one of these flats five minutes. She may be in one of them yet. Anyhow, I have taken the necessary steps to obtain the fullest knowledge of the inhabitants of Raleigh Mansions."

"Scotland Yard appears to be an unnecessary institution, Mr. Brett," snapped the detective.

"By no means. It is most useful to me once I have discovered a criminal. And it amuses me."

"Listen, Reggie, and you, Mr. Winter," pleaded the baronet. "I implore you in future to keep me informed of developments in your search. The knowledge that progress is being made will sustain me. Promise, I ask you."

"I promise readily enough," answered Brett. "I only stipulate that you prepare yourself for many disappointments. Even a highly-skilled detective like Inspector Winter will admit that the failures are more frequent than the successes."

"True enough, sir. But I must be going, gentlemen." Mr. Winter was determined to thoroughly work the new vein of Raleigh Mansions before even his superiors were aware of its significance in the hunt for her lost ladyship.

When the detective had quitted the room there was silence for some time. Lyle was the first to speak.

"Have you formed any sort of theory, even a wildly speculative one?" he asked.

"No. None whatever. The utter absence of motive is the most puzzling element of the whole situation."

"Whom can my wife have known at Raleigh Mansions? What sort of places are they?"

"Quite fashionable, but not too expensive. The absence of elevators and doorkeepers cheapens them. I am sorry now that I mentioned them to Winter."

"Why?"

"He will disturb every one of the residents by injudicious inquiries. Each housemaid who opens a door will be to him a suspicious individual, each butcher's boy an accomplice, each tenant a principal in the abduction of your wife. If I have a theory of any sort, it is that the first definite news of Lady Delia will come from Richmond. There cannot be the slightest doubt that she was going there on Tuesday night."

"It will be very odd if you should prove to be right," said Sir Charles.

Again they were interrupted by the footman, this time the bearer of a telegram, which he handed to his master.

The latter opened it, and read: "What is the matter? Are you ill? I certainly am angry.—Dick."

He frowned with real annoyance, crumpling up the message and throwing it in the fire.

"Confound people who bother one at such a time," he growled.

Soon afterwards Brett left him.

True to the barrister's prophecy, Inspector Winter made life miserable to the denizens of Raleigh Mansions. He visited them at all hours, and, in some instances, several times. Although, in accordance with his instructions, he never mentioned Lady Delia's name, he so pestered the occupants with questions concerning a lady of her general appearance that half-a-dozen residents wrote complaining letters to the company that owned the mansions, and the secretary lodged a protest at Scotland Yard.

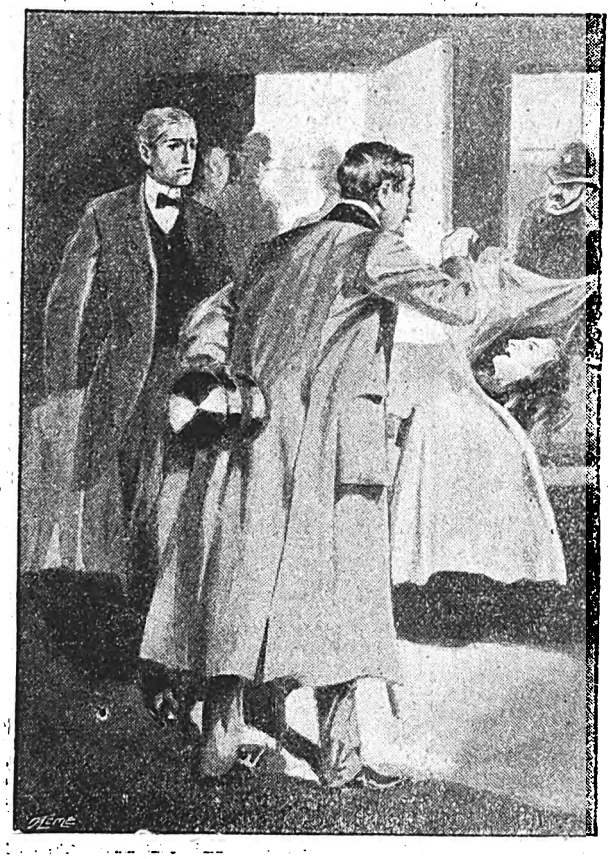
Respectable citizens object to detectives prowling about, particularly when they insinuate questions concerning indefinite ladies in tailor-made dresses and fur toques.

At the end of a week Mr. Winter was nonplussed, and even Reginald Brett had to confess that his more carefully conducted inquiries had yielded no result.

But towards the close of the month a sensational turn was given to events.

The body of a woman, terribly disfigured from long immersion in the water and other causes, was found in the Thames at Putney.

It had been discovered under peculiar circumstances. A



"I am sure this is not she. Let us get away quick."

drain pipe that emptied into the river beneath the surface was moved by reason of some sanitary alterations, and the workmen intrusted with the task were horrified at finding a corpse tightly wedged beneath it.

Official examination revealed that although the body had been in the water fully three weeks, the cause of death was not drowning. The woman had been murdered, beyond a shadow of doubt. A sharp iron spike was driven into her brain with such force that a portion of it had broken off, and remained imbedded in the skull.

If this was not sufficient there were other convincing proofs of foul play.

Although her coat and skirt were of poor quality, her linen was of a class that could only be worn by some one who paid as much for a single under garment as most women do for a good costume, but there were no laundry marks, such as are usual, upon it.

On the feet were a pair of strong walking boots, bearing

Digitized by Google

the stamped address of a fashionable bootmaker in the West End. Among a list of customers to whom the tradesman supplied footgear of this size and character appeared the name of Lady Delia Lyle.

Not very convincing testimony, but sufficient to bring Sir Charles Lyle to the Putney mortuary in the endeavour to identify the remains as those of his missing wife.

In this he utterly failed.

Not only was this poor misshapen lump of distorted humanity wholly unlike Lady Delia, but the colour of her hair was different.

Her ladyship's maid, called to identify the linen—even the police admitted that the outer clothes were not Lady Lyle's—was so upset at the repulsive nature of her task that she went into hysterics, protesting loudly that it could not be her mistress she was looking at.

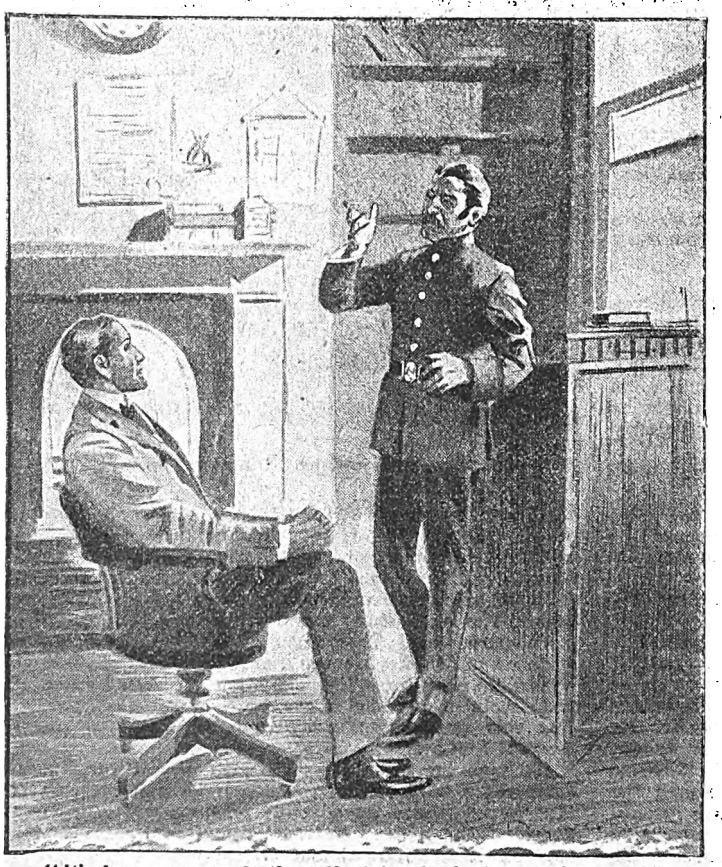
Brett differed from both of them. He quietly urged Sir Charles to consider the fact that a great many ladies give a helping hand to Nature in the matter of hair tints. The chemical action of water would——

The baronet nearly lost his temper.

"Really, Brett, you carry things too far," he cried. "My wife had none of these vanities. I am sure this is not she. The mere thought that such a thing could be possible makes me ill. Let us get away, quick."

So a coroner's jury found an open verdict, and the poor unknown was buried in a pauper's grave.

The newspapers dismissed the incident with a couple of paragraphs, though the iron spike planted in the skull afforded good material for a telling head-line, and within a couple of days the affair was forgotten.



"It's been gone to Scotland Yard for the best part of a week."

But Reginald Brett, barrister and amateur detective, was quite sure in his own mind that the nameless woman was Lady Delia Lyle.

He was so certain—though anything like an identification of the body was impossible, owing to the condition it was in—that he bitterly resented the scant attention given to the matter by the authorities, and he solemnly swore that he would not rest until he had discovered her destroyer and brought the wretch to the bar of justice.

CHAPTER III.

The Lady's Maid.

The first difficulty experienced by the barrister in his self-imposed task was the element of mystery purposely contributed by Lady Delia herself. To a man of his quick perception, sharpened and clarified by his legal training, it was no impossible undertaking to arrive at the positive facts underlying the trivial incidents of his meeting with the missing lady at Victoria Station.

Briefly stated, his summary was this: Lady Delia intended to go to Richmond at a later hour than that at which his unexpected presence had caused her to set out. She had resolved upon a secret visit to some one who lived in Raleigh Mansions, Sloane Square—some person whom she knew so slightly as to be unacquainted with the exact address, and, as the result of this visit, she desired subsequently to see her sister at Richmond.

Sir Charles Lyle was apparently in no way concerned with her movements, nor had she thought fit to consult him, beyond the mere politeness of announcing her probable absence from home at the dinner hour.

To one of Brett's analytical powers the problem would be more simple were it, in a popular sense, more complex. In these days it is a hard thing for a woman of such position in society to be suddenly spirited out of the world without leaving trace or sign. He approached his inquiry with less certainty, owing to Lady Delia's own negative admissions, than if she had been swallowed up by an earthquake and he were asked to determine her fate by inference and deduction.

It must be remembered that he was sure she was dead—murdered, and that her body had been lodged by human agents beneath an old drain-pipe at Putney.

What possible motive could any one have in so foully killing a beautiful, high-minded, and charming woman, whose whole life was known to her associates, whom the breath of scandal had never touched?

The key of the mystery might be found at Raleigh Mansions, but Brett felt that this branch of his quest could wait until other more transient features were cleared up.

He practically opened the campaign of investigation at Putney. Mild weather had permitted the workmen to conclude their operations the day before the barrister reached the spot where the body had been found—that is to say, some forty-eight hours after he had resolved to neither pause nor deviate in his search until the truth was laid bare.

A large house, untenanted, occupied the bank, with solid front facing the road, and a lawn running from the drawing-room windows to the river. Down the right side of the grounds the boundary was sharply marked by a narrow lane, probably a long disused ferry road, and access to this thoroughfare was obtained from the lawn by a garden gate.

A newly marked seam in the roadway showed the line of the drainage work, and Brett did

Digitized by Google

not glance twice at the point where the pipe entered the Thames, as the structural features here were recent.

He went to the office of the contractor who had carried out the alterations.

An elderly foreman readily answered his questions.

"Yes, sir. I was in charge of the men who were on the job. It was an easy business. Just an outlet for rain from the road. An old-fashioned sort of affair; been there thirty or forty years, I should think; all the pipes were crumbling away."

"Why were the repairs effected at this moment?"

"Well, sir, the house was empty quite a while. You see, it used to be a school, a place where young gents were prepared for the Army. It was closed about a year ago, and it isn't everybody as wants so many bed rooms. I do hear as how the new tenant has sixteen children."

"The incoming people have not yet arrived?"

"No, sir."

"Can you tell me the name of the schoolmaster?"

"Oh, yes. When I was younger I have done a lot of carpenter's work for him. He was the Reverend Septimus Childe."

Brett made a note of the name, and next sought the local police-inspector.

"No, nothing fresh," said the latter, in reply to a query concerning the woman "found drowned."

"I suppose these things are soon lost sight of?" said Brett, casually.

"Sometimes they are, and sometimes they aren't. It's wonderful occasionally how a matter gets cleared up after years. Of course we keep all the records of a case, so that the affair can be looked into if anything turns up."

"Ah, that brings me to the most important object of my visit. A small piece of iron was found imbedded in the poor woman's skull."

The inspector smiled as he admitted the fact.

"Can I see it? I either want the loan of it for a brief period, or to have an exact model made."

Again the policeman grinned.

"I don't mind telling you that you are too late, sir."

"Too late! How too late?"

"It's been gone to Scotland Yard for the best part of a week."

So others beside the barrister thought that the Putney incident required more attention than had been bestowed upon it.

* * * * *

Brett concluded his round by a visit to the surgeon who gave evidence at the inquest.

The doctor had no manner of doubt that the woman had been murdered before being placed in the water, the state of the lungs being proof positive on that point.

"It is equally indisputable that she was put to death by malice aforethought?"

"Oh, yes. A small iron spike was absolutely wedged into the brain through the hardest part of the skull."

"What was the nature of the injuries that caused death?"

"This piece of iron penetrated the occipital bone at the lower part, and injured the cerebellum, damaging all the great nerve centres at the base of the brain."

"Would death ensue instantly?"

"Yes. Such a blow would have the effect of a high voltage electric current. Complete paralysis of the nerve centres means death."

"Well, I'm jiggered," said the detective.

"Then I take it that great force must have been used?"

"Not so much, perhaps, as the nature of the wound seems to imply; but considerable—sufficient, at any rate, to break the piece of iron."

"It was broken, you say? Was it cast iron?"

"Yes, of good quality. Off some ornament or design, I should imagine. But it snapped off inside the head at the moment of the occurrence."

"Curious, is it not, for a person to be killed in such a manner by such an instrument?"

"I have never before met such a case. Were it not for the way in which the body was jammed beneath a hidden drain pipe, and the effective means taken to destroy identity, I should have inclined to the belief that some strange accident had happened. At any rate the murderer must have committed the crime on the spur of the moment, and seized upon the first weapon to hand."

"You say she was forcibly placed where found?"

"Yes; the workmen's description left no other idea."

"Could not the tide have done this?"

"Hardly. One cannot be quite emphatic, as such strange things do happen. But it seems to be almost impossible for the tide at Putney to pack a body beneath a jutting drain pipe in such manner that the waist, or narrowest part, should be beneath the pipe and the body remain securely held."

"Yet it is not so marvellous as the coincidence that this particular drain should need repairs at the precise period when this tragedy happened."

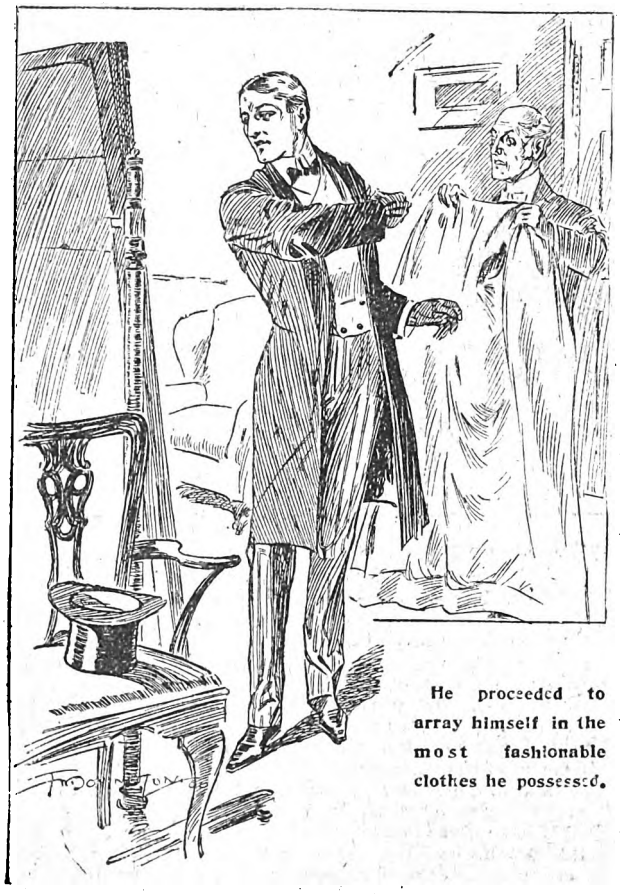
"Quite so. It is exceedingly strange. But are you

Digitized by Google

interested in the case? Have you reason to believe that this poor woman——?"

"I hardly know," broke in the barrister. "I have no data to go upon, but I feel convinced that I shall ultimately establish her identity. You, doctor, can help me much by telling me your surmises in addition to the known facts."

The medico looked thoughtfully through the window before he exclaimed: "I am certain that the woman found in the Thames came from the upper walks of life. Notwithstanding the disfiguring effects of water and rough usage, any medical man can rapidly appreciate the caste of his subject. She was, I should say, a woman



He proceeded to array himself in the most fashionable clothes he possessed.

of wealth and refinement, one who led an orderly, well-regulated life, whose surroundings were normal and healthy."

Brett thanked his informant and hurried back to London.

A telegram to Inspector Winter preceded him. He had not long reached his Victoria-street chambers when the detective was announced.

Reggie soon made known his wishes. "I want you to get me possession of that small piece of iron found in the head of the woman at Putney. If necessary, I will return it in twenty-four hours."

Mr. Winter's face showed some little sign of annoyance. "It is against the rules," he began; but Brett curtly interrupted him.

"Very well, I will make direct application to the Commissioner."

"I was going to say, Mr. Brett, that although not strictly in accordance with orders, I will make an exception in your case." And the detective slowly produced the *pièce de conviction* from a large pocket-book.

In sober fact the police-officer was somewhat jealous of the clever lawyer, who saw so quickly through complexities that puzzled his slower brains. He was in no wise anxious to help the other in his inquiries, though keenly wishful to get the benefits of his discoveries, and follow out his theories when they were defined with sufficient clearness.

Reggie did not at first take the proffered article.

"Let me understand, Mr. Winter," he said. "Do you object to my presence in this inquiry? Are you going to hinder me or help me? It will save much future misunderstanding if we have this point settled now."

The detective flushed at this direct inquiry. "I will be candid with you, Mr. Brett. It is true I have been vexed at times when you have over-reached me. But I regret it immediately. It is foolish of me to try and solve problems by your methods. Kindly forget my momentary disinclination to hand over the only genuine link in the case."

"In what case?"

"In the case of Lady Delia's disappearance."

"Ah! Then you think it is in some way connected with the woman found at Putney?"

"I am sure of it. The woman at Putney, whether Lady Delia herself or not I cannot tell, wore some of Lady Delia's clothes. When we have ascertained the means and manner of the death of the woman buried at Putney we shall not be far from learning what has become of Lady Delia Lyle."

"How have you identified the clothes?"

"I managed to gain the confidence of the lady's-maid, who gave evidence at the inquest. She, of course, is quite positive that the body was not that of her mistress, but when I had examined some of Lady Delia's linen I no longer doubted the fact."

"If you knew all this, how comes it that more did not transpire at the coroner's inquiry?"

"In such affairs an inquest is rather a hindrance to the police. It is better to lull the guilty person or persons into he belief that the crime has passed into oblivion. They know as well as we do that Lady Delia is buried at Putney. We have failed to establish her identity by the evidence of the husband and servants. The linen and clothes, our sole effective testimony, remain in our possession, so, taking everything into consideration, I prefer that matters should remain as they are for the present."

"Really, Mr. Winter, I congratulate you. You will perhaps pardon me for saying that some of your colleagues do not usua ly take so sensible a view."

The policeman smiled at the compliment. "I am learning your method, Mr. Brett," he said.

As he spoke a servant entered with a note addressed to Brett and indorsed "Urgent."

It was in the handwriting of Sir Charles Lyle, and even the imperturbable barrister could not resist an exclamation of amazement when he read:

My Dear Brett,—My wife's maid has vanished. She has not been near the house for three days. The thing came to my ears owing to gossip amongst the servants. There is something maddening about these occurrences. I really cannot stand any more. Do come and see me, there's a good fellow.

"Well, I'm jiggered!" said the detective. "The blessed girl must have been spirited away a few hours after I saw her. Maybe, Mr. Brett, we are all wrong. Has she gone to join her mistress?"

"Possibly—in the next world."

Nothing would shake the barrister's belief that Lady Delia Lyle was dead.

Digitized by Google

CHAPTER IV.

No. 61 Raleigh Mansions.

Really, the maid deserved to have her ears pulled.

People in her walk of life should not ape their betters. Lady Delia, owing to her position, was entitled to some degree of oddity or mystery in her behaviour. But for a lady's maid to so upset the entire household at Wensley House, Portman-square, was intolerable.

Sir Charles became, if possible, more miserable; the butler fumed; the housekeeper said that the girl was always a forward minx, and the footman winked at buttons as much as to say that he knew a good deal if he liked to talk.

As a matter of fact the police were as greatly baffled by this latter incident as by its predecessor. This time the movements of the maid were quite unknown. No one could tell definitely when she left the house. Her fellow-servants described the dress she probably wore, as all her other belongings were in her bed-room; but beyond the fact that her name was Jane Harding, and that she had not returned to her home in Lincolnshire, the police could get no further clue.

So, in brief, Jane Harding quickly joined Lady Delia in the limbo of forgetfulness.

Brett, however, forgot nothing. Indeed, he rejoiced at this incident.

"The greater the apparent mystery," he communed, "the less it is in reality. We now have two tracks to follow. They are both hidden, it is true, but when we find one it will probably intersect the other."

The new year was a few days old when Brett made his first forward step through the bewildering maze which seemed to bar progress on every side. He received a report from the man, a pensioned police-officer, who had been making a painstaking research into the history and occupation of every inhabitant of Raleigh Mansions.

Two items the barrister fastened on to at once.

"At No. 12, top floor right, entrance by first door on Sloane Square side, is a small flat occupied by a man named Sydney H. Pyne. He passes as an American, but is probably an Englishman who has resided in the United States. He does not mix with other Americans in London, and is of irregular habits. He frequents race meetings and sporting clubs, is reputed to belong to a Piccadilly club where high play is the rule, and has no definite occupation. He occasionally visits a lady who lives at No. 61, same mansions, ground floor, and sixth door. They have been heard to quarrel seriously, and the dispute appears always to have concerned money. Pyne left for Monte Carlo early in December. His address there is Hotel du Cercle, and the local post-office has a supply of stamped and addressed envelopes in which to forward his correspondence.

"At No. 61, as already described, lives Mrs. Gwendoline Hillmer. She maintains a good style of living, has a brougham and victoria, rented by the month, and is either a wealthy widow or maintained by some one of means. She dresses well, and goes out a good deal to theatres, but otherwise leads a rather lonely life. Her most frequent visitor is, or was, a gentleman who looked like an officer in the Guards, and, much less often, the aforesaid Sydney H. Pyne. Her servants, except the maid, live out. The maid, who is a sort of companion, is talkative, but does not know much, or, if she does, will not speak."

Brett weighed the foregoing statements very fully. They did not contain any positive facts that promised well for the elucidation of Lady Delia's visit to the mansions on that fateful November evening, but the absolute colourlessness of the reports concerning the other occupants rendered them quite impossible of individual distinction.

After an hour of puzzled thought the barrister finally decided upon a course of action. He would see Mrs. Gwendoline Hillmer, and trust to luck in the way of discoveries.

A quiet smile lit up his handsome regular features as he proceeded to array himself in the most fashionable clothes he possessed, paying the utmost attention to every detail in a manner that amazed his valet.

When at last that worthy was dispatched to the nearest florist's for a *boutonnière*, he communicated his bewilderment to the hall-porter.

"My guvnor's going out on the mash," he said confidentially. "I thought he would never look at a woman; but bless you, Jim, we're all alike. When the day comes for us we all rush after a petticoat."

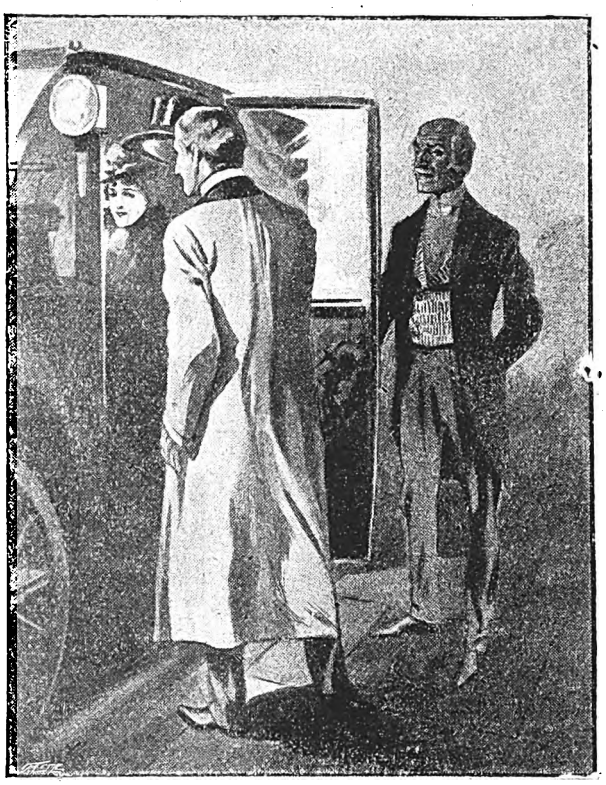
It was nearly six o'clock when Brett walked down Victoria Street. For some reason he did not call a hansom, and it was almost with a start that he found himself purchasing a ticket to Sloane Square at the Underground Railway office. At this precise hour and place he had last

"Are you a policeman?"

Digitized by Google

seen Lady Delia on earth. The memory nerved him to his purpose.

A few minutes later he pressed the electric bell that communicated with No. 61, Raleigh Mansions. As he



When his master entered a brougham in which was seated a fur-wrapped lady the valet grinned broadly.

listened to the slight jar of the indicator within, he smiled at the apparent fatuity of his mission.

He had one card, perhaps a weak one, to play, it was true, but he hoped that circumstances might prevent this from being tabled too early in the game.

The door opened, and a youthful housemaid stood before him, the simple wonder in her eyes showing that such visits as his were rare ones at that establishment.

"Is Mrs. Hillmer at home?" he said.

"I'll see, sir, if you give me your name."

"Surely you know whether or not she is at home?"

The girl stammered and blushed at this unexpected query. "Well, sir," she said, "my mistress is in, but I do not know if she can receive a visitor. She is dressed to go out."

"Ah! that's better. Now take her my card and say that whilst I will not detain her, my business is very important." This with a sweet smile that put the flurried maid entirely at her ease.

The girl withdrew, after hesitating for a moment to decide the important question as to whether or not she should close the door in the visitor's face.

Another smile from Brett, and she did not.

He was thus able to note the luxurious and tasteful air of the general appointments, for the entrance-hall to an establishment usually reveals much of the characteristics of the inmates. Here there was every evidence of refinement and wealth. All the display had not been lavished on the drawing-room.

As he waited, conscious of the fact that his colloquy with the servant had been heard within, a lady crossed from one room to another at the end of the passage. Her smart but simple dress and the quick scrutiny she gave him, as though discovering his presence accidentally, caused him to believe—rightly, as it transpired—that this was the maid-companion described by his assistant.

Not only had she obviously made her appearance in order to see him, but the housemaid had carried his message to a different section of the flat.

The girl returned. "My mistress will see you in a few minutes," she said. "Will you kindly step into the dining-room?"

He followed her, sat down in a position where the strong glare of the electric lamps would fall on any one who stood opposite to him, and awaited developments.

The furniture was solid and appropriate, the carpet rich, and the pictures, engravings for the most part, excellent. This pleasant room, warmed by a cheerful fire, impressed Brett as a place much used by the household. Books and work-baskets were scattered about, and a piano, obviously out of place, blocked up a corner. There were a few photographs of persons and places, but he had no time to examine these before the lady of the house entered.

Her appearance, for some reason inexplicable to the barrister himself, took him by surprise. She was tall, graceful, extremely good-looking, and dressed with quiet elegance. Just the sort of woman one would expect to find in such a well-appointed abode, yet more refined in manner than Brett, from his knowledge of the world, thought he would meet, judging by the hasty inferences drawn from his subordinate's report. She was self-possessed, too. With calm tone, and slightly elevated eyebrows, she said:

"You wish to see me, I understand?"

"Yes. Allow me first to apologise for the hour at which I have called."

"No apology is necessary. But I am going out. Perhaps you will be good enough not to detain me longer than is absolutely necessary."

She stood between the table and the door. Brett, who had risen at her entrance, was at the other side of the room. Her words, no less than her attitude, showed that she desired the interview to be brief. But, if possible, the barrister resolved that he would not be repelled so coolly.

Advancing, with a bow and that fascinating smile of his, he said, pulling forward a chair:

"Won't you be seated?"

The lady looked at him. She saw a man of fine physique and undoubted good breeding. She hesitated. There was no reason to be rude to him, so she sat down.

Reggie drew a chair to the other side of the hearth-rug and commenced:

"I venture to ask this interview for the purpose of making some inquiries."

"I thought so. Are you a policeman?" The words blurted out impetuously, a trifle complainingly, but Brett gave no sign of their interest for him.

"Good gracious, no," he cried. "Why should you think that?"

"Because two detectives have been bothering me, and every other person in these mansions, about some mysterious lady who called here two months ago. They don't know where she called, nor will they state her name; as if anyone could possibly know anything about it. So I naturally thought you were on the same errand."

"Confound that rascal Winter," growled Reggie to himself.

But Mrs. Hillmer went on: "If that is not your business, would you mind telling me what it is?"

Now Brett's alert brain had been actively engaged during the last few seconds. This woman was not the clever, specious adventuress he had half-expected to meet. It seemed more than ever unlikely that she could have any knowledge of Lady Delia or the causes that led to her

Digitized by Google

disappearance. He was tempted to frame some excuse and take his departure. But the certainty that Lady Delia had visited Raleigh Mansions, and the necessity there was for exploiting every line of inquiry impelled him to adopt his last resource.

"It is not concerning a missing lady, but concerning a missing gentleman that I have come to see you."

The shot went home.

Why, for the life of him he could not tell, but his companion was manifestly disturbed at his words.

"Oh," she said.

Then, after a little pause: "May I ask his name?"

"Certainly. He is known as Mr. Sydney H. Pyne."

She gave a slight gasp.

"Why do you put it that way? Is not that his right name?"

"I have reason to believe it is not."

Mrs. Hillmer was so obviously distressed that Brett inwardly reviled himself for causing her so much unnecessary suffering, as the reason for her emotion in all probability had not the remotest bearing upon his quest.

Then came the pertinent query, after a glance at his card, which she still held in her hand:—

"Who are you. Mr.—Mr. Reginald Brett?"

"I am a member of the Bar, of the Inner Temple, My chambers are at No. 7, Paper-buildings, and my private residence is given there."

"And why are you interested in Mr. Sydney Pyne?"

"Ah, in that respect I am at this moment unable to enlighten you."

"Unable, or unwilling?"

Brett indulged in a quiet piece of fencing:

"Really, Mrs. Hillmer," he said, "I am not here as in any sense hostile to you. I merely want some detailed information with regard to this gentleman, information which you may be able to give me. That is all."

All this time he knew that the woman was scrutinising him narrowly—trying to weigh him up, as it were, not because she feared him, but rather to discover the true motive of his presence.

Personally, he had never faced a more difficult task than this make-believe investigation. He could have laughed at the apparent want of connection between Lady Delia's ill-fated visit to Raleigh Mansions and this worrying of a beautiful, pleasant-mannered woman, who was surely neither a principal nor an accomplice in the crime that caused Lady Delia's death.

"Well, I suppose I may consider myself in the hands of counsel. Tell me what it is you want to know!" Mrs. Hillmer pouted, with the air of a child about to undergo a scolding.

Brett was quite at a loss to understand her, but he acted his *rôle* with a skill few men could equal.

"Are you acquainted with Mr. Pyne's present address?" he said.

"No. I have neither seen him nor heard from him since early in November."

"Can you be more precise about the period?"

"Yes, perhaps." She rose, took from a drawer in the sideboard a packet of bills—receipted, Brett saw—searched through them and found the document she was looking for. "I bought a few articles about that time," she explained, "and the account for them is dated November 15. I had not seen my——" She blushed, became confused, laughed a little, and went on. "I had not seen Mr. Pyne for at least a week before that date—say November 8th or 9th."

Lady Delia disappeared on the evening of the 6th!

Brett swallowed his astonishment at the odd coincidence of dates, for he said, with an encouraging laugh, "Out with it, Mrs. Hillmer. You were about to describe Mr. Pyne correctly, when you recollected yourself."

Mrs. Hillmer, still colouring and becoming saucily cheerful, cried, "Why should I trouble myself when you, of course, know all that I can tell you, and probably more? He is my brother, and a pretty troublesome sort of relation, too."

"I am obliged for your confidence, Mrs. Hillmer. In return, I am free to state that your brother is now in the South of France."

"As you are here, Mr. Brett," she said, "I may as well get some advice gratis. Can people writ him in the South of France? Can they ask me to pay his debts?"

"Under ordinary circumstances they can do neither. Certainly not the latter."

"I hope not. But they sometimes come very near to it, as I know to my cost."

"Indeed! How?"

Mrs. Hillmer hesitated. Her smile was a trifle scornful, and her colour rose again as she answered: "People are not averse to taking advantage of circumstances. I have had some experience of this trait in debt-collectors already. But they must be careful. You, as a legal man, must know that demands urged on account of personal reasons may come very near to levying blackmail."

"Surely, Mrs. Hillmer, you do not suspect me of being a dun. Perish the thought! You could never be in debt to me."

"Very nice of you. Don't you represent those people in Leadenhall-street, then?"

"What people?"

"Messrs. Dodge and Co."

"No, why do you ask?"

"Because my brother entered into what he called a 'deal' with them. He underwrote some shares in a South African mine, as a nominal affair, he told me, and now they want him to pay for them because the company is not supported by the public."

"No, I do not represent Dodge and Co."

"Is there something else then? Whom do you represent?"

"To be as precise as permissible, I may say that my inquiries in no sense affect financial matters."

"What then?"

"Well, there's a woman in the case."

Mrs. Hillmer was evidently both relieved and interested. "No, you don't say," she said. "Tell me all about it. I never knew Bertie to be much taken up with the fair sex. I am all curiosity. Who is she?"

Brett did not take advantage of the mention of a name which in no way stood for Sydney. Besides, perhaps the initial stood for Herbert. He resolved to try another tack.

Glancing at his watch, he said: "It is nearly seven o'clock. I have already detained you an unconscionable time. You were going out. Permit me to call again, and we can discuss matters at leisure."

He rose, and the lady sighed: "You were just beginning to be entertaining. I was only going out to dine at a restaurant. I am quite tired of being alone."

Was it a hint? He would see. "Are you dining by yourself, then, Mrs. Hillmer?"

"I hardly know. I may bring my maid."

Reggie now made up his mind. "May I venture," he said, "after such an informal introduction, to ask you to dine with me at the Prince's Restaurant, and afterwards, perhaps, to look in at the Jollity Theatre?"

The lady was unfeignedly pleased. She arranged to call for him in her brougham within twenty minutes, and Brett hurried off to Victoria Street in a hansom to dress for this unexpected branch of business.

When he told his valet to telephone to the restaurant and the theatre respectively for a reserved table and a couple of stalls, that worthy chuckled.

When his master entered a brougham in which was seated a fur-wrapped lady, the valet grinned broadly. "I knew it," he said. "The guvnor's on the mash! Now, who would ever have thought it of him?"

(To be continued.)

Digitized by Google

SHORT STORIES ABOUT GIRAFFES.

We devote, every week, two pages of *Short Stories* to pithy, humorous anecdotes similar to those which appear in these columns. A prize of £1 1s. will be sent to the reader who submits the best storyette this week, and a copy of "A Bitter Vintage," by K. Douglas King, to each of those whose attempts are used. The anecdotes may be either original or selected; in the latter case the source *must* be stated. The prize of One Guinea offered for the best Storyette in this competition has been won this week by Mr. G. T. White, Plasnewydd House, Roath, Cardiff. Attempts this week must deal with Stories about ANY SUBJECT, and must reach the Storyette Editor, *Short Stories* Office, Henrietta Street, Strand, London, W.C., by Monday, December 24th. Post-cards only, please.

Undoubtedly.

A PARISH minister was examining a class of boys. In order to test their intellect he told them he would give a penny to the one who should first tell him what was the highest form of animal life.

Silence reigned for a moment, when a red-headed urchin at the bottom of the class, whose joyful face proclaimed that he was in possession of the grand secret, snapped his fingers with great glee and shouted:

"I ken't. I ken't, Mr. Minister."

"Well, my boy, will you kindly inform me what it is?"

"The giraffe," was the prompt reply.

G. T. W.

What a Neck!

A PARTY of laundry workers went some time ago to London, and, of course, the Zoo was included in the programme. After wandering round a bit, they came at last to the giraffes.

When they had gazed in wonder for some moments, one of the party exclaimed:

"Crikey! What a neck!"

Another moment of silence followed, and then:

"Well. Aw shouldn't like to get linen up for a family of six wi' necks like that!"

J. W.

A Donkey Raiser.

A GIRAFFE attached to a travelling circus got loose one night, and made a light meal off some geraniums and other plants that grew in a flower-box outside the bedroom window of an Irish costermonger.

In the morning Mike discovered his loss, and was much puzzled thereby, until looking out of the window he observed his donkey quietly grazing below.

"Bedad, thin so ye're the thafe, are ye!" he exclaimed. "But, by Saint Pathrick, I'd loike to see th' mon thot lifted ye up, I should."

J. B.

Wot Nex'!

Two boys were gazing in wonderment at the giraffes in a circus procession, passing through the town.

"I say, Bill," said one, "what a nobby long cool drink them there animals could 'ave, with a throat that length."

"Yus," admitted Bill, "but wot a thunderin' lot o' flannel they'd want, if ever they 'ad a sore throat."

J. D. W.

Poor Giraffe.

AN itinerant showman some years ago had pitched his "canvas" on the downs at Lewes.

The giraffe, being so tall, was accommodated in a tent all to himself, and it would seem that the poor animal was, among other uses, used as a tent pole, judging from the following:

One night the wind blew a hurricane, and, on being met next morning by a partner, or assistant, who inquired about the menagerie, he said:

"It did blow awful. The other tents was shook a bit, but the one with the giraffe suffered terribly. Why, if it had not been tied to his neck it would have been blown clean away."

W. B.

A Neckstraordinary Escape.

LONGBOW was in great form the other evening, and the fellows at the club were listening to his yarns with rapt attention.

"Yes," he said, in reply to someone's query, "I have had some narrow shaves in my time, but about the closest shave I ever had was when I was at Cairo some years ago. It was, indeed, an extraordinary escape. You see, it was like this:

"I was staying at the Grand Hotel, and one night, after all the occupants had retired, a big fire broke out in the basement, and in a few minutes the whole building was a mass of flames. I was sleeping off the effects of over-indulgence when it happened, and it was some time before the noise and bustle awoke me. When I did awake, however, I saw that my position was almost hopeless; for my room was on the sixth landing, and as the fire had worked its way upwards all means of retreat were cut off. Then I rushed to the window, only to find escape impossible that way, and I gave all up for lost.

"Suddenly, my hopes were renewed, for a native came galloping across the square with a giraffe. Stopping directly beneath the window at which I stood calling for help, the intelligent animal reared aloft its head and planted its chin firmly on the window-sill, thus forming an excellent fire-escape, and in another moment I had slid down its neck to the ground, and I was saved!"

"But, look here, old man," said Billson, "if that giraffe could reach six storeys, it was a pretty tall one, wasn't it?" "Yes" chimed in a cynical listener, "and in that respect it bears a striking resemblance to his yarn. Anyhow, we can't deny the fact that our friend there had a neckstraordinary escape."

A. V.

Digitized by Google

A Vegetarian.

"This," said the showman, "is a fine specimen of a giraffe. Its diet is principally a vegetable one, carrots being a great delicacy."

"For goodness' sake, Bill," exclaimed a youth to a chum, whose locks flamed like an Eastern sunset, "stand back a bit, or there's no telling what'll happen!"

"Very good advice, young man," said the showman, turning to the interrupter; "but have a care yourself, for I must tell you the animal is equally fond of greens."

E. C.

Interred.

In the middle of a stiff paper on practical chemistry, the boys competing for a certain scholarship found the following extraordinary question: "What is a giraffe? Tell all you know about it."

Whether it had got there through a printer's error, or was merely a ponderous attempt at a joke, nobody could determine; so the boys, with one exception, wisely fought shy of the question.

The exception was the pampered son of a merchant prince, who conducted his scientific experiments in a costly laboratory of his own. Not to be beaten, he answered the question thus:

"I am sorry I never experimented with giraffes. Pa brought me one from foreign parts in his ship, but the poor thing got its head raffled in the rigging, and had to be shot. They interred it in the Bay of Biscay."

R. A. H. G.

Dressing on the Railway.

There is a story told of a lady and gentleman travelling together on one of our railways. They were strangers to each other. Suddenly the gentleman said:

"Madam, I will trouble you to look out of the window for a few minutes; I am going to make some changes in my wearing apparel."

"Certainly, sir," she replied, with great politeness, rising and turning her back upon him. In a short time he said:

"Now, madam, my change is completed, and you may resume your seat."

When the lady turned she beheld her male companion transformed into a dashing lady, with a heavy veil over her face.

"Now, sir, or madam, whichever you are," said the lady, "I must trouble you to look out of the window, for I also have some changes to make in my apparel."

"Certainly, madam," and the gentleman in lady's attire immediately complied:

"Now, sir, you may resume your seat."

To his great surprise, on resuming his seat, the gentleman in female attire found his companion transformed into a man.

He laughed, and said:

"It appears that we are both anxious to escape. What have you done? I have robbed a bank."

"And I," said the whilom lady, as he dexterously fettered his companion's wrists with a pair of handcuffs, "am Detective A., and in female apparel have shadowed you for two days. Now," drawing a revolver, "keep still!"

M. H. E.

A Lift Incident.

Two women wandered into a large block of offices, and halted near the lift.

They saw the place was nicely carpeted, and contained comfortable seats, and one of them took a look in the mirror.

"Now, Eliza," said the older one, "you just take a seat in this sittin'-room while I go upstairs and see the lawyer."

Eliza took a seat in the lift, and the old lady started up the stairs.

She had just reached the first landing when she heard a yell and saw the "sittin'-room" flying towards the sky with Eliza inside.

The old lady was dumb with amazement, and stood looking upwards at the lift which paused a moment at the seventh floor and then started to descend. As it passed her she saw Eliza was still alive and she hastened to the lower floor, where she arrived in time to seize her as she came out.

"Did it blow up?" she inquired.

"No," replied the young woman, "it didn't blow up, but it flew up."

"Perhaps that young man was trying to elope with you," said the old lady, pointing her finger at the lift boy. "You come here at once. This is no doubt one of those places that we have been readin' about where they kidnap people, and right in daylight too. It is a lucky thing that I saw the kidnapper or he might have carried you off for good. Come along before he kidnaps both of us."

The two women made a bolt for the avenue and disappeared, and it took a bucket of water to revive the lift boy.

YOUR HEAD AND SHOULDERS ONLY.

If you have a relative who has passed away either at home in peace or abroad in war, send his photograph—which you probably cherish—and we will enlarge it to a beautiful India ink and crayon portrait, 15in. by 12in., mounted on plate sunk mount 24in. by 19in.

Relatives of soldiers at the front may obtain one of these enlargements for 6s.

Other photographs will be enlarged for 7s.

You will certainly get a genuine bargain by availing yourself of this offer. The enlargements can be made from any photograph, large or small, tin-types, or any kind of glass picture, provided the print is legible. All the enlargements are of the head and shoulders only.

What to do.

Write your name and address plainly in ink on a slip of paper, also on the back of the portrait you are sending us. Get a postal order for 7s. (if the photograph be that of a soldier or sailor get a 6s. postal order). Place all of these in an envelope, or make a securely packed parcel of them and address it to the PORTRAIT EDITOR, *Pearson's Weekly*, Henrietta Street, London, W.C.

A Reduction of Threepence

on each enlargement, when the order is for two or more from the same photograph, will be made.

Orders will be treated in rotation.

All photographs—particularly those on glass—should be securely packed. Although all possible care will be taken, we do not hold ourselves responsible for photographs damaged or lost in transit.

Digitized by Google

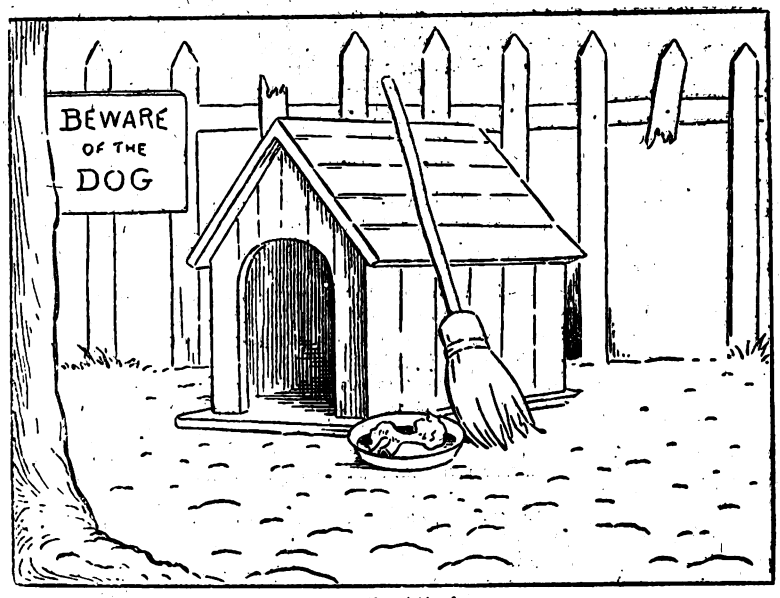
"QUICK CHANGE" PUZZLES.

First Prize ... ... *A Magnificent Graphophone.*
Second Prize ... ... *£2.*
Six Prizes of ... ... *10s. each.*

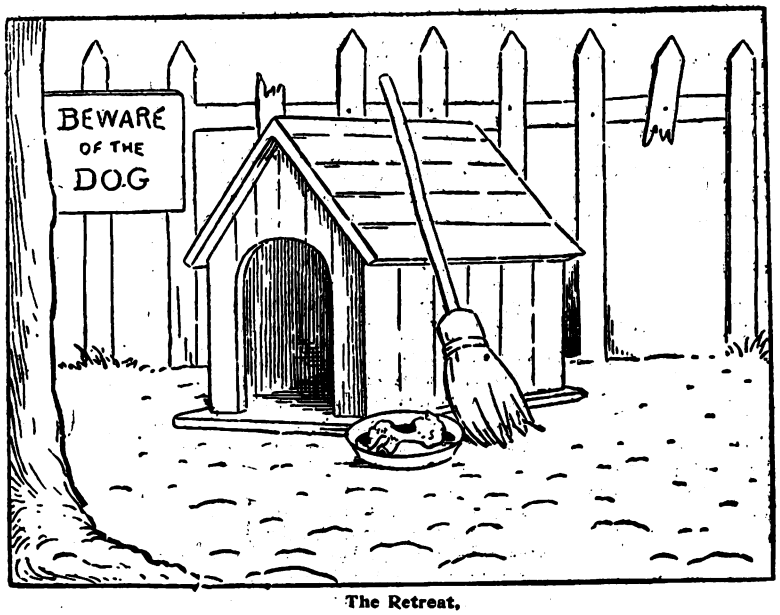
On this page you will find two drawings exactly alike, and a number of parts of animals. What you have to do is to cut out the parts of the animals at the dotted lines, and paste them on the picture in the way they should go. There is no guess work about it. Each part of an animal should be pasted on a certain spot, and will fit no other spot.

When you have pasted up your picture, put it by until two more sets have appeared. We will tell you the closing date in good time. Competitors may make any number of attempts, but each set of three puzzles must be sent in separately.

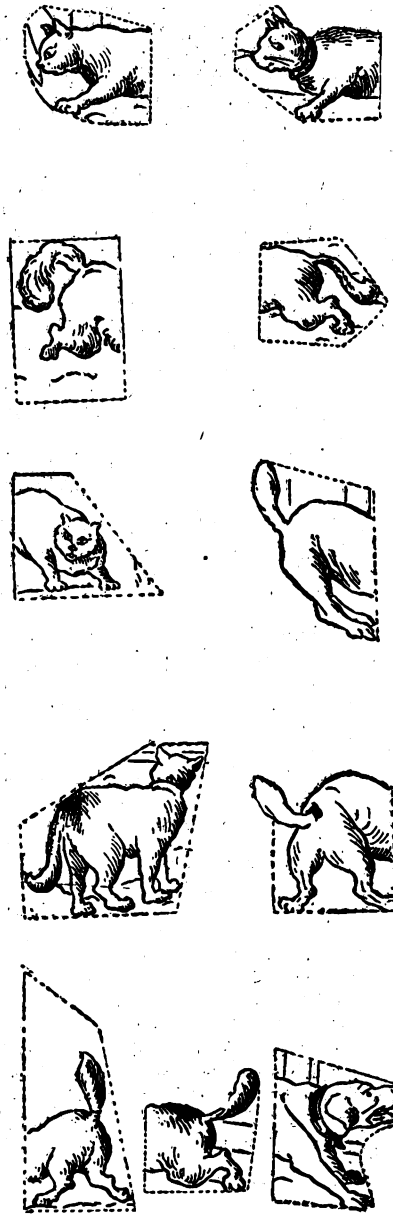
Competitors must abide by the Editor's final decision, and may enter only on that understanding.



The Attack.



The Retreat.



Digitized by Google

The Thoughtfulness of Twopenny.

FATHER and mother were having tea when Twopenny fell over the door-mat into the dining-room.

"I wanted to surprise you," he explained when he had recovered himself and picked up an ungainly parcel.

"You might have tried walking in quietly, old man," said father looking up sharply.

"He's only six," apologised mother.

Twopenny smiled at her. He was a solid, nice-looking boy, with baby-blue eyes and a huge smile.

"You'll say it's very good for me," he stated confidently.

He never claimed higher praise than this, being conscious that he could not approach the merits of his big sisters.

"Umph!" said father, whose notions of goodness did not always coincide with Twopenny's.

"Tell me, dear," asked mother.

"You will be surprised." He had a weakness for surprising people. "You see."

He bumped the package down heavily on the tea-table, knocking over an emptied cup and upsetting the cake upon the floor.

"I am surprised," said father, "that it wasn't the full cup!"

This is the sort of thing he usually says. Mother put her arm round Twopenny, which is what she usually does.

"The shilling that Uncle Jack gave me next day," he said mysteriously. He meant yesterday.

"You were going to save it."

"Ye-es." He fidgeted by one leg and nearly overbalanced. "Somefink better 'curred to me."

"To spend it?" inquired father, who is clever at guessing things.

He nodded.

"I wanted to buy somefink for ev'rybody."

Mother stroked his hair.

"Like a kind little boy," she said approvingly.

Twopenny undid the parcel with slow importance, and displayed—three loaves of bread! Father roared with laughter, and mother looked—surprised.

"Oh, Twopenny!" she cried. "Whatever made you do it?"

"Don't we give you enough to eat?" inquired father.

Twopenny looked from one to the other, and the big blue eyes grew a little moist.

"I couldn't fink of anyfink else that would be plenty for ev'rybody," he explained.

There was the least tremble about his mouth.

"It was very kind of you, darling," said mother quickly; "I shall like some for dinner, and so will father, won't you?"

Father inspected a loaf critically. It was the soft, brand-new kind, which is worst for the digestion.

"Of course I shall," he said. "It is a superior kind of bread, now I come to look at it."

Twopenny beamed with satisfaction.

"It was clever for me, wasn't it?" he claimed.

Father agreed. Also he took him on his knee and showed him the inside of his watch, where the time is made.

"You know, Twopenny," he explained presently, "you can't give presents to everybody. There are such a lot of people."

"More than twenty?"

This was as far as Twopenny had learnt to count. Some greater thinkers have fancied that the world went no further than their understanding.

"More than twenty. So you have to pick out a few. It's not a bad thing, either, to make sure that they want what you are going to give them. It would be no use my giving a big boy like you frocks, would it?"

"No," said Twopenny, laughing at such an absurd idea.

"Do you know what *I* should do, if I were going to give somebody bread?"

Twopenny shook his head.

"Why, I should see first who hadn't enough bread, and hadn't anybody to give it to them. Do you see?" Twopenny nodded. "You just think about it."

So Twopenny thought. Perhaps if father had thought a little more it would have occurred to him that it was dangerous to set Twopenny thinking.

* * * * *

Twopenny does not think quickly, but he keeps on for a long time, and thinks a good deal before he is done. It was October when he bought the new loaves, and father had the bad attack of indigestion, and told him to think. It was the end of November when he

Digitized by Google

concluded that Mrs. MacDaub, the washerwoman, was a person who hadn't enough bread, and hadn't anyone to give it to her. About a week later cook noticed an extraordinary rise in the bread-book, and began thinking also. Cook is one of those people who can't keep their thoughts to themselves.

"There's waste goin' on," she told nurse, "an' I ain't goin' to take the credit of it. Master Alan eatin' 'earty, indeed! Why, 'e couldn't do it, not if 'e was a helephant, nor you neither!"

This set nurse thinking also. Thought is a curious thing, and you can never tell where it will lead to. It led nurse to the big toy cupboard, and then to mother. Master Alan had accumulated ten half-loaves, and fifty-seven pieces of bread, she reported, most of them now very stale. He was saving them for a present to Mrs. MacDaub and her six small children, he stated. He was of opinion that this arrangement was very good for him; and that it would be a surprise.

It did seem rather a surprise to mother, but unfortunately she did not consider his proceedings really good. It was very wrong, she told him, and he mustn't do it any more because it was stealing. Father took his part, however. It was following the same principle, he said, as the church bazaar, at which mother had recently been assisting. You robbed your friends to give to the poor.

"Oh, John!" said mother. "They needn't be robbed unless they like!"

This was so, father admitted, "in theory"—Twopenny did not know where this was—but it came to much the same "in practice"—which Twopenny knew was in the sum-books, where you learn that two and two make four.

"I couldn't fink of anyfink else that would be plenty for ev'rybody."

"However," father said, "in future if you want to give away anything of mother's, or mine, or anybody else's, you must ask for it first. If you don't *I* shall begin thinking of something you won't like. If you *must* think, just think of that."

So Twopenny continued thinking upon a revised plan; and as Christmas was approaching, and he was a generous little boy, his thoughts took the shape of Christmas presents for people who weren't getting any, and what he could ask father, mother and sisters to give him to give to them. The difficulty was that they gave so many Christmas boxes that nobody of importance seemed to be left out; but after careful researches he found two such unfortunate persons.

The first was Mr. Richards, whose garden was at the back of theirs, and who talked to Twopenny over the fence. He and father used to talk a great deal also, but now they didn't, because of something that happened in "business"—which everyone knows is in the City, wherever that is. Father said that it was because Richards wasn't "straight." He did stoop a little certainly, but Twopenny considered this rather a reason for charity. Besides, he hadn't any little boys and girls of his own to borrow his pennies to buy him presents like Twopenny was going to buy for father.

The other unfortunate was Fred Hanson. Fred used to come every evening to see his Sis, but now he didn't. This was a pity, because he was very jolly, and Twopenny liked him. Sis was jolly, too, but she wasn't quite so jolly as she used to be, and he feared that perhaps this was why Fred stayed away.

He suggested it to Mabel, who was fifteen and clever enough to take prizes at the High School. She said that Twopenny was confusing cause and effect—which he believed because he couldn't understand—and that they were a pair of great stupids—which he believed because he could. Anyhow, Mabel was quite clear that none of them were likely to send Fred a present this Xmas. So Twopenny made up his mind that he would, if he could get somebody to give him something to send. His own pocket-money was already mortgaged for presents to the family.

* * * *

Upon the morning of Christmas Eve Twopenny eluded nurse, and found his way into the library, where mother was busy adding a few words on some cards with printed writing and addressing envelopes. He ought not to have come, she told him—as he expected—but he might stay if he was very quiet—which he expected also. So he stayed.

"Are they presents?" he inquired, nodding at the cards.

"Yes," said mother, "in a way."

They were, in fact, invitations to dinner, which she was sending to a few friends who were likely to be lonely on Christmas day.

"Who for?"

"People."

"What people. Growed-up ones?"

"Yes, dear. Don't bother, there's a good boy."

"Will they be pleased?"

"I hope so. I can't write if you talk so, Alan."

"Why didn't you buy pretty picture cards? Do people like reading ones best?"

Digitized by Google

"Some do."

Mother finished directing envelopes and put the cards in. Some were left, he noticed.

"Give me a card," he begged, "and a wellup."

"Very well." She gave him one of each.

"Write on my card," he requested, "like you wrote on the others."

Mother wrote and handed it to him with a smile. She was thinking that it was for a dear little guest. It read like this:

If you have no engagement for dinner (2 p.m.) on Christmas Day, Mr. and Mrs. Nugent will be glad of your company.

R. S. V. P.

The Firs,
Rockwood Road,
Upper Burnton.

"Now run away and play, dear," said mother.

So Twopenny ran down to the bottom of the garden, to look for Mr. Richards, who was sure to be smoking a pipe there before lunch.

When he saw Twopenny's head over the fence he walked down to him.

"He's a nice little chap," he was thinking. "I've a good mind to send him a present as usual, in spite of his father." For Mr. Richards thought that father hadn't been "straight" in the "business" I mentioned. This was quite a mistake, for father is as upright as a —soldier.

"I've got a present for you, Mr. Richards," said Twopenny. "You'll be surprised."

"Yes," said Mr. Richards. "I am. What is it?"

"It's this," said Twopenny, handing over the card in its envelope. "It's nice reading, what grown up people like. You look at it."

Mr. Richards looked at it so long, and wrinkled his forehead so much, that Twopenny suspected that he couldn't read very well.

"Ye-es," he said slowly, at last. "It's very nice reading. Do you know what it says?"

"No-o. I—I didn't buy it," Twopenny confessed. "I'd spent all my pennies, you know; but I wanted to give you somefink. So mamma gived it to me for you."

"You're sure you asked her for it?" said Mr. Richards doubtfully.

"I never take other people's fings wivout asking them —not now," declared Twopenny solemnly. Mr. Richards looked at it again, and pulled his moustache.

"Did your mother know it was for me?" Twopenny thought the matter over carefully. He knew it was for Mr. Richards; and mother knew much more than he did, everyone said. So she must know.

"Yes," he said decidedly. "Of course she did."

Mr. Richards seemed buried in thought. It was a queer way to send the invitation; but doubtless they had noticed his friendliness for the child.

"Don't you like it?" asked the boy anxiously.

"Very much," he said. "Only I am surprised." Twopenny laughed and rubbed his fat hands.

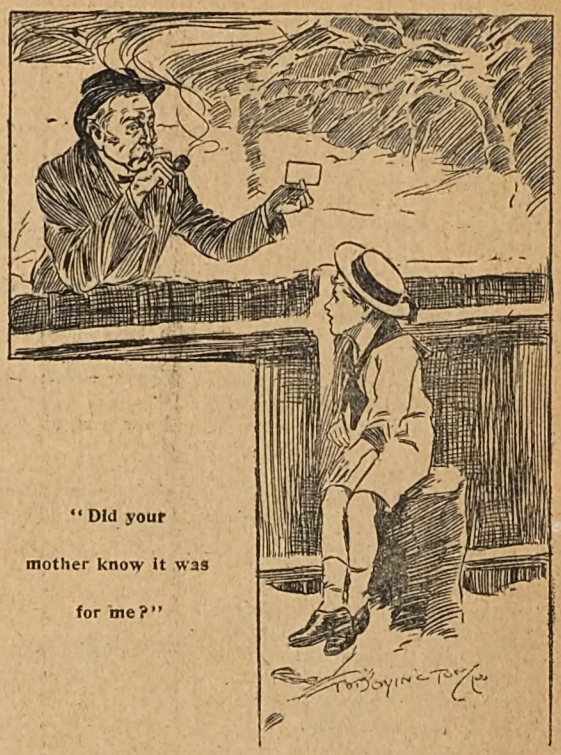
"I fought you would be," he said gleefully.

He was so pleased with himself that he kept smiling and rubbing his hands all the afternoon. When nurse asked the reason, he explained that he was only thinking, which made her extremely apprehensive.

"The things that boy thinks of," she told cook, "you'd never credit!"

* * * * *

Twopenny's thinking did not lead to any evil result so far as nurse observed. So, after dinner, she washed



"Did your mother know it was for me?"

him and let him go to find Sis, who generally read to him in the afternoon. He liked Sis's reading best of everybody's, because she had such a pleasant voice, and looked so nice while she read. He knew this was so, because Fred Hanson had corroborated his opinion.

He found Sis engaged in sending off her Christmas cards. They were beautiful pale blue ones, with a photo of Sis at the corner, and some reading underneath. This is what it said:

If meeting and greeting the Fates should end,
Yet once a friend is always a friend!

Twopenny edged up to the table and touched one of the cards gingerly.

"My hands is clean," he stated, holding them up for inspection.

"Very well, dear," said Sis, patting his head before resuming her writing.

So he inspected the card at leisure. It certainly was a pretty card, especially at the corner where the photo was. Fred would like that part, he decided; but mamma and Mabel had impressed upon him that he must not talk to Sis about Fred. So he thought, and at last Sis noticed that he was thinking.

"What is it, old blue eyes?" she asked, smiling at him in her kind way.

"I want one," he said.

She hesitated.

"They're rather expensive, dear, you know," she objected.

The first day that Twopenny had a card he usually thumb-marked it all over. The next day he drew things meant for British soldiers slaughtering enemies upon the back. The third day he drew soldiers and enemies upon the picture side. The fourth day it disappeared.

Digitized by Google

"I'd be awful careful with it," he promised, looking up at her pleadingly, "an' keep it in the wellup, if you gived me one."

So Sis kissed him, and gave him a card in a pale blue "wellup."

He said "Fank you," very politely—he was always polite to mamma and Sis—and ran off to find Mabel, who was sprawling on the sofa, reading a Christmas number. He jumped on her with a rush and sent the Christmas number flying. Mabel was the sort of girl you could jump on. She generally boxed his ears, it was true; but she never did it very hard.

On this occasion they scuffled till both rolled on the floor, which made them laugh a great deal. Then Mabel took him by the legs and shook him till his pockets emptied on the floor.

"You little horror!" she cried. "You've taken one of Sis's cards. Oh, you naughty boy!"

"I didn't," denied Twopenny, when he was right way up again; "she gived me it."

"Honour bright?"

"Honour bright," he vowed. So Mabel knew it was true. "I'm goin' to send it to someone, an' you'll d'rect it, won't you?"

"You send it? To whom, pray?"

"Fred Hanson, 'cause——"

"Nonsense!" said Mabel sharply.

"Tisn't!" said he indignantly.

Mabel put her hair straight in front of the glass. She did not care whether it was straight or not really, but she liked to do as grown-up girls do.

"No-o," she admitted, "I'm not sure that it is."

"Come along," said Mabel quickly, "I'll take you up to-night."

She looked thoughtfully at something and didn't see it, like she looks when home lessons are hard. "It's rather a clever idea for you, Twopenny," she said at last. "You mustn't tell anybody if I do"

"No. It'll be a secret, won't it?" Twopenny loved a secret. "Won't he be surprised?"

"I think he will," said Mabel with a gleam in the corner of her eyes. She walked over to the writing-table and took up a pen hesitatingly. Hesitation is rare with clever Mabel. "I wonder," she remarked half to herself, "if they really meant to—— Oh, but I'm sure they do. It's just silly, foolish pride."

"Why don't you do it?" asked Twopenny impatiently.

"You won't tell anyone? Honour bright?"

"Honour bright."

Mabel addressed the envelope rapidly. "I write very like Sis," she thought with another smile.

"Shall I ask mamma for a stamp?"

"No, no! It's to be a secret, you silly boy. Run and tell nurse to put on your things to come out with me. And if you say a word about it I'll—*excorpusculate you.*"

Twopenny could only be daunted by words that he could not understand.

So Mabel took him out and bought the stamp, and treated him to little cakes with icing on and ginger-beer.

"You're not half-bad Twopenny, for a kid," she assured him.

As a matter of fact, she thought him the nicest small boy that ever was; but she knew that male creatures must not be flattered, because of their excessive vanity.

"You've been such a good boy to-day, Alan," said mother," when he was going off to bed.

"So far as we know," qualified father cautiously.

Twopenny beamed.

"If you knowed what you don't know," he began mysteriously.

"Come along," said Mabel quickly; "I'll take you up to-night," and she hustled him off.

Father laughed when they were out of hearing.

"I'm afraid he's been thinking again," he said.

"He *means* well," said mother softly, and father nodded.

* * * * *

Santa Claus left a sleigh-load of presents during the night, and Mr. Richards sent a clockwork train on Christmas morning. So Twopenny was fully occupied; but he could not help noticing that some strange things happened.

Just as breakfast was finishing, the postman came with letters for everybody. When Sis saw one of hers she trembled, and when she opened it she began to smile and cry quietly at the same time. As soon as she had finished reading it she went out of the room. Mabel followed her; and when Twopenny went in search of Mabel, who had promised to arrange a lead-soldier battle, he found them hugging one another in an extraordinary manner. Sis picked him up and kissed him more times than he liked to be kissed, and gave him an ivory penholder, and promised to make him a khaki suit, like a real soldier's; and Mabel carried him downstairs on her shoulder, and played with his toys, and was jollier even than usual.

"She's had a letter from Fred, Twopenny," she whispered. "It's all through your card."

Digitized by Google

"What did it say?"

"I don't know," stated Mabel. But she did. It was this:

Dear Little Friend—More Than Friend—

I've kissed the pretty face on your pretty card a hundred times. Once a true lover, always a true lover; and I was your true lover, Sis. It's been just a silly mistake, and so much my fault. Will you meet me in the park after church? I can't do without you, dear.

Always your lover,

Fred.

Father also received a letter, which seemed to surprise him. He was showing it to mother when the girls left the table. This is how it ran:

My Dear Nugent,—

I have the greatest pleasure in accepting your kind invitation to Christmas dinner. Thinking matters over I see that we misjudged one another. We ought both to have known that neither would take an unfair advantage intentionally. You have had the largeness of mind to recognise this first. A happy Christmas to you and yours.

Yours most sincerely,

Hy. Richards.

"You good little woman, to think of inviting him!" said father, putting his hand on mother's shoulder for a moment.

"But I didn't, dear," said mother. "I can't think how——" then she suddenly remembered Twopenny and his card.

Presently father and mother came down to the breakfast-room, where Mabel was amusing her brother. Mother petted him quietly. Father didn't say much, only smoked; but when mother went off to make some dinner arrangements, he stayed and joined in the games.

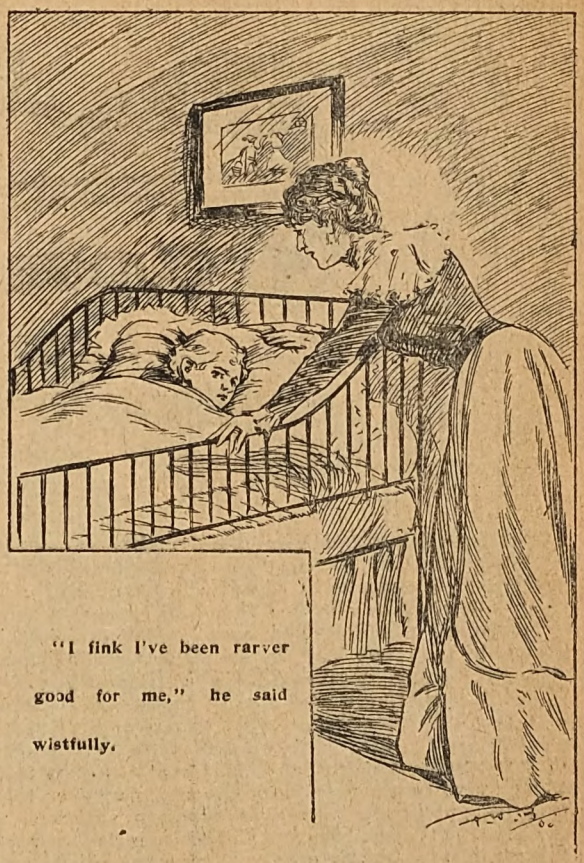
"I want you and Sis to pay every attention to Richards, Mab," he said presently. "He's coming to dinner." Mabel raised her eyebrows. "Peace and goodwill, you know."

"Yes, dad." Mabel was silent for a time. Then her mischievous eyes began to sparkle. "Won't I be enough to amuse him?" she inquired. "I'm getting awfully grown up; and Sis will have Fred to attend to, you see."

"Eh? What?" cried dad. "Fred? Well I am glad."

He laughed like a boy—indeed mother says he is half a boy still, though his hair is getting thin.

Then mother came in and they all explained things. Only Twopenny was so busy playing with his soldiers that he did not hear.



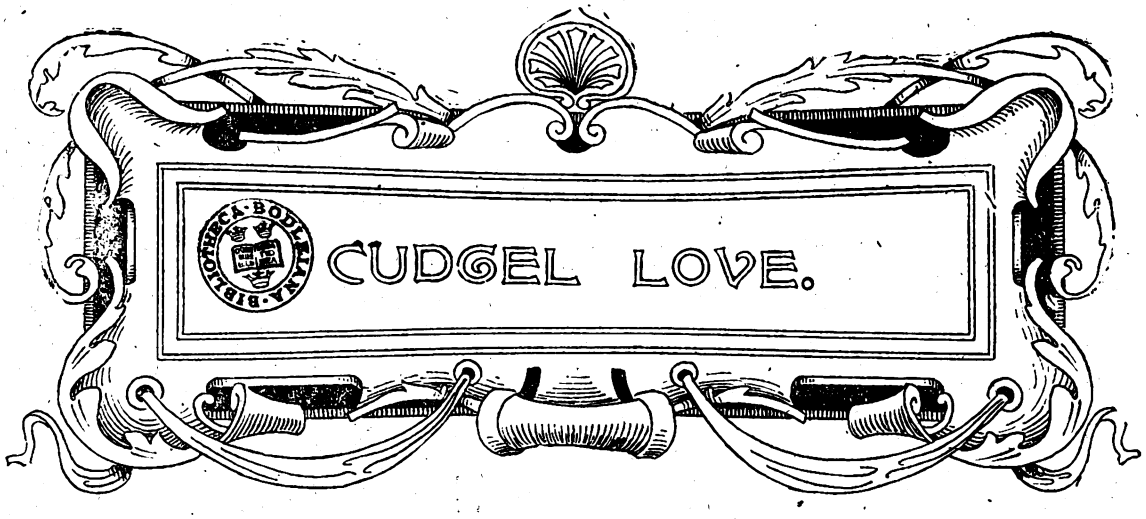
"I fink I've been rarver good for me," he said wistfully.

It occurred to him during the afternoon and evening that everybody was very kind to him. This set him thinking; and he concluded that it was because they were good, and that he ought to be good also, so far as a little boy of six could.

"I fink I've been rarver good, for me," he said wistfully when mother tucked him in bed.

Mother bent over him and hugged him. "So good, darling," she said; and somewhere, right down in her heart, she prayed a prayer. Owen Oliver.

Digitized by Google



How much do nine and seven, and three and a quarter, and fifteen, and one thousand nine hundred and eighty-nine and threequarters make? Two thousand and twenty-four. What do five thousand a year, a good constitution, a well-drained house, a popular temper, and a shrewish wife make? An all sort-of-life, happy and not happy, chequered, like a Highland plaid. What do a pretty girl and an old gentleman drinking brandy without knowing it, and a coward and a cudgel, make? Give it up? A story for the Christmas number of SHORT STORIES—the shortest Christmas story that was ever written for the finest Christmas number that ever was published. Wonderful powers of addition!

Listen, Christmas boys and Christmas girls. Stir the fire, until the sparks fly up the chimney as bright and as fast as loving looks from laughing eyes. Attention! Turn upon me, faces all, young and old, blooming and wrinkled. No coughing. No flirting. Nothing until the story is done, for done it quickly must be.

Here I am, well-known to be the second-best writer in England for spinning a story out, and the editor—between ourselves, a tasteless despot—tells me I shall have four pages, and no more. I seem to hear his scissors click and snip above my head in anticipation, like a hungry giant trying his jaws while his wife is getting his little bit of dinner ready.

If the story is jerky, abrupt, beginning too late and ending too soon, blame not the author, for he, with proper scope given to his unrivalled faculty, could produce a narrative such as every reader in the Empire would admit to be long enough. But to be measured by the inch, pruned, cropped, clipped, lopped, shaved, cut out and cut off and cut up, is fatal to that sort of Clarissa-Richardson-Pamela-Grandison genius, which critics tell me I possess. And now for the story.

An old friend of mine was for thirty years (and is still) practising in the town of Westerham. He never was a man of great ability, but, being careful and conscientious, he had gained the confidence of a large circle of patients. Let us call him Thompson, for his real name I must not tell you. Thompson had a son, who was studying the art of healing, and a daughter, who was studying the art of heart-breaking, and seemed likely to take honours.

Nelly Thompson's saucy face and twinkling eyes ensnared the eldest son of a wealthy merchant who lived in the neighbourhood. The father was a self-made man, and, though vulgar, had a force of character which made him respectable in society. The son, as is very common with the children of such parents, had all the father's vulgarity without his shrewd genius. He was a low, coarse, purse-proud fellow, and had not, I believe, sufficient culture to admire Nellie Thompson as she deserved.

But he heard her praised, and wanted to marry her, and thought, of course, that, with his personal and pecuniary attractions, he was sure of the girl. "No, thank you," pretty Nell said. It was all over the town in no time that pretty Nell had refused Charlie Stott, and Charlie was perfectly savage. He revenged himself in a way worthy of his character.

Old Dr. Thompson had for some time been in imperfect health. He worked on at his profession, but brokenly. His disease—disease it could hardly be called—was a species of cerebral weakness, which often simulates the graver form of brain mischief, but as often manifests itself only in a general decline of power. Of this affection a distinct symptom, in many cases, is intolerance of alcohol in any form. Sometimes a patient, in such a state, will be completely upset by a glass or two of wine.

This was Dr. Thompson's case, and, unfortunately, Stott, who had been a frequent visitor at his house, had ascertained it. Now it fell out that, shortly after Miss Nell's refusal, Dr. Thompson was summoned to attend the elder Stott, who, though irritated at what had passed, did not think proper on that account to desert a physician in whom he had great faith.

It was a blazing summer afternoon. One of Dr. Thompson's horses had an accident in the morning, and he walked out to Stott's house, about half-a-mile from the town. After his professional visit, young Stott met him in the hall as he was leaving, and finally asked the Doctor to take a glass of wine. Under ordinary circumstances, Thompson would have declined this offer, but thinking it a kind of conciliatory overture, he judged it wiser to say yes.

"Champagne will be agreeable to-day," said Stott, "and we have just had some in which is fine quality. It drinks rather fiery, perhaps, but a finer wine you

Digitized by Google

never tasted, especially when it comes fresh from the ice, as it will to-day."

He went out himself to fetch the wine, and, after a long absence, returned with the bottle opened in his hand, and two glasses, muttering as he came in something about the servants being out for a holiday. The Doctor took a glass, and at the young man's urgent pressure another, and he was thinking of leaving when the scoundrel said:

"Dr. Thompson, I have not acted quite as I ought towards you lately; you know why. I am very sorry, and I wish all bygones to be forgotten."

So they shook hands very warmly, and then Stott said:

"One glass more to clinch it."

The Doctor objected.

"There isn't a headache in a dozen bottles!" cried Stott. "It is as mild as milk. Come, Doctor, you won't refuse to drink to renewed friendship."

So Thompson drained a third glass in quick succession to the other two. He had scarcely swallowed it when Stott cried out:

"Bless me, I have an appointment I quite forgot! So sorry to hurry you, Doctor, but I must meet a friend immediately."

And so fussing, and talking, and protesting, and apologising, he managed to get the Doctor outside of the house within ten minutes after his first glass had been tasted.

No sooner had he left the house, Thompson subsequently said, than he felt rather odd, and he mentally reproached himself for having taken so much wine. But three glasses of champagne did not seem very excessive after a fatiguing day, and, though he felt a little unsteady, he walked on confidently. From that time, however, until he wakened in his own bed, all was either very indistinct or lost in oblivion.

But what an interval there had been! It was market-day in the town, and the streets were full. Several people had stories to tell of Dr. Thompson. With one he had held a short, incoherent conversation. Against another he had jostled heavily, and, after a stupid stare, staggered on without apology. He went into a chemist's shop and gave some outrageous order for a patient. Finally, he fell down in the street, and lay motionless. The bystanders at first thought it a fit, but they were soon undeceived, and, amidst sneers from a few and openly-expressed grief and pain from others, Dr. Thompson was carried home dead-drunk.

The news ran like wildfire. Thompson was found drunk. Rumour gave free translations of the fact, with various additions. Thompson had nearly killed a patient through his liquor. He had fought a crossing-sweeper. He had sat up a whole night drinking. One sagacious person said he had always seen it in his eye. And apart from all exaggeration, the shock to the Doctor's friends and patients was very great. They pitied him, but even the kindest said his position was irreparably lost.

I have heard that within the Doctor's house the grief and shame were inexpressible. Neither wife nor children could reproach him. Years of kindliness and rectitude had impressed them too deeply with the goodness of his character to permit an instant's blame to overshadow the loyalty of their affection. They looked upon the affair as a terrible disaster, but never thought that he had done wrong. For three long weeks Thompson's was a sorrowful home. It is not always the saddest house that has the blinds drawn down.

To make the matter worse, Charlie Stott declared that it was utterly impossible that the quantity of wine Thompson had drunk in his father's house could have upset any man. And, indeed, it did not seem likely to

"No, thank you," pretty Nell said.

produce such total intoxication in the most delicate subject.

So the inference was that Thompson had been drinking elsewhere, and the matter grew darker from examination. One lady of influence in the town, a well-meaning person of the revival school of piety, with that rather callous temper on social matters which I have more than once observed in persons of that type, wrote a solemn letter to the Doctor, remarking that although, socially, the sin he had committed might never be forgotten on earth, yet there was One, and so on. This letter, I have been assured, was, to the poor Doctor, the bitterest of the many mortifications he had to endure.

About three weeks after the event the hopeful Charlie Stott was billiard-playing, and, luck failing him, he drank rather freely to solace his misfortunes or to whet his play.

Growing talkative with his liquor, he said he could tell a capital story, and, without being pressed, went on to say that he had overthrown Dr. Thompson by putting brandy in his champagne.

"I took care," Stott said, "to pour it out at the other end of the room. Being iced, the old fool drank it,

Digitized by Google

suspecting nothing until it toppled him over in the High Street."

So far he had proceeded when one of his companions suddenly turned upon him, and said:

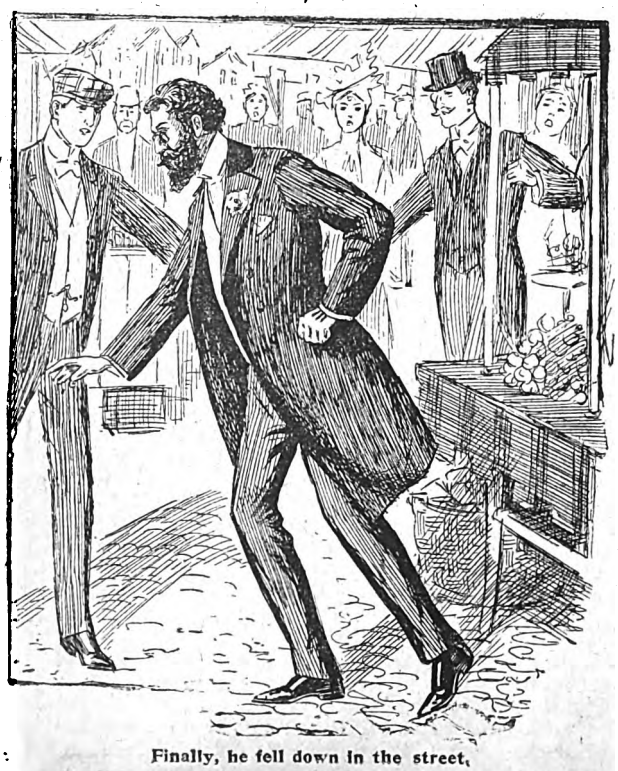
"Stott, I have known you for five years, and I never thought you a gentleman; but, after what you have told us, if ever I speak to you again in the way of friendship——" And he clinched his sentence by a wish framed in language more suited to the scene and the company than the spirit of his speech. So speaking, he walked out of the room.

Stott had sense enough left to grow frightened, and now began to deny what he had before of his own free will confessed; but he might have spared himself the trouble, for the rest of his companions were partial strangers, and but slightly interested in the story.

The other, however, went straight to Dr. Thompson's house, and, asking for his son, told him what he had heard. The two young men consulted upon the matter, and though the resolution they came to was characteristic of youth, the issue showed it was not practically unwise.

Charlie Stott was in the habit of visiting his father's mills every day. These were situated about two miles and a half from the town, and his homeward path lay through some unfrequented fields. As he was returning home, the evening after his game of billiards, he encountered his offended friend, and with him Dr. Thompson's son. Stott looked uncomfortable; but, with a surly nod, he was passing on when Thompson brought him to a stand with a shout of "Stop!" which sent whatever of heart he had into his mouth.

"So, you hound, it was you made my father drunk!" said Thompson fiercely.



Finally, he fell down in the street.

Stott lost his presence of mind.

"You have been letting out my secret, have you?" he said, turning angrily upon his late companion. "You are a man of honour, are you?"

"I hope so," said the other. "At any rate, you have an account to settle with Thompson, which I recommend you to attend to before you deal with me."

Stott looked from face to face, and now, for the first time, noticed two significant oak sticks in the hands of the young men. He prognosticated danger, and grew very pale indeed. But the common resource of the vulgar did not fail him. He at once resolved to lie himself out of the fix.

"Thompson," he said, holding out his hand, with an attempt at generous frankness, "I don't wonder at your being annoyed. If I had done as I was foolish enough to say last night, I don't know what I should not deserve. But, upon my soul and honour, I had too much wine myself then, and invented the whole story. The champagne your father drank at my house was pure champagne, and nothing beside, and that's the truth!"

"Look here," retorted Thompson, taking the stick out of his friend's hand and holding it up with his own. "You can choose whichever of these you like the better, and then defend yourself. With the other I will carve something on you that will last as long as the stain you have put on my father's name!"

Thompson's manner was so fierce in its very deliberateness that a stout heart might have quailed to hear him.

Stott was a coward, and, besides, a sense of guilt and shame helped to unnerve him. He declared he was unwell, would meet him another day, wanted a friend on his own side, at last fairly blubbered, when Thompson suddenly thrust one stick into his hand, and, by a smart cut of the other, announced that the struggle was about to begin.

A short struggle it was. Thompson, after a moment's pause, during which he had drawn back a pace or two, strode up to Stott, and, collaring him, began to lay stroke after stroke upon his quivering frame. Stott shrieked and swore, an art which he had practised largely and on various occasions, but never under circumstances so stimulating to the invention. He vainly tried to wrench himself out of his foe's grasp. As vainly he made a few spasmodic attempts to use his stick. Whack, howl, scuffle; scuffle, whack, howl. Such was the action that followed.

In two minutes Stott had received as sound a thrashing as ever a vulgar coward earned; and, to do him justice, he acknowledged the fact handsomely by his yells. Then Thompson threw him off with a few scornful words. Rage and pain, however, had imparted to Stott something that acted as courage for the moment, and he suddenly sprang forward and gave Thompson a blow with his stick across the temples that nearly knocked him down. Then, to show his prudence as clearly as his valour, he took to his heels, and tore across the fields like one who knew that vengeance was flying after.

Thompson was stunned for a moment, but, recovering himself, dashed after Stott like a fury. The race was not doubtful. Stott had reached the gate of the field, and was opening it, when a stroke cracked across his shoulders, and another, and another, to which all that had gone before were mere ladies' blows. Stott struggled desperately to open the gate, and defend himself at once, when a blow, which he managed to avoid with his

Digitized by Google

body, came down upon the hand which was working the latch of the gate, hitting his thumb with such flattening force that he fainted with pain.

The two young men doctored him, bound up his thumb hastily, gave him a little brandy which the umpire had brought with him, and started him home, his small eyes glaring with the hatred and malice he dared not utter. Sorer bones never crossed a threshold than his when he entered his father's house, and the damage done to his thumb was so serious that Thompson's promise of leaving a lasting mark upon him was rigidly fulfilled.

As I have heard, the fellow told his father as many lies as he possibly could, and very artfully concealed the real facts of the case. The old man was infuriated. His son—his eldest son—the boy who would have his twenty thousand a year—beaten by an upstart medical student that hadn't two sixpences in his pocket! Stott senior was full of pride of purse and brutal contempt of poverty. He raved. He would see if there was law in the land. He would this, and he would that, his fine purple countenance displaying various apoplectic tints, as thus to various friends he declared his intentions.

But the affair soon got wind. Plenty of generous feeling was aroused on the other side. Old Dr. Thompson was really beloved, and people were only too delighted to see him honourably extricated from his disgrace. Callers came in showers. Young Thompson was the hero of the hour, and all the girls went wild about him, and one particular pair of eyes contrived to convey their silent appeal of his pluck so bewitchingly that Thompson resolved to take the ball at the hop. He married the bewitching eyes, and settled down as partner with his father.

And as for pretty Nell Thompson, who said "No, thank you," to Stott, she fell in with a young medical man of some private fortune and remarkable ability. The beginning was he loved her, and the end was she married him. No, that was not the end either. He—Dr. Mansfield—joined the Thompson partners, father and son. The firm enlarged its designation to Thompson, Thompson, and Mansfield, and a prosperous firm it has become.

For several miles round all the practice is gathered into this great medical net, and the two young men are rapidly making fortunes. No other doctor has a chance in the district, as one rash practitioner of the Dublin medical school—Titus O'Grady by name—found to his cost. After flourishing his brass door-plate before the public for twelve months, Titus packed up and departed.

"In the whole year," he said, with doleful humour, "I had one patient, and that was a girl with the measles, and even she had only one spot. How can a man demonstrate his abilities in such a place?"

So poor old Dr. Thompson's disaster, like the mishaps of a truly worthy man, turned into good fortune at last. He is supported on one side by an active and affectionate son, on the other by a loyal and talented son-in-law. He sees two blooming rows of grandchildren rising before him, and once in a twelvemonth or so a new face appears suddenly in the line in the oddest sort of way, Dr. Thompson, senior, need not complain; and as for Dr. Thompson, junior, he declares that his good luck began on the very evening that he thrashed that cowardly ruffian Stott.

Now, I discharge you all. Forfeits, mistletoe, Sir Roger, snapdragon, what you please, only never again say that I cannot tell a story in five minutes.

ALAN MUIR.

IT MAKES YOU SCREAM

WITH LAUGHTER.

What does?

Why, watching a man try to do the Twenty Teazer.

There's nothing calculated to titillate the risual palate more effectively than Twenty Teazer.

BUY IT, 6d.

TRY IT,

DO IT.

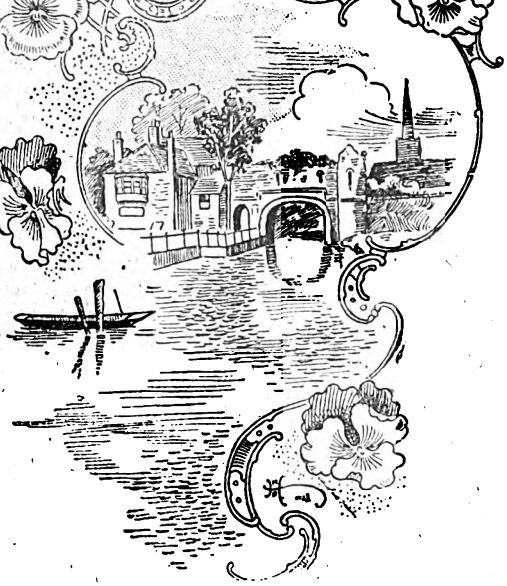
The first two things are easily accomplished. But the third—no, you cannot do it, can you? If you do succeed let us know how long it took you.

THE picture given below represents the name of something with which all my readers are acquainted. Stereoscopes will be awarded to the first five competitors whose letters, giving the correct solution, are first opened. All attempts must arrive by Thursday, December 27th, in envelopes addressed "Discoverer," *Short Stories* Office, Henrietta Street, Strand, London, W.C.

Digitized by Google

DONE BROWN.

A Tale of the old Smuggling Days.



NOBODY could make it out; at least, everybody said they could not make it out in Oatney—that little dull old south-coast town, abandoned to smugglers and fossillised folk, of ages dead to the rest of the world; and there were not many people in Oatney who would be at the trouble of expressing their views, even if they could make out how a successful run could be effected under the very noses of the Preventive men. In fact, looking at the very large proportion which loafers in Oatney bore to the general population—and loafers always know everything that is going on—the universal ignorance was perfectly astounding.

And so thought Lieutenant Pleydell, the officer in command of the Oatney Preventive Station, as he strode up and down the coffee-room of his temporary quarters at the Bull Inn, in none of the best of humours at the news that a 'run' had been effected in spite of the watchfulness and precautions of himself and his men.

"Heart-breaking work, this," he muttered, "to be stowed away in this dead-alive hole, whilst other fellows are winning kudos and medals and promotion by active service. I've a good mind to cut it altogether, and take to the Church or the Bar, or anything. And I suppose I must spend another Christmas Day here, without a soul to speak to."

It was quite upon the cards—not upon the Christmas cards, for in Anno Domini 1811 those delights of nurseries and abominations of letter-carriers had not been invented—that it was going to be what is called a seasonable Christmas; for the loafers who hung about all day over the parapet above the town green—in olden times the town port and harbour—and who were far more infallible in their weather prognostications than the modern Meteorological Office, cocked their heads knowingly at the clouds, and said that "Summat wur comin', it wur."

And so it turned out; for Christmas Day, by some juggling feat known only to itself, dawned somehow or other through the heavy masses of snow-clouds, and the worthy burghers of Oatney began to wish each other a "Merry Christmas" when they had no evidence that the day had even arrived except for a scarcely perceptible lightening of the atmosphere.

It was with anything but a desire to "salute the happy morn" that our Lieutenant stood at the coffee-room window, and gazed out upon as much of the street as he could see for the snow, which drifted about it apparently from each point of the compass, but which seemed to have no deterrent effect upon sundry red-cheeked, red-stockinged damsels on their way to morning service at the old church in Strand Street. He was thus engaged when there came a knock at the door, and the landlord entered.

"I beg your pardon, your honour," he said, "but it's Christmas Day, and me and the Missus, thinkin' you'll be lonely like a-sitting here all by yourself, wants to know if you'd do us the honour of dinin' with us this evenin' at five o'clock."

"Thank you, landlord," replied the officer; "I've some very important letters to write, so I think I'll dine alone to-night."

The landlord withdrew with a look half of surprise, half of contempt, for the man who would choose to dine alone upon Christmas night.

When the door had closed behind him the Lieutenant shook his head and said to himself:

"No, not this time. I'm a young un, but I'm too old a bird to be caught with gammon like that. Get me out of the way, make me half-seas over, and then——why, another run by Dungeness, and sell number two for me, No, I'll dine alone, and keep my eyes open all the time. Besides, the men dine at five o'clock, and they'd take it very strangely if I didn't give them a look in and tell them not to forget that there are such beings as Ned Ward and the Dymchurch gang, in the midst of their jollity."

So during the afternoon the Lieutenant plodded through the almost knee-deep snow to the look-out station situated at the mouth of the river some two miles southward of the town.

Digitized by Google

He duly admired the men's attempts at decoration, satisfied himself that there was plenty of good cheer in store, wished the men "A Merry Christmas," at the same time warning them not to forget entirely that there were such beings as smugglers in existence, left them a box of cigars, and turned back homewards.

It had become quite dark by the time he approached the inn, and the snow-clouds which had been sullenly hovering about all day delivered themselves of their pent-up wrath in a fierce blinding storm. So he hastened his steps.

He was somewhat startled to hear, during a momentary lull in the elementary warfare, a deep groan just as he arrived at the inn-door, and, looking in the direction whence the sound seemed to proceed, he could make out, in the dim light cast by the inn-lamp, a dark mass huddled against the opposite wall. Approaching, he saw that it was the figure of a young woman. He lifted her into his room at the inn, placed her by the roaring fire, and put some brandy to her lips, which seemed to revive her.

The Lieutenant saw that she was an exceedingly pretty girl, and revolved in his mind the possible causes which could have led her to her present position.

"Evidently no coast lass," he muttered, as he felt the soft, delicate hair, and marked the refined features of the girl. "There must be some mystery to bring a young and beautiful woman to such a position as this, on Christmas of all nights in the year. Do you feel better?"

"Yes, thank you," replied the girl, in a low, faint voice, "I shall soon be quite well. But tell me, where is he? where is he?" And her eyes flashed at these words, and her hands stretched out wildly as if to grasp something.

"Oh, never mind—wait a bit," said the young officer, "and when you've had something to eat and drink you shall go to bed and to-morrow you'll be as right as——"

"No, no," said the girl, with a shake of the head and a sad look in her large, black eyes, "I must go on to-night."

"Go on!" repeated the Lieutenant, "that's quite impossible. I wouldn't turn a dog out upon such a night as this. Besides, where and how are you going?"

"I must go on to T.," said the girl, mentioning a seaport town three miles from Oatney. "Please don't try to prevent me, as I have a duty, a solemn duty, to perform."

"Well, at any rate," said Pleydell, "you must eat and drink something before you go. It's Christmas night; I'm all alone here, and I shall be delighted if you will stay. So I'll make up the fire, and you sit close to it—you're still shivering—and in a very few minutes dinner will be ready."

He left the fair incognita gazing at the fire with a look of the deepest sorrow on her face.

"By George; she is a pretty girl, and no mistake," he said to himself as he went upstairs to change his reeking clothes and to make himself generally more presentable. "Depend upon it, there's some mystery connected with this, and I'll get it out of her before she goes."

The Bull had been famous for its dinners from time immemorial, and the landlord was quite equal to the task of consoling the Lieutenant for his inforced solitude by setting before him a most tempting little banquet.

Pleydell was pleased to see that the warmth of the room and the generous fare had the effect of completely reviving the strength of his guest, although she still re-

As to Moving About——.

"If I moved about much," said Lizzie Dickinson, "I could hardly get my breath."

Now if she had been a typewriter or a seamstress this would not have been so bad, as—save in acute asthma—the breathing goes on fairly well if one can only keep quiet.

But Miss Dickinson was in service, and how in Mercy's name was she to keep quiet and at the same time keep her place? No; it is upstairs, downstairs, and in my lady's chamber; early to rise and late to bed, and a perfect raffle of work between whiles. That's how it is.

So we see that she just *had* to "move about much," although she was really and truly not able to do it. The end was that she got so ill that three years ago—at this date—she was obliged to drop everything and leave her situation.

In her own little account of her trouble, written about the first of December, 1899, the young girl says she had a dry cough that shook her whole body, and a fearful sharp pain in her right side. Her cough was of the kind that frightens young people—and naturally; these coughs sound so like consumption, and there is plenty of that in dear old England.

"My appetite," she says, "was about gone. I stood in the greatest need of nourishment, yet when I looked at my meals, or even thought of them, I turned away with a strange feeling of dislike and disgust.

"Going on this way, and trying to do my work, I got so miserable and weak I didn't know what was to become of me. Sometimes I felt so wretched and nervous that I lay down on the sofa and cried like a heart-broken child.

"The doctors tried to help me, and of course I wanted them to succeed. One attended me for over four months, and I saw several others afterwards; but I kept getting worse in spite of all they could do.

"Finally, I commenced to fancy I was doomed to die, seeing that no good came of the medicines I had used—and there were so many of them. Who it was that wanted me to try Mother Seigel's Syrup is of no consequence to you, even if I could remember. Somebody did, however, and, as I could think of nothing else to do, I did try it. The first few doses made me feel better. I could eat a trifle, and no pain after it. Then my meals began to taste good, and I got strength out of them. It wasn't long before the pain went away, and my breathing was much more natural and easy, and I could move about and turn my hand to a bit of work.

"In this manner it was that I went on improving, and when I had taken four small bottles of Mother Seigel's Syrup I was quite myself again, and *went back to service.*"

A common friend who saw Miss Dickinson recently, at Ashley, near Tetbury, Glos., reports that she is in fine health, and has plenty of colour. Long may she remain well and happy.

Digitized by Google

mained silent and sad; and he took advantage of her recovery to press again his questions about her intentions.

"I am sure you will pardon me for my curiosity," he said, "but as I am your temporary protector I feel that I have some right to know whither you are going, and how you propose to make the journey. I dare not ask you to tell me your story although I am convinced that you have a story, and a sad one."

She raised her beautiful eyes to him as he said this.

"Yes, I have a story, and a sad one, but I can only tell it to the nearest Preventive officer, and he, I believe, is at T."

Pleydell started.

"I beg your pardon," he said, "you need not go so far as T. for a preventive officer, as I have the melancholy honour to be one."

"You are!" the girl exclaimed. "Then listen, I have come upon an errand of revenge. Do you know the name of Ned Ward?"

"Ned Ward?" repeated the young officer. "I should think I did. The smuggler you mean?"

"Yes, the same," continued the girl. "Well, I loved him dearly; he gave me his troth solemnly, and I gave him my heart. We were to have been married on New Year's Day; but I found out yesterday that he is already married to another girl, the daughter of a French officer on parole, and that she is at sea with him. And I have come from Dover on foot, all through the snow and storm, on purpose to take my revenge. He is going to run a cargo ashore at ten o'clock to-night."

"To-night! Where?" exclaimed the Lieutenant.

"At Redman's Lane, you know, close by the Ship Inn. He will have this girl with him, and as I know they will be many, and well-armed, to do good you must take every man you can. Then, then I shall be revenged."

Her eyes flashed so as she said this, and she looked so beautifully fierce in her just wrath, that the young officer stooped and kissed her hand.

"You will remain here, will you not?" he said. "I must lose no time, for it is now getting on for eight o'clock."

"I will remain," said the girl, "trust me."

In a very few minutes he was ready, cloaked and armed, and in less than an hour he arrived at the station.

The men were lustily roaring the chorus of "God save the King," as he entered; but at his appearance voices were hushed, and each man stood at "attention."

"I'm very sorry to stop your fun, lads," said Pleydell; "but I've just received news that Ned Ward intends to have a try at Redman's Lane. We shall have our work cut out for us; but we can polish him off, stop his little game and finish ours afterwards."

At this the men burst out with a hearty cheer, they were just in the humour for fun of this sort, and would willingly have gone out to meet with an enemy a dozen times their strength.

In a very short time the whole detachment—some twenty men all told—were ready armed and equipped; forty rounds of ammunition were served out to each man; a parting bumper, to fight against the exposure upon such a night during a five mile tramp, was drained, and they set forth, leaving a couple of men on guard at the station.

They kept along the marsh road by the sea, eyes and ears open all the while for the smallest sign which might betray the proximity or existence of the quarry. The snow drifted in their faces, the wind blew almost a hurricane, and the word of command could scarcely be heard for the roaring of the sea and the shrieking and whistling of the gale. There were lights in the Ship Inn at Redman's Lane, the sounds of singing and laughter were heard as the little body of blue-jackets approached; otherwise there was no sign of life at this wild, out-of-the-way, sequestered spot, known to few but smugglers and fishermen, and doubly wild and remote on this inclement Christmas night.

It was almost ten o'clock by the time the Lieutenant had disposed his men in the most advantageous manner. Still there was not a sign; not a blue light from the sea, not a lantern hoisted from the window of the inn—both well-known signals in the freemasonry of smuggling.

Eleven o'clock; it was weary, bitter work waiting about inactively, searched to the very bones by the wind; midnight, the lights at the inn disappeared, and the sounds of revelry ceased.

There were audible murmurs of discontent and disappointment amongst the men, and Jem Beate, approaching Pleydell with a salute, said:

"I'm afraid, sir, it's no go. They've either done the business, or else the weather's too bad."

"I'm afraid so too, Jem," said the Lieutenant. "My information came from a most trustworthy source; at least, I—I have every reason to believe it to be so."

"Excuse me, sir," said the honest tar, "if I axe you who it was as told you."

"Well, I don't know that I can," said Pleydell. "I might get my informant into trouble."

"No, sir, but was it a man or a woman?" asked the sailor.

"Well, it was a woman," replied the officer.

"Well then, sir, depend on't we've been done brown."

The possibility of this had never occurred to Pleydell, so interested had he been in his patient at the inn, and yet it was humbling to think that such was the case.

It was evident, however, that nothing would be done at Redman's Lane this night; so the word was given to re-form, and the men, wet and shivering, obeyed with alacrity.

When they arrived at the station, Pleydell was surprised to hear no challenge, and ran ahead of the detachment. His surprise was increased tenfold when he beheld the two men he had left on guard gagged and trussed up like fowls in a corner, and on the table a piece of paper on which was scrawled:

> Dere Sir,—We 'ope you have ingoyed yore little walk. We have very much, igspeshally as we have done you regular brown.

Pleydell was beside himself with rage. The two men when released, could only say that at ten o'clock the door was burst open, and before they could spring to their arms they were gagged and bound so that they could neither speak nor move. That by the time occupied by the smugglers the "run" must have been a big one. Pleydell returned to the inn with all speed, and found, as he had feared, that his interesting guest had gone. So angry and mortified was he that he threw up his commission, and tried to forget his humiliation in the study of medicine. Years afterwards he bought a practice in Dover, and had for a patient upon one occasion an elderly woman, who, when he had entered her cottage, saluted him by his old title of Lieutenant. Naturally astonished how a poor woman in her position could have found out about his past career, he asked her.

"Lor' bless you, sir," she said, with a twinkle of her black eyes, "you surely can't have forgotten the Bull Inn at Oatney, where you was so regular done brown."

Frank Abell.

Digitized by Google

A Treat for the Children.

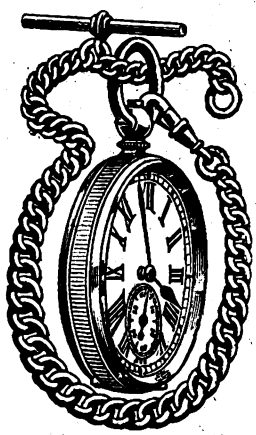
When children meet at birthday and other parties, the hostess is naturally anxious to provide the most suitable and acceptable fare. Children do not require heavy meat-food, yet they need variety, and the mother would do well to secure—among other appetising things—a supply of Chivers' Gold Medal Jellies. These excellent Jellies are refreshing and cooling and also nourishing. Chivers' Gold Medal Jellies are *flavoured with ripe fruit juices*, expressed by the firm themselves from the fresh fruit. Their sale and popularity are ever increasing. It is merit that does it all, the merit that takes pains to do the best. Children like Chivers' Jellies—there is no doubt about that. Put it to the vote where they have been used and the "Ayes" have it

unanimously. The *Medical Press*, after careful analysis, says: "Chivers' Jellies are to be commended for the delicacy of their flavour and for their absolute purity." The *Woman's Signal* gives this testimony: Chivers' Jellies can be confidently recommended, they are perfectly pure, absolutely clear and pleasant to look at on the table, and the flavour is simply perfect." A high-class Cookery Teacher writes: "Your Jellies are almost daily on our table, and they are, without doubt, the best in the market."

Chivers' Gold Medal Jams and Table Jellies are sold by Grocers throughout the United Kingdom. *Insist on being supplied with Chivers'*. A free sample packet of Jelly will be forwarded on receipt of post-card. S. Chivers and Sons, Histon, Cambridge.

SEND NO MONEY. WE TRUST YOU.

FREE.



£2 10s. £2 10s.
REAL SILVER.

We give you your choice of either of these handsome presents for selling NINE articles of Jewellery at 1s. 6d. each. (Regular price 2s. 6d.)

WE DO NOT WANT YOUR MONEY.

Just send us a STAMPED ADDRESSED ENVELOPE, and say that you will either sell the Jewellery or return it to us if you fail to sell it. On receiving your letter we will at once post you the Jewellery.

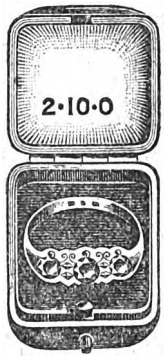
When sold, send us the 12s. 6d. you have received for same, and we will at once send you, **Absolutely Free**, our £2 10s. Real Silver Watch, with Chain, or the Gold Ring, whichever you desire.

A Written Guarantee for Ten Years sent with each watch.

You can sell our Jewellery in a few minutes at 1s. 6d. each article. We have thousands of testimonials as to the quality and value both of our Jewellery and Presents.

SEND ND MONEY. WRITE TO-DAY.

FREE.



REAL GOLD AND REAL DIAMONDS.

BRITISH GOLDSMITHS CO. (DEPT. 29), 48 GRAY'S INN RD., LONDON

2/9 CHALLENGE TO THE WORLD—OUR WARRANTED TIMEKEEPER, 2/9

With a guarantee to keep correct time for three years, will be sent to any address on receipt of P.O. or stamps value 2/9 and three stamps extra for postage. To every purchaser during this month we give with it ABSOLUTELY FREE a strong Mexican SILVER CHAIN. All we ask of you is to show them to your friends, as by doing so you advertise our business. GENEVA WATCH IMPORTERS, 148 Old Street, London, E.C.

POST FREE THREE STAMPS

A Treatise on the Modern and Successful Treatment of Nervous Diseases and Exhaustion, by local absorption.

Fully up to the advanced ideas on the subject.
THE MARSTON CO.,
59 and 60 Chancery Lane, London, W.C.

NOSE Wintry weather makes Red Noses. I cure them. Send 1/- for my book on "Their Cause and Prevention," or 3/9 for Medically approved Cure. Particulars of my Patent Nose Improver and Ear Machine sent for stamp.—C. LEES RAY, Specialist, South Castle Street, Liverpool.

A SUM of from 12s. to 25s. per week

can be earned in spare hours or evenings by either sex everywhere.—Send addressed envelope for particulars to Box 24, Eclipse Works, 89 Aldersgate Street, E.C.

AND NEURALGIA Cured

by a Simple, Safe, and Speedy Remedy. A Zox Powder can be taken anywhere, at any time, and with any liquid, with wonderful results. *Two free Sample Powders* to any reader of *Short Stories* sending stamped addressed envelope for same to

The ZOX Co., 11 Hatton Garden, London, E.C.

THE MOST NUTRITIOUS.

EPPS'S

GRATEFUL—COMFORTING.

COCOA

BREAKFAST—SUPPER.

VIE D'OR FOR THE HAIR.

THE AMERICAN TREATMENT.

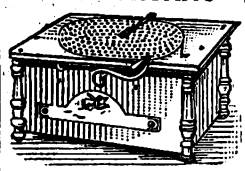
Vie d'Or puts 10 years on the life of the hair.

SOLE AGENT:

GUSTAV ROSSELLI, 4 New Park Street, Park Lane, LEEDS.

Price 2/9 post free.

HAND ORGANS FROM 20s.



Made in three sizes, in black and gold case. Full tone. Six metal tunes, plays all songs, hymns, or dance music. Sent on receipt of 4s. P.O., if desired, balance 4s. monthly. Send for list of tunes, prices, &c. ATLAS CO., 182a High Street, Camden Town, London; 63 Seven Sisters Road, N.; and 14 High Road, Kilburn.

RUPTURE

Gentleman (cured himself) will send Free Particulars of inexpensive self-curative treatment. Stamped address.—(Box 49), 59 Castle Street, Carlisle.

Don't Cough-use

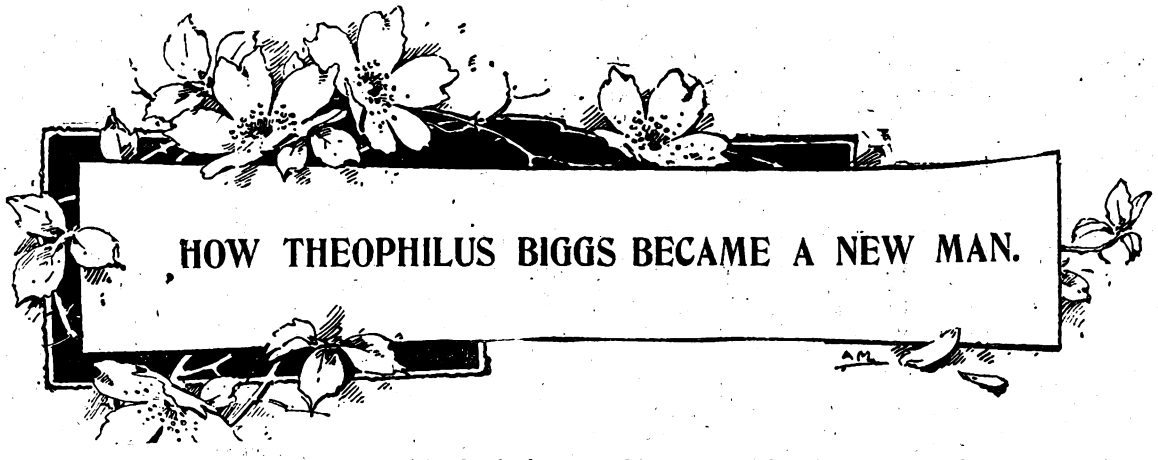
They at once check the Cough and remove the cause.

The Unrivalled

One Lozenge alone relieves. Sold everywhere, Tins 13½d. each.

Keating's Lozenges

Digitized by Google



HOW THEOPHILUS BIGGS BECAME A NEW MAN.

I THINK every man should have a friend of the Jenkins' order, because every man needs stimulating, keeping up to the mark, and Jenkins always keeps me in a state of perpetual bustle. One never knows what Jenkins is going to do next, and no one ever did know just what Jenkins was going to do next. Why, his own mother expected him to be born a girl. But that was just like Jenkins, and I feel sure that if his mother had formed the opinion that he would turn out to be a boy he would have been born a girl.

Jenkins' latest wheeze is to make a new man of me. It would have been no use to tell Jenkins that I did not want to become a new man—that I was perfectly satisfied with the kind of wreck I was. No, the best way is to let him do just what he likes with you, and if you survive the treatment to be thankful. So all I said to Jenkins was that so long as I could wear the same clothes and took the same size in boots after the process he could start the "new man" business as soon as he liked.

Jenkins beamed. He said that when he had finished with me I would thank him with tears in my eyes.

"The fact is, Biggs," he went on to say, "you are getting a trifle too plump. You want thinning down a bit."

I didn't protest; I never do with Jenkins.

"Now, if you let yourself go on like that," he continued, "you will only be sowing the seeds of future discomfort and rheumatism."

I like to hear Jenkins talk like this; it is like sitting on the seashore listening to the waves flopping on the beach.

"Now, what you want is exercise, plenty of it, Biggs, my boy, and you must take it early in the day. You have got a bicycle, and it is not necessary for you to be at your office before nine o'clock in the morning, so that you have everything that is necessary except one thing—to make a new man of you."

"And that one thing?" I asked.

"Will-power," said Jenkins.

I turned slowly round in my chair and faced Jenkins.

"Jenkins," I said, "if there is one thing I pride myself upon more than another it is the possession of strength of mind. Please, please Jenkins, do not attempt to rob me of the consolation that affords me by saying that I do not possess it."

"Well," said Jenkins, "I will put you to the proof. To-morrow morning at six o'clock I will call for you to go for a cycle ride with me."

I slightly amended Jenkins' proposition.

"Meet me at the Cross Roads' Inn at seven o'clock to-morrow morning," I said, and then we shook hands on it.

I had a very happy feeling that night as I went to bed. I was going to become a new man, and as I thought the new man might possible have a bigger appetite, I told my landlady to provide accordingly.

I must have been dreaming when Mrs. Gum called me, for I thought myself spinning along past charming scenery listening to the morning songs of the birds, drinking in the pure air of a delightful sunny morning.

Bang! Hello, there goes my back tyre, I thought, and I got off my machine to examine it. But it was only Mrs. Gum calling me, so I picked myself up from the floor and got back into bed.

"All right, Mrs. Gum," I shouted. "I'm nearly half-dressed and will be down in a minute."

Now this was hardly correct, but then I spoke as I felt. Before getting up I thought it would be best to decide upon the direction to take on this my first early morning ride. There was a choice of three routes. There was the road down past the farm. Grand ride that. All the charms of a peaceful English farm burst upon one as one rode past, the sweet-smelling hay in the fields, the happy looks of the contented—contented——

"It is eight o'clock, sir, and Mr. Jenkins is waiting for you downstairs."

I awoke with a start and went to the door.

"Not a word to Mr. Jenkins," I said to Mrs. Gum. "Go to him in ten minutes and say that you knocked at my door. Don't tell him anything more."

Before that ten minutes was up I had dressed, slipped out the back way, got my bicycle, and then cycled round through a bye-street as hard as I could to the top of the street in which I lived. I then scorched down the street to my dwelling. I perspired quite freely as I opened the front door.

"Has Mr. Jenkins been here?" I shouted to Mrs. Gum whom I met in the hall, at the same time giving her a most expressive wink.

"He is in the dining-room, sir," said my landlady.

As I entered the room where Jenkins was I was saying:

"Well, of all the lazy, weak-minded toads I ever met you are about the laziest, Jenkins."

"I own I was a bit late," said Jenkins rather sheepishly, "but then you might have waited, as I was only ten minutes behind time."

"I never encourage laziness, Jenkins," I said, and then I left him as I wanted to change my clothes.

Jenkins walked with me to the station, but I absolutely

Digitized by Google

FOR A XMAS PRESENT

There is nothing so appropriate, pleasing, or satisfactory as a

PARKER FOUNTAIN PEN

OR OUR

Gravity Stylo

AT

3/6

PEACE
AND THE
PARKER
JOINTLESS
FOUNTAIN PENS

Go hand in hand. If you want pen-peace, the smooth, swift, simple Parker will give it. It has neither screw joint or nozzle, but a perfectly smooth barrel from tip to tip, making it

Jointless.

The secret of its simplicity and perfection is the famous "Lucky Curve," Combined with our new **Spring Lock Device.** Also fitted with our **Anti-Break** Cap. Ask your dealer to let you try a Parker. Now and then a dealer tries to sell an old-style pen instead; in such a case write us. If you want to investigate send for our valuable Guarantee and interesting Booklet, Free.

Or if you need a pen at once our No. 020, Price 10/6, offers extraordinary value; and our *Gravity Stylo* at 3/6 is the best in the World. Sent by post on receipt of price if your dealer will not supply you.

THE PARKER PEN CO.,
Largest Manufacturers of Fountain Pens in the World,
193 & 195, Oxford Street, London, W.

"WORTH A GUINEA A BOX."

BEECHAM'S PILLS

FOR ALL

BILIOUS & NERVOUS DISORDERS,
Sick Headache, Constipation, Wind and Pains in Stomach, Impaired Digestion, Disordered Liver, and Female Ailments.

SALE OVER SIX MILLION BOXES YEARLY.

In Boxes, 1s. 1½d. and 2s. 9d. each, with full directions.

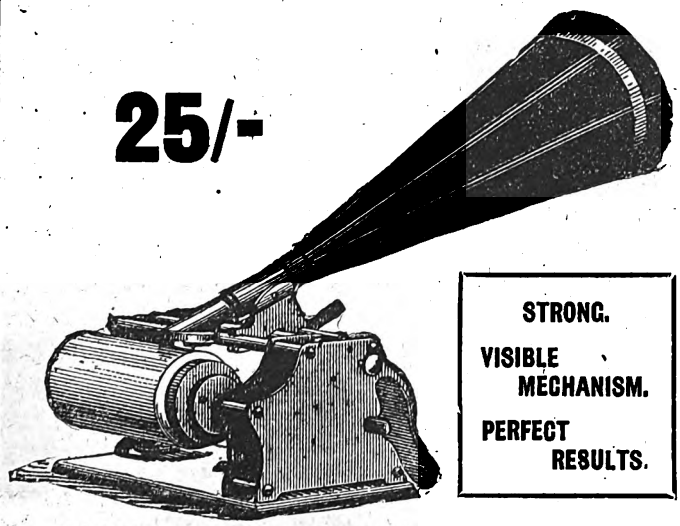
Prepared only by the Proprietor,

THOMAS BEECHAM, St. Helens, Lancashire.

Sold by all Druggists and Patent Medicine Dealers everywhere.

A GRAPHOPHONE FOR 25/-

25/-



GRAND PRIX, PARIS EXPOSITION.

Reproduces Same Records as all Small Cylinder Talking Machines.

Makes Music in the Home, and is an Inexhaustible Source of Amusement and Pleasure.

STRONG.
VISIBLE MECHANISM.
PERFECT RESULTS.

The pleasure in owning a Graphophone is largely increased by being able to make and reproduce your own records. The Graphophone will record your own voice as well as reproduce specially prepared records.

Graphophones are sold from 25s. upwards.

The Toy Graphophone for Children, 8s.

Send for Catalogue C. to

COLUMBIA PHONOGRAPH COMPANY, Genl., 122 Oxford Street, London, W.

Digitized by Google

refused to talk of my cycle ride to him, saying that he should have been with me and that I was not going to encourage laziness. Jenkins offered me a cigar when I had got into the train, and I said to him:

"Jenkins, old man, I freely forgive you, but don't let it happen again."

Jenkins said he would not be able to join me in my ride the next morning, nor the following one, as he would be away from home.

"But keep it up, old man," he said to me. "I can see it is doing you good already."

I really did mean to follow Jenkins' advice, and bought an alarum clock that day in town. I set the clock for 7.15 that night and put it on a chair near my bed. At one o'clock I took the clock off the chair and put it under the bed.

I must have gone to sleep though eventually, for I suddenly jumped into the air and then as quickly dodged beneath the bed clothes to get out of the range of the gatling-guns; but it was only the clock telling me that 7.15 had arrived. I pulled my watch from beneath my pillow to see how long the clock would keep on ringing. It rang for three minutes, and then died slowly in jerks, ending with a slight hiccough. "Not a bad clock, that," I thought. "Only cost 3s. 6d., too."

I then began thinking how a clock like that could be made for the money. I was trying to find out where the profit came in.

It was late that morning when I got to the office, and I thought how disappointed Jenkins would be if he knew that I had missed my usual morning ride. If anyone had seen my face as I went to bed that night they would have noticed a certain look of determination which is always a sign of strength of mind, of great will-power.

I wound up the clock without a word. I didn't care if everyone whose incomes depended upon clocks got twopence or half-a-sovereign on every three-and-sixpenny alarum. I turned out the gas firmly, and then, whilst trekking for the bed, I kicked my toe against the bed-post. Those were the first words I had spoken since coming into the bedroom, and I hope Mrs. Gum didn't hear them.

I sank into a calm sleep.

Thunder and earthquakes, what's that? It was dark, and the clock was ringing for dear life. I struck a light. It was half-past two, and I had set the clock for 7.15. I took the clock up, gently but firmly, opened the window, and dropped it into the yard, where it lay ringing as if it had a contract on hand.

I got into bed again, and was just going to sleep when I heard a violent ringing at the front door bell. Thinking the house might be on fire I hurriedly donned my dressing-gown and went down to see what was the matter.

The policeman I saw told me that he had heard the "burglar-alarm" ringing and had come to see if anything were wrong. I am sorry I spoke harshly to that policeman, and I hope he will forget what I said. My conscience pricks me when I think how I told him it might be the "burglar-alarm" of the people next door, and that he had better wake them up.

Of course, after such a night it would have been folly to have got up so early, and Jenkins agreed with me when I had told him my adventures.

"You should never depend upon alarum clocks," said Jenkins. "Now I know many and very much better ways which will get you up at any hour you please. I have often tried them myself, and never knew any of them to fail."

That is the best of a man like Jenkins; one can depend upon him in any emergency. He can always tell you exactly what to do, how to do it, and, if necessary, what you will look like when it's done.

"Proceed Jenkins," I said. "Tell me all about these methods and I will try each in turn."

"Well, the first is this," said Jenkins. "Let us suppose that you wish to get up at five o'clock."

"Quite a natural desire upon my part," I said.

"Well," continued Jenkins, "to get up at five o'clock all you have to do is to bump your head five times upon the pillow just before you go to sleep. I have never known it to fail," Jenkins added.

"I will try it to-night," I told Jenkins.

I did. I bumped my head six times upon the pillow, and then, thinking to impress whatever unseen agent had the working of the little arrangement that seven o'clock was the time I wished to awake, I put some extra energy into the last bump and nearly caved in the back of my head with the iron railing at the top of the bed. This caused me to think about several of Jenkins' faults, and I mentioned them in the still and peaceful gloom of night.

I didn't awake at seven, and if I had done so I should have gone to sleep again for I felt quite cross with Jenkins. Now I am a peaceful kind of man generally, but when Jenkins offered to unfold some more methods I felt positively bloodthirsty, and spoke to that effect. I didn't want any more of his methods. I had thought of one myself and meant to try it.

I got an iron plate and fixed it to my bedroom door that very night. I showed it to Mrs. Gum and told her to bang upon that iron plate with the coal-hammer I had bought, and to keep on banging until I got up and opened the door. It was thus that I was able to go for the ride before breakfast that I had craved. It was not much of a ride. I got wet through and caught a severe cold, but what I wish chiefly to emphasise is that I did go for a ride before breakfast.

However, if anyone is desirous of buying a really good coal-hammer and an iron plate I am willing from sheer philanthropy to let them go cheaply. I hope someone will buy them and soon, for they rest in my study, and I really do not want to brain Jenkins when next he calls.

Henceforth, if I want to get up early and go for a cycle ride before breakfast, I will make up my mind upon the night before and simply say, "I will get up to-morrow morning at six o'clock," and then of course the rest will follow. W. St. G. Drennan.

RESULT OF BRAIN GYMNASIUM.

Nos. 247 to 252.

The prize of £2 has been awarded this week to Mr. J. R. Robinson, of 60 Sherrard Road, Forest Gate, E., whose attempt was the first correct one dealt with.

The following have each received a copy of "The Marquis of Valrose," by Charles Foley:

J. Solly, 21 Abbot's Park Road, Upton Park, E.
Miss E. Robinson, 60 Sherrard Road, Forest Gate, E.
Miss Mary Ryan, 21 Abbott's Road, East Ham, E.
F. Cheesman, Junction Road, Burgess Hill, Sussex.
F. J. Smith, Alpha House, Saxmundham.
T. Bennett, Doddington, Oxon.
E. Francis, 7 and 8 Regent Street, Teignmouth.
M. Dack, 93 Lee Road, Northampton.
H. Cammack, 32 Radcliffe Street, Liverpool.
Miss N. Daley, 49 Salisbury Street, Liverpool.

Digitized by Google

PEOPLE WHO NEVER GROW OLD.

It *is* curious, but it's true. Some people, both men and women, seem never to grow old. What is their secret? They retain their good spirits as well as their good looks. The explanation is simple enough, after all. These people have studied the art of keeping young, just as you would study any other art or science. Perhaps the most thorough and most scientific investigation into the matter that has ever been made is to be found in Professor Boyd Laynard's great work, "SECRETS OF BEAUTY, HEALTH, AND LONG LIFE." Most people have heard of this book, and certainly everyone who values his or her health and appearance should read it. It is now the standard book on the question with which it deals. Its publishers, Messrs. Hammond, Hammond & Co., 19, 21 and 23 Ludgate Hill, London, E.C., have produced a popular edition. The book, although published at two shillings, will, if ordered direct from the publishers, be forwarded, carriage paid, to all readers of *Short Stories* at the low discount price of One Shilling and Sixpence. Professor Laynard's Book is recommended because it is actually the only book of its kind. It is the Practical and Reliable Guide to Health and Beauty such as men and women in all parts of the civilised world have been waiting for since the pursuit of these blessings became the subject of serious scientific study. In the words of the *Monitor:* "A really practical work on this subject, free from objectionable and harmful features, has long been wanted. Professor Laynard's new book seem to supply the need. . . . It is crowded with useful information from the first page to the last." The *Christian Globe* pronounces it to be "the most remarkable work of the present century." The book stands alone. It is interesting without being frivolous. It is scientific without being dull. It is learned without being obscure. Briefly, it is what Professor Laynard means it to be—a practical guide to the Secrets of Beauty, Health, and Long Life. Among the numerous subjects dealt with in Professor Boyd Laynard's work, the following are but a few (a complete syllabus showing the contents of the whole 127 chapters enumerating upwards of 500 subjects, and divisions of subjects, can be had free on application to the publishers):

Analysis of beauty—Beauty a possible attainment—The way we make our own faces—Secrets of face transformation—Changeableness of beauty and its causes—Metaphysical secrets of keeping young and preserving a youthful appearance—The author's investigations into the causes why some individuals look younger than others at a certain age—Discovery of a great metaphysical secret—Natural means by which a youthful appearance can be retained until late in life—Wonders of the skin—Relation of the skin to beauty—Effects of mental emotions upon the skin—Bad complexions and their causes—Diet that spoils and diet that improves the complexion—General care of the complexion—Construction, growth, and wonders of the hair—Why hair falls out, and its remedy—Premature greyness: its causes and prevention—General care of the hair—Superficial hairs—Wrinkles, and how to treat them—Freckles, tan, and blackheads—Oily skin, dry skin, and loose skin—How the nose may be improved—Protruding ears and their treatment—Offensive breath—Anatomy of the teeth—Why teeth decay—General care of the teeth—Tallness, and how to attain it—Round shoulders, and how to cure them—How to acquire a full chest—Perfect form and figure: their proper proportions—Thinness, and its treatment—Excessive stoutness—Care of the hands—Care of the feet—Physiognomy; or, the art of reading character from the face—Mental influences upon health—Power of the mind over the body—How all kinds of ailments can be induced into the physical system by the action of the mind—How the mind can cause dyspepsia—Effect of the direction of thought to the heart—How real diseases often supervene upon fancied ailments—Influence of the mind in curing diseases—How violent passions injure health—The way anger effects the heart, brain, and liver—Organic diseases caused by fits of passion—Laughter as a medicine—Ailments cured by laughter—Wonders of digestion—Relative value to our bodies of the principal articles of food—Fruits and vegetables as medicine: their various influences upon the physical system—Health-preserving diet, and its consistency—Diet favourable to mental exertion and intellectual culture—Influence of various foods upon our passions and propensities—Some perilous articles of food Light, and its influence upon health—Exercise and its relations to health—What walking does for the body—Diseases cured by walking—Cycling as an exercise—Physical effects of cycling—Rowing as an exercise—The gymnasium—Dumb-bells—Baths and bathing; their influence upon health—Bathing physiologically considered—Proper temperature for baths—Sea-water bathing—Code of rules for the guidance of bathers—The way we breathe, and how it affects our health—The marriage state, and its influence upon health—Statistics showing the comparative vitality of married and single persons—100 professions, trades and occupations: their respective influences upon health and long life—The voice: its culture and preservation Curious facts about the voice—How it can be rendered stronger—Rules for the preservation of the voice—Loss of voice, and its connection with hysteria—The eyes, and how to preserve them—The ears and hearing: how to prevent deafness—A common cause of deafness, and the remedy—Foolish practices that occasion deafness—Influence of health upon hearing—Frequent cause of the defective hearing of children—Sleep and its relation to health—Conditions for healthy sleep—Number of hours necessary for individuals of various constitutions—Children's sleep from infancy upwards—The various enemies of sleep—How to guard against sleeplessness—A mental remedy for insomnia—Facts concerning the duration of dreams—Theory concerning the subject of dreams—Remarkable psychological facts relating to dreamers—Drowsiness physiol gically considered—Remedy for inordinate drowsiness—Memory, and how to improve it—Influence of health upon memory—Sudden failure of memory—Rules for cultivating the memory—Influence of diet upon memory—Stammering, and how to cure it—Prevention of disease—Colds: their nature, prevention and treatment—Indigestion—Constipation—Neuralgia—Rheumatism—Nervousness—Articles of diet that are much responsible for nervousness—Headaches—That rebellious organ, the liver—How it is a common seat of disease—Nervous disorders for which it is responsible—To what cause nearly all the irregularities of the liver are due—Blushing: its physiology and treatment—Rules of life for attaining longevity—Compendium of the mental, moral, physical, and external influences that lessen the years of our earthly existence—The mental, moral, physical, and external influences that are conducive to long life—How to live to a hundred—Premature old age and its causes—Short biographies of 30 modern centenarians, whose ages range from 115 to 185 years—Attainment of long life under physical disabilities—General principles that can be laid down for the anticipation of longevity—The eight signs of long life, &c., &c.

ORDER FORM **916,261.**

To HAMMOND, HAMMOND & CO.,
19, 21 & 23 LUDGATE HILL, LONDON, E.C.

Please forward me Professor Boyd Laynard's complete work, "SECRETS OF BEAUTY, HEALTH AND LONG LIFE" (carriage paid), for which I enclose the sum of One Shilling and Sixpence.

*Name*_____

*Address*_____

Digitized by Google

PEARSON'S WEEKLY

FOOTBALL PICTURE PUZZLES.

1st Prize - - £50 in Gold.

2nd Prize - - - £10 Note
3rd, 4th, and 5th Prizes - 3 £5 Notes
6th to 20th Prizes - 15 Sovereigns
21st to 40th Prizes - 20 Half-Sovs.

Below will be found ten pictures; each picture representing the name of a well-known football player.

If you cannot find all the names, ask your friends to help you.

If you look at the picture in the margin you will see that the name is Maxwell. What are the other names?

All you have to do is to write underneath each picture, in the space provided, the name of the player you believe the picture to represent. Then keep the list by you until ONE more list has appeared. The names are those of both Rugby and Association players.

Only one solution is allowed under each picture.

Where two men bear the same surname, but different christian names, the christian name or initial is indicated in the picture.

The prizes will be paid to the competitors from whom we receive the correct, or most nearly correct, solutions.

Example.

Maxwell.

No more than one prize will go to any competitor.

It must be taken as a condition of the competition that anybody competing therein agrees to abide by the Editor's final decision.

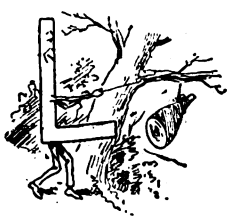
3rd LIST.

Intending competitors in the above would do well to procure a copy of "The Football Who's Who," which contains the names of about a thousand of the best known players. This book will be found of great service in discovering the names depicted. It only costs a shilling, and may be obtained of all booksellers, and post free for 1s. 3d. from the publisher, 17 Henrietta Street, London, W.C.

No. 21.....

No. 22.....

No. 23.....



No. 24.....

No. 25.....

No. 26.....

No. 27.....

No. 28.....

No. 29.....

No. 30.....

I send in this coupon as a competitor for the prize advertised in this paper, and subject to the conditions printed on this page:

Name and address.....

THINGS TO REMEMBER.

1. Coupons may be sent either from "Pearson's Weekly" or "Short Stories."
2. Do not send in your coupons till we tell you.
3. All coupons are sent at senders' risk, and if they go astray, from whatever cause, we do not accept responsibility.
4. Competitors must attach their private address to their attempts. No prize will be sent to any post-office, refreshment rooms, or other places at which letters are called for. Attempts bearing such addresses will be disqualified.

Printed by Horace Cox, Bream's Buildings, London, E.C., and published by C. Arthur Pearson Limited, Pearson's Buildings, Henrietta Street, London, W.C.

Digitized by Google

XMAS PRESENT.

Everyone can afford to give his Father or Mother, his Sister or Brother, his Cousin or Friend, the most magnificent present that could possibly be obtained in the whole world. Last year it would have cost him £15, £18, or £20—perhaps even more than that To-day, to readers of *Short Stories*

IT ONLY COSTS 5/-

Thousands who now possess these magnificent Bicycles proclaim them to be worth double the money we charge. **£8 17s. 6d.** for a perfect Bicycle is **5¾d.** a day when spread over twelve months, or one tenth the cost of hiring an inferior worn out old cycle of an 1896 pattern.

NO INSTALMENT ON DELIVERY.

A Beautiful Cycle secured for 5s.

It is gravely questioned whether there will be a penny net profit, unless 100,000 **Express Cycles** are sold during the season. It is an established fact that three months ago, Cycles not nearly so good were being sold at **£18** and **£20.** We charge you considerably less than half this sum.

5¾d.

A DAY

FOR A

CYCLE.

SCIENTIFIC REPORT

Of Mr. HENRY J. T. PIERCY, M.I.M.E.,

One of the ablest and most practical mechanical and consulting engineers of the day.

53 and 54 BROAD STREET, BIRMINGHAM.

I have visited your works, and have looked through the processes by which you produce the various cycle parts. I found the machinery of good construction, and the operators manipulating it with judgment and care. I have also examined the various parts of cycles, some in the rough and some finished. The material used in these parts is certainly the best, and the workmanship carefully and judiciously executed, and well calculated to cause the cycles to run easily and to wear well. I found necessary precision had been observed throughout, and wearing parts satisfactorily hardened. I have also examined a finished cycle. The design is modern, and built on good lines, and the appearance of the machine generally is pleasing. The adjustments are well-arranged and easy of manipulation. The frame is not only light, but rigid, and capable of resisting great strain, and the general character of the machine is such as to give confidence to the rider.

(Signed) HENRY J. T. PIERCY, M.I.M.E.

On View at 21 & 22 Temple Chambers, Temple Avenue, E.C.

PARTS OF THE MACHINE.

FRAME.—Steel Tubing (Best), Hudson Bros. Ltd. WHEELS.—Westwood Rims, J. T. James. CHAIN.—Perry & Co Ltd., Birmingham. SADDLE.—Lycett Ltd., Highest Grade. Pedals.—Optimus Pedal Co., Birmingham. GEAR CASES. (Ladies') Harthill Gear Case Co. SPOKES.—Patent Turned Spoke Co., Alcester. TYRES.—"Express." (cost £3).

Secure your Cycle by Sending To-day.

CYCLES SENT ON APPROVAL.
ENTIRE MACHINE GUARANTEED.

5/-

NO INSTALMENT ON DELIVERY.
NEXT PAYMENT MONTH AFTERWARDS.

Address the Manager "Express" Cycles, S.S. Dept., Temple Chambers, Temple Avenue, London, E.C.

Digitized by Google

DON'T HAVE CORNS

BUNIONS or ENLARGED TOE JOINTS, when a packet of

THOMPSON'S CELEBRATED CORN PLASTER

will cure you. It is thin as silk, and removes the pain at once. Post free, 14 stamps, from the Proprietor. Beware of imitations.

LADIES should take DR. SIMPSON'S ARSENICAL PEARLS. They secure a beautiful clear complexion, free from Blotch, Pimples and Roughness. Post free, 2/9 and 4/6 only, from M. F. THOMPSON'S Homœopathic Chemist, 17 Gordon Street, Glasgow.

Ask for Thompson's Pamphlet, "The Woman Beautiful."

THREE CHEERS FOR THE

RED WHITE & BLUE

COFFEE.

DELICIOUS FOR BREAKFAST & AFTER DINNER.

In making, use LESS QUANTITY, it being so much stronger than ordinary Coffee.

SOLD THROUGHOUT THE WORLD.

HOW DO YOU SPELL VELVETEEN?

FIVE LETTERS ONLY.

Don't Forget this when you buy.

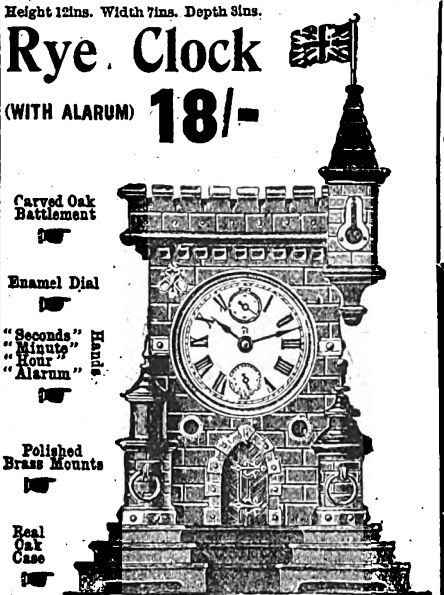
EVERY YARD IS STAMPED

L-O-U-I-S.

Height 12ins. Width 7ins. Depth 3ins.

Rye Clock

(WITH ALARUM) **18/-**



FREE TRIAL, 2/6.

Any reader of *Short Stories* can have one of these clocks on monthly payments as follows:—

YOU send us 2/6 with your name and address, and we will send you one on approbation.

IF you approve of it you send us 3/- on receipt, and 2/6 each month for five months, making the full 18/-.

BUT OUR NET CASH-WITH-ORDER PRICE IS 16/- ONLY.

If you do not approve of the clock we will refund cash sent if clock is returned within seven days.

(Signed) J. N. MASTERS.

FREE TRIAL

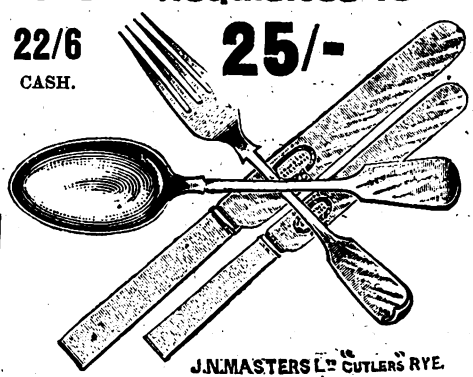
CLOCK or PARCEL

FOR **2/6**

NO MAN ON EARTH

NEED BE without one of our NICKEL SILVER PUZZLE BOXES. You can use it for a Match-box, a Stamp-box, a Pen-box, or one hundred different uses, and it will amuse and excite you and your friends trying to open it. **We shall present one ENTIRELY FREE to every customer during this month and January.** For further particulars send for our special Booklet of all the latest goods suitable for presents. Brooches from 1/-, Real Gold Gem Rings from 4/-, and hundreds of other goods at similar low Prices. Shall we send you a copy post FREE? Send us your name and address.

50 Full-Size Table Requisites for 22/6 CASH. 25/-



J.N.MASTERS Ltd "CUTLERS" RYE.

WE will supply any reader of *Short Stories* with one of these 25/- parcels of Cutlery on monthly payments as follows:

YOU send us 2/6 with your name and address, and we will send you one on approval.

IF you approve of it, you send us 2/6 on receipt of parcel, and 5/- each month for four months, making the full 25/-. But

OUR NET-CASH-WITH-ORDER PRICE IS 22/6 ONLY.

And we will refund the Cash sent, if you do not approve of the parcel and you return it at once.

(Signed) J. N. MASTERS.

Each Parcel contains 50 Articles.

6 Table Knives.
6 Dessert Knives.
6 Table Forks.
6 Dessert Forks.
2 Table Spoons.
6 Dessert Spoons.
6 Tea Spoons.
1 Pair Sugar Tongs.
1 Sugar Sifter.
6 Egg Spoons.
2 Salt Spoons.
2 Mustard Spoons.

J. N. MASTERS LIMITED. "VERACITY" WATCHMAKERS, RYE, SUSSEX.

Advertisements should be sent to "Short Stories" Advertisement Department, Henrietta Street, London, W.C.

Digitized by Google

NEW SERIAL STORY. BEGIN TO-DAY.

SHORT STORIES

A WEEKLY MAGAZINE FOR HOME AND TRAIN

No. 626. FOR WEEK ENDING DECEMBER 29TH, 1900. [ONE PENNY.

How to Cure Indigestion.

(Quoted from "Our Home.")

"Indigestion or Dyspepsia, though it may not completely incapacitate a person, yet renders life a misery to a great extent. There are so many forms of Indigestion, too, and it leads to so many other diseases that it should always, if possible, be stopped in its earliest stages. With the change of season more people than usual suffer from derangement of the System, and it is therefore at this time that it becomes specially helpful to recommend a simple, yet thoroughly reliable remedy. Guy's Tonic has stood the test of many years' use, and becomes more popular from day to day. Its effect is quite wonderful; people who suffer from dreadful Discomfort after they have had a meal, find a course of Guy's Tonic gives them relief, and makes eating once more a pleasure, instead of an experience to be dreaded. Flatulence and Nausea are removed, and the food is not only enjoyed, but benefits the system.

"Debility causes Indigestion, and in such cases a tonic is of the greatest benefit, and the weakness that follows Influenza can be treated by no better remedy than Guy's Tonic. It is of simple Vegetable origin, is widely recommended by Medical Men, and is in use in many Hospitals. It can be bought in bottles at 1s. 1½d. at chemists and stores, but should there be any difficulty in getting it, it can be had direct from Guy's Tonic Company, 12 Buckingham Palace Road, S.W., who also will send free to anyone who writes for it, a little booklet, giving particulars of the many complaints for which Guy's Tonic proves an invaluable remedy."

Nausea and Flatulence Removed.

Mr. W. Campbell Muir, of Inistrynich, Dalmally, N.B., writes:

"For the last four months I have been suffering from "Nausea, Flatulence, and Depression. Occasionally three "days would pass without my having eaten solid Food. "I tried various remedies which did good for a day or "two, but the effects were not permanent. I thought at "last I would try Guy's Tonic, and with great pleasure I "have to inform you that I had only taken half a bottle "before my Appetite returned, the Flatulence dis-"appeared, and I am now as well as ever."

Guy's Tonic is the most pleasant, the most efficacious, and the most largely sold Tonic-Digestive-Medicine in the World.

A new size (Six Ounce) Bottle of Guy's Tonic, price 1s. 1½d., is now on Sale at all Chemists and Stores.

Mr. Geo. R. Sims' Discovery.

"TATCHO."

20,000 LARGE (4s. 6d. SIZE) BOTTLES TO BE DISTRIBUTED.

"TATCHO" is a brilliant spirituous tonic, the colour of whisky, free from all grease. A sprinkle of a few drops on the scalp and five minutes with the brush daily works marvels with every head of hair.

"TATCHO" acts as an invigorating tonic. It stops the hair falling, creates a luxuriant growth, and imparts to it a bright and youthful lustre.

"When I discovered the preparation, I found that I had hit upon a remedy capable of working wonders," said Mr. George R. Sims to the representative of the *Daily Mail*. "Look at my hair now. Look at the colour. In time people got to know. Then the trouble began.

"Letters in thousands poured in to me from men and women in every quarter of the world, from all parts of the Kingdom, from America, India, Africa, China, and Australia. The work of answering the letters was enormous, and as far as possible the desired information was supplied; but it became quite evident that at the rate at which the demand was increasing I should very soon need a large staff of clerks to attend solely to the hair renewer department of correspondence.

"In consequence, I said to myself, Why should this thing go on? If the public wants my hair renewer, the public shall have it; but the demand must be met in the ordinary business-like way. So I resolved to place the genuine article within reach of all, and with the assistance of a number of gentlemen, possessing the necessary commercial facilities, that has been accomplished."

The Geo. R. Sims' Co. have decided to Distribute

20,000

LARGE TRIAL BOTTLES OF TATCHO

to enable those who have not yet profited by Mr. G. R. Sims' discovery, to have the opportunity of doing so. The Company does this in the belief that such distribution will enable the preparation to become more widely known, and will introduce it to every home in a far more satisfactory manner than through unlimited puffing by advertisement.

COUPON.
S.S.
Dec. 29, 1900

If you are desirous of participating in this distribution, cut out this Coupon and send it to the Geo. R. Sims' Co., 81c Great Queen Street, London, W.C., accompanied by a postal order for 1/0. You will receive by return of post a plain package containing

A FULL SIZE 4s. 6d. TRIAL BOTTLE OF "TATCHO" POST PAID,

which will enable you to give TATCHO a fair trial and to satisfy yourself as to its merits.

Advertisements should be sent to "Short Stories" Advertisement Department, Henrietta Street, London, W.C.

Digitized by Google

KAPUTINE

The Best & Safest Remedy for

HEADACHE.

NURSE HILL, of the London Association of Nurses, writes:

"I have seen Kaputine administered to many patients, and can truly say it is a remedy which should have a place in every household."

All Leading Chemists sell KAPUTINE, 1/-. Samples One Penny.

If your Chemist has not KAPUTINE send his name and address to KAPUTINE, HUDDERSFIELD, and we will send you a SHILLING PACKET FREE.

WORTH A CROWN A DOSE.

"WORTH A GUINEA A BOX."

BEECHAM'S PILLS

FOR ALL

BILIOUS & NERVOUS DISORDERS,
Sick Headache, Constipation, Wind and Pains in Stomach, Impaired Digestion, Disordered Liver, and Female Ailments.

SALE OVER SIX MILLION BOXES YEARLY.

In Boxes, 1s. 1½d. and 2s. 9d. each, with full directions.

Prepared only by the Proprietor,

THOMAS BEECHAM, St. Helens, Lancashire.

Sold by all Druggists and Patent Medicine Dealers everywhere.

TO THE QUEEN
PURVEYORS

CROSSE & BLACKWELL'S

GREEN PEA. GRAVY. JULIENNE. MULLIGATAWNY. TOMATO. HOUSEHOLD. CRESSY. &c.

SOUP TABLETS

OF ALL GROCERS ETC. THROUGHOUT THE WORLD

THE ONLY EFFICACIOUS SUBSTITUTE FOR COD LIVER OIL.

DEVONSHIRE CREAM

(Really Genuine). In Patent Air-tight Tins. ½-lb., 1/4; 1-lb., 2/4; 2-lb., 4/-, including Tin & Postage.

Mrs. CONYERS, Morchard Bishop, DEVON.

NOSE

Wintry weather makes Red Noses I cure them. Send 1/- for my book on "Their Cause and Prevention," or 3/9 for Medically approved Cure. Particulars of my Patent Nose Improver and Ear Machine sent for stamp.—**C. LEES RAY, Specialist, South Castle Street, Liverpool.**

A SUM of from 12s. to 25s. per week can be earned in spare hours or evenings by either sex everywhere.—Send addressed envelope for particulars to Box 24, Eclipse Works, 89 Aldersgate Street, E.C.

NEW AUTOMATIC KNITTER

FOR HOME WORK.

"The machine that knitted the hosiery and comforts for the troops in Africa."—See what *The Times* said.

Knits Socks (a pair in 35 min.), Stockings, Fancy Goods, &c. Easily learned. Lessons Free.

15/- to 30/- Weekly

Cash, hire, and Work Terms from "Sorres" dept.: 67 Southwark St., S.E.; 55 Oxford St., W.; 192 Upper St., London, N.; 105 Nicolson St., Edinburgh; 58 Union St., Glasgow; 132 Stephen's Green, Dublin; 62 Great Hampton St., Birmingham; 31 Stokes Croft, Bristol.

ESTABLISHED 1851.

BIRKBECK BANK

Southampton Buildings, Chancery Lane, London.

2% on CURRENT ACCOUNTS, on the minimum monthly balances when not drawn below £100.

The BIRKBECK ALMANACK, with full particulars, post free.

FRANCIS RAVENSCROFT, *Manager.*

Advertisements should be sent to "Short Stories" Advertisement Department, Henrietta Street, London, W.C.

Digitized by Google

SHORT STORIES

No. 626.] For the Week Ending December 29th, 1900. [ONE PENNY.

AT THE BOTTOM OF A WELL.

"I WISH you to dig here," said Miss Morson. "I may have reasons, sentimental ones; but they would not interest you."

"And if we should meet insuperable difficulties?"

"I will bear the loss."

"Very well," said the expert; "I don't like the soil, and it is a pity to mar the beauty of this lovely spot; but I won't persist in what you are pleased to term frivolous objections."

"I hope your workmen are temperate, married men."

"One is single, but his age is not less than forty-five, and he looks older. The other is a benedict of thirty. Both are intemperate occasionally, and they also swear; but potential angels are few in the trade, and I never seek them."

Miss Morson considered the answer for a few moments, and as the men were not likely to flutter the hearts of her domestics, she professed to be satisfied.

Two days later the well-sinkers arrived. The bachelor was tall, and bowed. His sun-browned face was thin, and his dull eyes and heavy lips almost hid the mark of the gentleman.

He stood for some moments near a cluster of alders that half-hid a rustic chair, and stared at the grey house visible through a frame of trees; then he smiled, slapped his leg, and uttered an oath that thrilled the rough, common-looking benedict.

"Anything wrong, Jim?" queried that worthy.

"Do you believe in fate?" asked Jim, still looking at the house.

"No."

"Then you're a fool. When the boss said Elm House, Scratby, I never thought of this house; thirty years of starving and loafing makes a man dull."

"Did you know this place thirty years ago?"

"Know it; why I helped to plant that tree by the gate, and I made that rustic chair, or one like it. I wonder who lives here now."

"They tell me no beer is allowed at the house, so I worn't interested in the name."

"Well, people change their residences, and sometimes they die in thirty years. Let's get to work, Roger."

Jim was very silent as he worked and it seemed to his companion that he was thinking of other matters; but good progress was made, and at noontide when Miss Morson reached the alders, some hundreds of bricks were piled and Roger was wheeling away the earth thrown up by Jim.

Miss Morson walked close to the excavation and Roger warned her away.

"Surface soil ain't first-class," he said, "an' we can't lower the ring yet; so keep ten yards away, please."

"Who is foreman here?"

Jim raised himself and lifted his slouch cap, and Miss Morson stared at him as she would have stared at an apparition.

Roger grasped the shafts of his barrow and moved away.

"I am not surprised," said Miss Morson, recovering her composure without apparent difficulty.

Jim bowed again.

"I suppose you had good reason for changing your name," she continued.

"Family reasons," he said in very low tones, "no others, believe me. Do you wish me to go?"

"Certainly not. Resume your work Mr.—er—Phillips. You came here knowing that I still occupy Elm House."

"I was nearly drunk when I received instructions, and the name escaped me."

Miss Morson raised her head and looked down on her nose; then she gathered up her skirts and walked away with an unusually majestic stride. Jim again bent over his spade, and when Roger returned there was more than enough earth to fill his barrow.

At sunset the well-sinkers retired to the Green Gate tavern, and after tea Roger joined the company in the bar. But Jim walked abroad. There were no clouds in sight and the full moon made Scratby look very beautiful. So he moved along a narrow path leading to Elm House and listened to the nightingales. At length he halted beside the gate leading to the grounds, and resting his elbows on the top rail looked ahead, not to admire the beauty of the scene, but to refresh his memory. This done, he leapt the gate and walked towards the rustic chair. He had nearly reached it when a woman cried:

"You are trespassing; please leave the grounds again."

"Oh, I beg your pardon, madam," said Jim, "I am

All rights reserved.]

Digitized by Google

merely going to satisfy myself that the work is all right."

"Don't tell falsehoods, Mr. Phillips, you came to look at my house and grounds by moonlight."

"You are right," said Jim coolly, "and I apologise

"You are trespassing. Please leave the grounds again."

for the falsehood, our meeting disconcerted me for a moment."

"I always go over my grounds before retiring; servants are not to be trusted."

"You trust other people, tramps for instance."

Miss Morson toyed with a whistle and carelessly looked at a very heavy walking stick.

"I am glad to see you are prepared," said Jim "But I suppose the old place is as peaceful as ever."

"Disreputable persons sometimes wander here."

"Thanks, I understand. But they are wanderers from necessity."

"Or from foolish choice. Where have you been all these years?"

"Australia, Africa, and America. Living like a dog, and unconsciously cultivating the manners of one."

"You are disguising them to-night."

"It is an effort, Madge."

"Mr. Phillips."

"Pardon me, Miss Morson. I did not know how low I had fallen until I saw you to-day."

"I did not think you occupied so high a position in the world."

"Thanks again. Probably you thought I was in prison, or better still, dead by order of Judge Lynch. Well, perhaps I have escaped my deserts. Yet at one time I was manager of a ranch out West, and if there had been no city journeys and no saloons I should have done well. After a row with the boss I joined the Brazilian army and won a commission in the field; but I insulted a general, and half his command hunted me out of the country. I then prospected in Rhodesia; no luck. So I fell back on my profession, civil engineering, you know, and helped to sink shafts in the Transvaal. I left that place in time to escape drinking myself to death; existed six months as a sundowner in Australia; and then returned to England where I have been living a tolerable life ever since."

"I am not sorry for you, or even interested in your story."

"I did not hope to interest you; but it is pleasant to talk sometimes of oneself. Shall I leave you now?"

"I am going indoors."

"Then I will stay here a little while. Good night, Miss Morson."

She stepped from the shadow of the alders and stood erect in the moonlight.

Jim looked at the stern pale face and clear eyes, and saw that her forehead was wrinkled, and her hair touched with grey.

"Good night," he said again. "If you can forgive me, please do."

"What have I to forgive?"

"Perhaps I spoilt your life as well as my own."

"Spoilt my life, bah. I have loved toads; but I never loved you."

"Good night, Miss Morson."

Miss Morson, without replying, walked away, and a few minutes later Jim heard the yard gate closed with unnecessary violence.

"Looks as lovable as marble," he mused. "Yet I loved her in the old days, and I thought she loved me. Not pleasant to be placed lower than toads, and I believe she is sincere. So 'tis all up, Jim. She's hard, and wouldn't shed a tear if you died. Yet they say she's the Lady Bountiful of these parts, and this well is to replace one which the village doctor connects with an outbreak of typhoid. Some women with nothing at home to love have large hearts for the outside world. Good-night, Madge."

He kissed the trunk of the elm that grew near the gate, and added as he looked at its gently moving boughs:

"We planted you, I and Madge. She used a spade like a man, and threw the earth up faster than I can throw it now. You were to have sheltered our family old fellow, we pictured ripe age under your boughs. God forgive me, she deserved a fuller life."

Jim looked at the house again, shrugged his shoulders and walked from the grounds.

That night he drank heavily, and in the morning his spade trembled in his hands, but he worked doggedly, and Roger found it difficult to keep pace with him. In the afternoon Jim often rested, and looked towards the house, but Miss Morson did not approach the well until the men were preparing to leave Then she bowed stiffly to Jim and passed on, after a brief inspection.

A week later the master arrived.

He had faith in his men, but he thought some personal superintendence was essential, and the men did not object. Jim had fitted the bricks carefully, but when men are working in loose and troublesome soil fifty or sixty feet below the surface, it is good to know that some one who desires their safety is above.

Jim often looked from the bottom of the well to the small piece of sky visible above, half-expecting to see a woman's face, but he was disappointed. The bucket

Digitized by Google

went up and down with monotonous regularity, and only the face of the master was seen, which, Jim thought, looked strained and apprehensive.

One evening Jim ascended, smiling blandly. The spring was within measurable distance and he believed another day would see ten feet of water in the well. "I shall be glad," he added, "for my nerves are not just now better than a woman's."

"Be careful," said the master, "and promise me that you won't drink heavily until the job is finished."

"All right," returned Jim, "the promise is as easy to keep as to make in this case."

He heard next morning that Miss Morson had obtained from the master reassuring opinions regarding the safety of his workmen, and Jim smiled. The smile appeared at intervals as he filled the bucket, and Roger, more than once rested on his spade and looked at him.

"Am I unusually interesting?" Jim asked.

"You keep on grinnin'," returned Roger, "I don't understand why. This air is enough to choke me."

"Perhaps I'm happy because this is our last day down here."

"I hope so, but unless I go aloft for a mouthful o' fresh air I shan't know night from day. Hi! master, I'm coming up."

"Ta, ta," said Jim. "Come back soon, your conversation lightens the toil."

Jim seldom whistled and never sang, but as Roger moved from the mouth of the well a baritone that had once been sweet and powerful was heard, and those on the surface listened, amazed. The music was unknown to them and the words were indistinct, yet the song thrilled them.

The master peered into the well and saw Jim working in his old style. The bucket was filled, the last spadeful of earth flattened down with a stroke that hushed the music for a second, then, as the bucket was raised, the music stopped altogether, and a dull, echoing roar was mingled with a shriek.

The master crawled to the mouth of the well and looked down, his eyes staring, and his face ghastly. Jim could not be seen, and the bottom of the well was a chaos of bricks and loose earth.

"Heavens," he gasped. "Jim is buried. Stand by the windlass; I must go down hand over hand."

He snatched a spade with a cord attached to its handle, and holding this with his teeth descended for about thirty feet; then his heart sank and he looked at the bulging brickwork and shuddered. Ten feet lower and perhaps he too would be buried.

For some moments he stared at the spot where a man was dying unseen, then, reviling his own cowardice he cut the rope at his feet and bade the man at the windlass raise him again with all speed.

Roger was ready, but the master held him back.

"Jim is dead, and you have a family. Listen!"

Another mass of soil fell, and Roger whispered:

"There's fifteen feet o' soil on him now. No man can help him."

Labourers were hastily summoned, but they loved life, and none would venture into the death-trap. So, when Miss Morson reached the scene all were staring at the well, and talking softly.

Miss Morson clutched an alder branch as she listened to the truth; but recovering, she asked:

"Are you all cowards?"

"I bain't a coward," said Roger, looking at the crowd, "and no man must say as much. Give me a drink o' brandy and I'll go down."

And he did, in spite of the remonstrances of the master; but before the bottom was touched he shouted to be raised again, and returned to the surface with the information that a mass of red earth was ready to fall; that it must fall if the *débris* were removed, and that the man on whom it should fall would never know what struck him.

Miss Morson clutched an alder branch as she asked: "Are you all cowards?"

Digitized by Google

Miss Morson turned from Roger, and looked at the crowd; but no one moved.

"If he were alive, mum," said an old labourer; "I'd chance it, but a man can't only be buried."

Miss Morson offered twenty pounds for the recovery of the body, then thirty, forty, but in vain.

"'Tis death to go down," said Roger, "and what's the use o' a hundred pounds to a dead man?"

Miss Morson sighed and returned to her house. A few minutes afterwards an old servant found her weeping just like an ordinary woman.

On the morrow she rode to Denemouth, whence she dispatched a telegram to the master informing him that

Part of the stranger's heavy beard fell away, and a white throat and skin were revealed.

she had engaged a clever and daring well-sinker who would reach Elm House early in the afternoon and attempt to recover the body.

The news went round, and when a stalwart stranger reached the scene a great crowd was collected about the gate. The stranger, without a glance in their direction, remarked to the master, "The lady at the house says you'll give me all the assistance I need. She seems too cut up to come herself. Says 'tis all her fault, and wishes she'd never thought about the well; but I says, what is to be will be. So I'm ready."

The master looked curiously at the stranger. He was bearded, and a slouch cap covered his forehead. His voice was very low and seemingly strained, while his calmness did not disguise a reasonable amount of fear. The master pointed out the extreme danger of the task, but the stranger refused to listen. He wanted exact information, and two vigilant men at the windlass, nothing more.

These wants having been satisfied, he descended, and after a brief examination of the strata and the brick-work, he proceeded to dig. The bucket was filled and raised with fair regularity, and to the surprise of everybody there was no fall. Great masses of earth loomed above the daring man, but he gave no heed to them. Gradually his spade reduced the depth of earth above the dead, the borer was discovered, and as evening approached, it was whispered that the stranger had nearly uncovered poor Jim. The excitement increased when the master, after a long examination of the well remarked to an assistant. "If Jim is not raised within an hour he'll have company."

Half-an-hour passed and the stranger was seen on his knees, cautiously scraping the earth aside, and the master looked at his windlass rope. It was strong enough to raise a ton, and satisfied with his examination he again looked into the well. Jim was uncovered, and the stranger was wiping the soil from the still face.

The master opened his eyes very wide because the stranger clasped the rigid form as though fearful of losing it again, and the rough beard was for a moment pressed to the dead man's forehead while the sound of a kiss floated upward. Then the stranger placed the body in a bucket so that it could be raised without touching the sides of the well, and shouted, "Haul up."

The men at the windlass obeyed, and as the bucket swung clear the stranger grasped it and uttered a cry of terror. For a few moments a sudden strain almost overpowered the men but they struggled bravely and the master cried:

"Thank Heaven," as tender hands lifted the stranger to a place of safety and Jim was laid on the rustic chair beneath the alders.

"A narrow squeak," gasped the master. "We dragged them through the fall. How are you, old chap?"

"Fainted or stunned," said Roger. "Undo his collar, sir, that's it. Now a drop o' brandy an'—What's this?" Roger stepped back in astonishment as a part of the stranger's heavy beard fell away and a white throat and chin were revealed.

"Do you want help there, mates?" asked a policeman.

"Yes," said Roger, reverently fastening the collar again, "but not from you. Send two or three women for'ard and keep the men away, while I run to the house an' tell 'em Miss Morson ain't dead, but only cut an' bruised."

A. H. Smith.

7s. FOR AN ENLARGED FACE.

If you have a photograph which you greatly cherish, send it to us, and we will enlarge it to a beautiful India ink and crayon portrait, 15in. × 12in., mounted on plate sunk mount 24in. × 19in.

The enlargements, which are of the head and shoulders only, can be made from any photograph, large or small, tintypes, or any kind of glass picture, provided the print is legible. The price is 7s. for photos of civilians, and 6s. for those of soldiers and sailors in uniform.

Full particulars appeared last week and will appear again next week.

Digitized by Google

PEM.

SHE was only a London flower-girl; nothing better, and—nothing worse.

Her name was Emily Petherick; but with her sister-vendors, and with her intimates generally, she was just Pem Peth'ick.

In her business she was successful above the average, although it is difficult to say why, since her brusqueness, and independent dealing with her customers, would, one would have thought, have operated adversely in her commercial transactions.

Probably, the secret lay in her having a connection, people who knew her, and made allowance for her odd ways. Strangers seldom patronised her, a fact she regretted but little. She served them when they came, and there was an end of it; while she was absolutely indifferent as to whether or not they were likely to come again.

Pem was a striking-looking girl, for one of her class; of middle height, and with a set of the head that gave her an appearance decidedly superior to her station.

Sal Emmet said that she, Pem, was "stuck up" ("chock full o' beastly pride," was, I believe, the actual expression) and if that meant that Pem kept herself strictly to herself, and maintained a close reserve upon the subject of her private affairs, then undoubtedly the allegation was more than justified.

Sal Emmet's motive in saying what she did is of course open to question, being entirely another matter.

That Pem had a sweetheart is in nowise remarkable, seeing that a drunken mother, and a by no means sober, and altogether brutal step-father made what little home she had almost impossible, and a place to be avoided upon any and every opportunity.

I don't think that she would have deliberately chosen Bill Smith, under different circumstances.

A hawker of the merry "winkle" and the festive "shrimp," he was but a colourless specimen of the ordinary street boy. If anything, Pem had the advantage of him in point of years, but they were, after all, children, if children of an abnormal growth.

Bill's knowledge, or, shall we say, its converse, was of a fearful and wonderful kind; its full flavour, and distinctive value being especially and peculiarly apparent on such occasions as a Sunday afternoon on Hampstead Heath, or in Regent's Park, or a street ramble after dark when the lamps were lit.

It would be rash to say that Pem correctly gauged the depth of his ignorance, but it may be safely inferred that she looked leniently upon it.

In fact, but for the matter to be now related, the course of humble love would possibly have run straight and smooth, with the usual results: an early marriage and its inevitable consequences, viz; squalor and an occasional "smashing" by the head of the firm.

Pem's "pitch" was by the steep flight of steps in Villiers Street which lead up into Charing Cross Station.

Every morning, between nine and eleven a continuous stream of business men poured down out into the street.

This two hours was Pem's harvest-time; this and later in the afternoon from five to six.

But it was on the stroke of "ten" that she would wake up to special alertness. Many a would-be customer then failed to attract her attention. She did not seem to care, her eyes were fixed upon the station door at the top of the steps.

"'Ere y'are, sir!" shrieked Sal Emmet, seizing her opportunity, and capturing a smart, elderly dandy, one of Pem's "specials." "White rose, sir! yessir! just picked this mornin', sir!"

Still Pem watched and waited.

Presently, as Big Ben chimed out the quarter past, a tall, fair young fellow came swinging down the steps.

Pem's face at once lost its look of eager suspense, she became almost unrecognisable.

"Well, what is it this morning? No, not a white rose—that red one—it matches your cheeks, I think," he added laughingly.

Poor Pem coloured furiously, and bit her lips; conscious of a titter among the other girls.

It was curious that she herself did not utter a word. No chaffing repartee, no preening in self-satisfaction at smile and compliment. She simply took a pin from the bosom of her dress, and, fastening the rose in its new owner's coat, took the sixpence he put into her hand.

With a pleasant inclination of his head he passed on into the Embankment Gardens. Pem's eyes followed him. Business might take care of itself. The one bright event of her day was over. Until to-morrow she would not see him again, for, for some reason, he daily returned country-wards via Victoria.

Sal Emmet had long spied upon Pem, in connection with this same recurring morning episode. Envious, spiteful, and only too well-disposed, like many another of her sex and class, to "put a spoke in the wheel" of a more fortunate sister, she bided her time to make the mischief her soul (or what passed for her soul) delighted in.

"Set 'er up! 'Oo's she? Think's the swell's gone on 'er! Yah! 'e's not such a mug as that comes to! On'y let Bill Smith get wind on it, an' there'll be ructions, you bet!"

Pem was not blind to Sal's malignancy of disposition, as toward herself; although her very spirit of blunt, reserved independence made her somewhat carelessly indifferent to anything the latter might do or say.

Digitized by Google

It is to be feared, however, that she was allowing herself to build an airy castle, which could not possibly have foundations, of any kind whatever.

She showed this by her poor little attempts at personal adornment. A larger hat, startling effects in feathers, and other head ornament; scrupulous, or comparatively scrupulous cleanliness of skin and apron, all this marked, and plainly, the bent of her mind.

No more innocent, at ordinary times, than her mates, in the use of a forceful vocabulary, she became, for her, strangely "proper" on those rare occasions when she did condescend to conversation.

Such a course of conduct necessarily subjected her to the only too ready gibe and sneer.

"She's quite the lydy, ain't she?" said Polly Carter. "It's callin' on Queen Victoria she'll be soon, at Buckin'am Palis! My word! we'll 'ave ter 'ave a 'oliday that day, gels, won't us?"

"Cuts 'er nails, bless yer! now she does!" said Bet, from Endell Street. "Borrered my mother's scissors on'y larst night. Washes 'erself, too, every mornin' afore she comes art! She'll ruin 'erself in soap, if she don't watch it! It's sicknin'! that's what it is!"

Pem, leaning against the wall, just round the corner under the entrance to the railway arch, heard, but took no notice.

One blossom remained in her basket; a beautiful blush rose, set in its own glossy, dark green leaves.

She took it up, and pinned it in the bosom of her dress.

"'Ere, Sal!" shouted Polly Carter, "look at Pem Peth'ick. Ain't she a-goin' it? Sportin' a button-'ole! My! we are grand, we are!" and the fat, dirty-looking Polly, her greasy fringe almost touching her apology for a nose, and her tattered hat grotesquely bobbing up and down as she wagged her head wildly about, minced up and down in front of Pem, to the accompanying derisive laughter of the rest of the girls.

Pem had promised Bill that she would walk out with him that evening, and, remembering this, she retired with dignity, not deigning even a word of remonstrance or retaliation.

Contrary to his usual custom, Bill Smith did not keep his appointment. Pem was not particularly disappointed her affections never being too busily engaged, but that she could as now easily console herself for her sweetheart's failure to come up-to-time.

Alone, therefore, she wandered about nine o'clock, back to the Embankment, and, finding an unoccupied seat, gave herself up to meditative imaginings.

She had devoured much cheap, deliriously sensational literature, so dear to the soul of the lowly born, in which the "lord of high degree" poses as improbably as fascinatingly, and she quite believed in the possible repetition of the story of "King Cophetua and the beggar-maid."

She must have sat there for nearly two hours, for it was long past eleven when she reached the end of the street where she lived.

Cabs, with returning theatre-goers, were plentiful, and Pem stood for awhile at the corner of the evil-smelling narrow lane and the busy thoroughfare, idly watching the traffic.

It might have been close on midnight when a hansom, in which was a gentleman in evening dress, whirled by. Not too quickly, however, for a recognition of the occupant.

Pem would have known him anywhere, and felt her listlessness vanish.

Less than a minute afterwards, a block occurred nearer the St. Martin's Lane end of Long Acre, the line of cabs, Westward-wending, including the hansom in question, came to a momentary halt.

Pem could not resist the temptation to run the few yards, and furtively feast her eyes on the face of her idol.

She was so absorbed in this that she failed to notice a youth of the coster class steal out from the shadow of the pawnbroker's shop-doorway at the corner of the little street, and follow in her wake.

Perhaps, had she made no sign, and refrained from any exhibition of undue interest in the "gentleman of the cab," all would have been well, but unfortunately, she pressed into the roadway, between two other vehicles, her face aglow with rapturous excitement.

Action and expression were alike seen, and although road and pavement were both crowded, and before anyone knew, or could have prevented it, a report rang out, and Pem fell forward upon her face on the muddy asphalte, shot from behind.

Making no effort to escape; standing on the kerb, the smoking revolver in his hand, Bill Smith offered no resistance when seized by the police, who, it being close to Bow Street, were near at hand in considerable numbers.

He spoke but little.

"Yus, I did it. Ask Sal Emmet as lives in the same ouse as 'er—she told me, an'll tell yer why."

Meanwhile, on raising Pem, they found her alive, blood streaming from a bullet-wound in the back of her head.

A tall, fair gentleman, who sprang out of a hansom, spoke to the policeman, and said that he recognised the girl as one of whom he was in the habit of buying flowers every day at Charing Cross Station, and that if she were taken to the Hospital, he would follow, and specially interest the house-surgeon, a friend of his own, in her case. He also gave his card, and expressed his readiness to say what he knew at any future time and place.

* * * * *

Pem recovered, thanks to exceptional skill and unremitting care on the part of the doctors and friends raised up for her through the influence of Henry Cassellis.

The latter's betrothed took her into her service on her complete convalescence, and few would recognize in the pale, quiet, neat hand-maiden, the old-time flower-seller of Villiers Street.

When, soon afterwards, Henry Cassellis married, Pem went with his wife as her especial attendant, and when, too, in due course replicas of husband and wife put in an appearance, who so devoted a nurse as Pem. They loved her, those children, from the cradle; and she—she gave them all the wealth of that heart of hers, that had known so much sorrow, and learned so great a lesson.

* * * * *

Bill Smith reaped the due reward of his cowardly deed; a long period of imprisonment.

As for Sal Emmet, the other girls, with the inconsistency of girls all the world over, cut her from that day forward; and to-day, it would be dangerous to speak in their hearing, one word in dispraise or disparagement of their erstwhile object of scorn and contumely, "Pem Peth'ick."

Ralph Enderby.

Digitized by Google

THE LION'S WARS

THE TWO FIRST GREAT MAHRATTA WARS (1802-1803).

A NOTION prevails in England, and still more in Europe, that the conquest of India by Britain led to the absorption of nationalities, abolished long seated dynasties, and did away with ancient nobilities. Our conquest did nothing of the kind, for the simple reason that when India fell into our hands there were no ancient dynasties or blue blooded aristocracies to displace in the countries we annexed.

Madhaji Scindia of Gwalior was the greatest of the Indian potentates in the last century. Whilst devoid of the cruelty which blackened the names of men like Tippoo Sahib and Surajah Dowlah, he was so inordinately ambitious that he devoted his whole life to the realisation of a scheme for the expulsion of the foreigner from India.

Scindia had, it is true, assisted us in the last Mysore war, which ended with the death of Tippoo Sahib, but that was only to lull the distrust with which he feared we were beginning to regard him. He hated us, but he had no desire to lose his country, which comprised over 33,000 square miles.

Before his death Scindia had conquered Bundelcund, occupied Agra and Delhi, reduced several of the Rajput princes, and largely extended the area of his dominions. He was succeeded by his nephew, Dowhit Rao, who, assuming the name of Scindia, took up the threads of the conspiracy.

At the beginning of the present century the Mahrattas were ruled over by three princes—Scindia, Holkar, and the Peishwa.

When the Marquis of Wellesley, the elder brother of the great general who in after years came to be known as the Duke of Wellington, became Governor General, the growing power of the Mahrattas at once attracted his attention, so as soon as the war with Mysore was concluded he endeavoured to bring the three princes under British control.

The task was not an easy one. He offered Peishwa a share of the spoils of Mysore on condition that he received in his capital a British contingent of six battalions, with guns, and set aside for their maintenance territory to the value of 26,000,000 rupees. This offer was haughtily declined. Being a man of endless patience the Marquis waited. A quarrel presently arose between Holkar and Scindia. Peishwa sided with the latter, and marched on Holkar's capital, Poona.

Although the forces of the allies exceeded 88,000 men, the victory which Holkar won October 20th, 1802, was so complete that Peishwa narrowly escaped capture before he reached Bassein.

In reply to appeals for assistance, Wellesley agreed to secure him his throne provided he became a feudatory Prince of Britain. This the Peishwa consented to do.

The treaty of Bassein, to which he affixed his signature, was greatly resented by Scindia and Holkar. Scindia especially was incensed as he saw in the treaty a death blow to his uncle's great project. The Governor, who knew nothing of Scindia's sinister plans, calculated that when Peishwa tendered his allegiance Scindia would do so, too.

Digitized by Google

In this he was mistaken. To make matters still worse, it was reported to the Governor-General that Peishwa, repenting what he had done, had entered into an alliance with the Rajah of Berar against the British. Hostilities being now imminent, General Wellesley marched against Poona with 8,000 infantry and 4,000 cavalry. Colonel Stevenson moved towards the same spot from Hyderabad with 6,000 of the Nizam's troops.

General Lake also received orders to expel Scindia's troops from Agra and Delhi, and then proceed to the assistance of General Wellesley. Ready to achieve his purpose without bloodshed, if possible, the Governor-General sent his secretary to Scindia, who declared that so far as he was concerned war depended on whether the Rajah of Nagpore joined him or not.

Even then Lord Wellesley was willing to temporise, but when he discovered for a fact that Peishwa, whom he had just reinstated at Poona, was secretly negotiating with Scindia, he declared war at once. To secure unity of purpose he invested his brother with full powers.

To gain time General Wellesley, who had marched from Seringapatam, a distance of nearly 600 miles from Poona, despatched an ultimatum to the conspirators, giving them twenty-four hours to consider the line of conduct they intended to adopt. The three princes instantly offered, if Wellesley disbanded his army, to retire thirty miles. This proposal was peremptorily rejected.

Hearing that it was the intention of the fiery Mahratta chiefs to combine their forces, General Wellesley pushed on to Poona with his cavalry, travelling so rapidly succeeded, although he had sixty miles to cover, in achieving his purpose.

On leaving Poona, Wellesley went north, taking the strongly-fortified town of Aurungabad, where, receiving information that the Mahrattas were threatening Hyderabad, the capital of our ally the Nizam, he made a forced march and got between them and the city.

The horde fighting under the banner of Scindia, although badly armed, were stubborn fighters. Existing entirely by plunder they regarded war as their natural avocation. Still, Scindia was not anxious to commence hostilities. His great uncle had so warned him to be careful of the British soldier, and not to begin unless he was certain of success. Scindia was contemplating a retreat with harassing attacks, but being reinforced by sixteen battalions of regular infantry and over seventy cannon, the whole led by French officers, he determined to risk a pitched battle.

As soon as Colonel Stevenson came up with a few thousands of the Nizam's native troops, Wellesley went in pursuit of Scindia. He was only just in time; Scindia had again changed his mind. The cavalry had gone and some of the infantry were decamping too. When the British appeared on the scene, Scindia's camp being six miles off, Wellesley was compelled to leave a strong force behind to protect his baggage and communications.

This so depleted his little army that he had only some 4,500 men, and of these large proportions were natives, to fight the huge Mahratta army of 50,000 hardy warriors. Worse still, Wellesley found the foe to his dismay encamped on the other side of the Kaitna and no ford in sight. At length one, and the only one for miles, was found. Fortunately for us it had been left unguarded. As soon as the news was brought to Wellesley he exclaimed, "I have them now, they cannot escape me."

As he was only thirty-five years of age and this was the first battle in which he had supreme command, the remark indicates the great self-reliance of the conqueror of Waterloo. As soon as our men had crossed, the battle of Assaye began. Wellesley had drawn up his men in two lines, which the French officers observing, altered the disposition of their men so that the right rested on the river and the left on the village of Assaye.

Scindia's artillery played fearful havoc in our ranks as we marched to the attack. The Nizam's troops, though well disciplined, would have run away but for a wholesome fear of their white comrades. Their courage revived, however, when they saw the calm ferocity with which the British repulsed a most determined charge of the Mahratta cavalry, who, brandishing their tasselled spears, attempted to break our ranks.

That one charge cost Scindia over 1,000 lives.

Urged by the French officers they made repeated efforts to drive us back, but as fast as our men fell other stern unyielding Britishers were ready to take their places. Wellesley was observing with delight how well the native troops, inspired by the conduct of our men, were behaving, when a miscarriage of orders nearly led to our being defeated.

The 74th, in reserve, having received orders to advance and reconnoitre, thought that it was called upon to attack. The Colonel therefore led his men against the village of Assaye, which was held by a large force of Scindia's infantry and nearly all his cavalry. The gaps in the ranks of the 74th so widened that Wellesley, ill as he could spare assistance, had to send supports in the shape of cavalry and guns. An officer galloping up reported that it would be impossible to get up the guns owing to the number of wounded men and dead oxen blocking the way.

"Tell the cavalry then that I look to them to retrieve the fortunes of the day. I know that they will not disappoint me."

There was a grim look on the faces of the troopers as they formed in line and tightened the girths of the horses.

Foreseeing what was coming, the French officers hurried up all their reserves, so that by the time we reached the lines the mass confronting us was so dense that to break through seemed hopeless. Just before the charge Wellesley rode up, the personification of calm intrepidity, attended by some scattered detachments of infantry who had followed in the wake of their chief.

The French called on their men to stand firm as we came tearing along. The Mahrattas were no cowards, but the force with which we delivered our blow made a break in the dusky wall of humanity large enough to admit of the infantry gliding in and getting to work. A desperate fight ensued, and at last, the centre growing unsteady, recoiled on the wings, which retreated in such haste that Wellesley was able to launch the 78th Highlanders, supported by a regiment of sepoy cavalry, on the rear of Scindia's quivering centre.

The Mahrattas offered a most gallant resistance, and so many of our men sank down that it became a question whether the next few minutes would leave sufficient British to complete the victory.

Wellesley noted this, too, but was quite unmoved. He knew that Scindia's horde, for all their bravery, lacked the dogged tenacity of the English; so, calling on his Highlanders, he charged again and again, driving the Mahrattas towards the Khelna to prevent them from defending their second line, which rested on the Jewah.

Simultaneously the victorious cavalry charged the

Digitized by Google

Drawn by] The natives paused on hearing the commanding tones of the pale, stern Englishman. *[Lawson Wood.*

Digitized by Google

village of Assaye, the 74th, which followed close behind, clearing out those who had escaped the horsemen. The two wings of Scindia, having recovered from their panic, rejoined the centre, but great as were their numbers they were also driven across the Jewah.

So far success had crowned our arms, but the battle was not yet won. Scindia's troops, instead of retreating, now took up a far stronger position than that they last occupied at Assaye. But Wellesley, who possessed the instinct only to be found in great commanders of knowing what the enemy would be likely to do, had made arrangements to defeat this move.

Before the Mahrattas crossed the Jewah he had posted a regiment of infantry near to, but out of sight of, the Mahratta position. Whilst the enemy were making ready to repel the onset of the cavalry, who had dashed across the river in pursuit, the force in hiding burst on their rear with such fury that the astonished Mahrattas took to flight.

Much still remained to be accomplished before this remarkable battle was won. Scindia's horse, numbering 30,000 men, had not yet come into action. Flushed with success it was with difficulty that our cavalry were recalled from the pursuit of the Mahratta foot to deal with the enemy's horse. For the second time that day we surprised the foe.

The Mahrattas were riding round our tiny force seeking for the weak spot when Colonel Maxwell and his troopers charged their rear. Cheered by the appearance of their General, who rode up, our brave fellows fought like lions. In less than ten minutes after this historic charge the whole of the enormous force of Mahratta horse galloped from the field hotly chased by the British, who did not pause in the pursuit till twelve miles had been covered.

This battle quite broke the spirit of our enemies in India. The town of Burhampore and the strong fortress of Alighur were so dismayed when the news reached them that they at once surrendered. Even Scindia's iron resolution so far faltered when he found our remorseless soldiers on his track as to induce him to make a pretence of suing for peace.

Wellesley then turned his attention to Bhoonsia, the Rajah of Berat. Stevenson had invested the great fortress of Gawilghur. On arriving he was confronted by the Rajah's army under the command of his brother, Vinsaji Bhoonsia.

In violation of the terms of the armistice, Scindia had sent a large body of troops to the assistance of the Rajah. Vinsaji had drawn up his army on the plain in front of the village of Argaum.

As soon as Wellesley had reconnoitred the position he resolved on an immediate attack. Our men by this time had got so used to fighting after marches of twenty miles and upwards that, although the sun's rays beat down that day with unusual fierceness, they only asked for half-an-hour's rest before attacking.

The Rajah's army was drawn up with the infantry and guns on the left centre and a body of cavalry on the left. Scindia's contingent occupied the right, with their flank covered by a body of Pindarese and other light troops.

The Rajah's position was strong but very extended. Its front occupied seven miles; still, owing to the number of water-courses which intersected it, it offered few points of attack. On account of the slowness with which the attack was developed, owing of course to infantry being employed, our Sepoys thought the battle was going against them, and began to retreat in disorder. Wellesley seeing this flew to the spot shouting to them to stop. The natives paused on hearing the commanding tones of the pale, stern Englishman, and followed him meekly back to the battlefield.

The Mahrattas, with the memory of Assaye still fresh in their minds, charged us several times, but not with the old irresistible ferocity. At this time the treachery of Scindia could not have been known, for Wellesley, in a dispatch to his brother, said: "The 74th and the 78th Regiments were attacked by a large body of strange horsemen supposed to have been Persians, and all these were destroyed."

Later in the day further reinforcements from Scindia arrived. In their first charge they encountered the first battalion of the 6th, a terrible lot of fighters, who had been stationed on the left to take charge of any fresh bodies of assailants.

Our men met the charge of the fresh arrivals with one of their own. The force of the impact was so great that the enemy were literally hurled out of the field.

As they were too demoralised to return we gave chase, capturing thirty-eight pieces of cannon and all their ammunition. The pursuit lasted for hours, and long before it was over we had captured so much plunder in the shape of elephants, camels, baggage, and war food, that the officers saw that if they continued the pursuit the spoil would have to be sacrificed.

They thereupon deputed the rest of the chase to the cavalry of the Mogul of Mysore. As the battle did not commence till late in the day our men devoted the night to recovering the elephants and camels which had wandered away.

During these exciting times Lake had been almost as successful as Wellesley. Marching from Kauhpur he fell upon the enemy's cavalry at Alighur, completely routing them. Then he stormed the fortress of Alighur, after which he marched to Delhi, defeated the Mahrattas outside the city, entering the town on the following day.

After resting a couple of days we find this active officer at Agra fighting and winning a battle for its possession. Agra and Delhi secured, Lake started for Central India in pursuit of Scindia. That wily prince, on hearing that the English were on his track, hastened his footsteps, but the English soldier, being as good a marcher as he was a fighter, overtook the enemy's army, after a series of forced marches, at Laswari, and at once assailed it with his cavalry.

Scindia's French officers had so strongly fortified the position they had taken up that Lake, after a couple of assaults, decided to wait till his infantry came up. On their appearance next morning Lake, in view of the formidable task awaiting him, decided to postpone assaulting the enemy's trenches till his men had had their dinner.

It was well he did, for in addition to the strength of the position Scindia's troops had been so well trained by the French that as Lake said, "At Laswari the Indians fought like Europeans."

The battle of Laswari displayed to the best advantage the intrepid fearlessness of the British soldier. Succeeding at last in reaching the intrenchments they calmly clambered over to receive the charge of Scindia's cavalry, the very flower of his army.

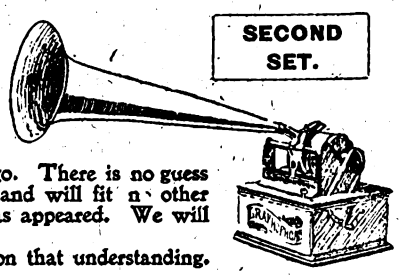
The onslaught shivered to pieces against the iron line confronting them, and after the second charge they took to flight.

On December 17th, 1803, Scindia and his chiefs signed a treaty which not only increased our prestige, but largely added to the possessions of the E.I.C.

Digitized by Google

"QUICK CHANGE" PUZZLES.

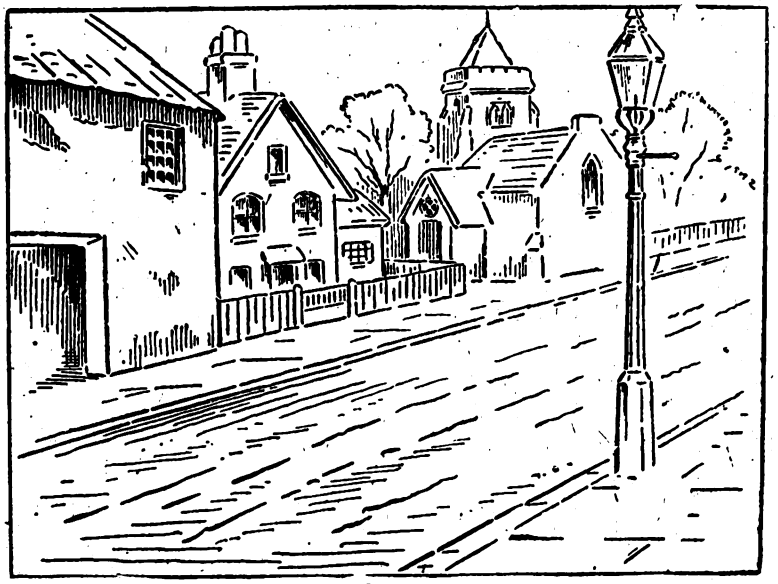
SECOND SET.



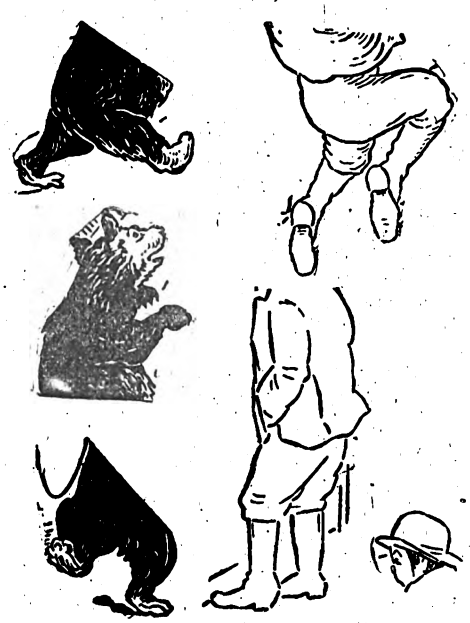
First Prize ... ... *A Magnificent Graphophone.*
Second Prize ... ... *£2.*
Six Prizes of ... ... *10s. each.*

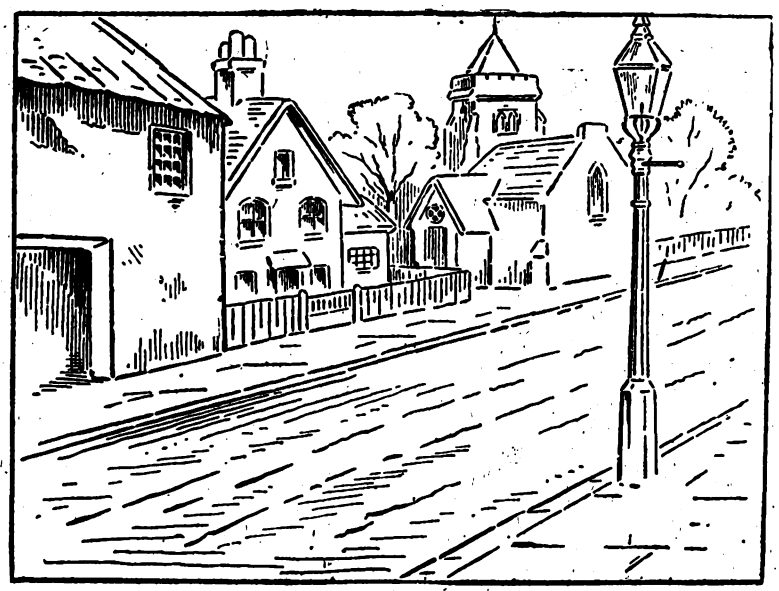
On this page you will find two drawings exactly alike, and a number of parts of figures. What you have to do is to cut out the parts of the figures, leaving a small margin, and paste them on the picture in the way they should go. There is no guess work about it. Each part of the figures should be pasted on a certain spot, and will fit no other spot. When you have pasted up your picture, put it by until one more set has appeared. We will tell you the closing date in good time.

Competitors must abide by the Editor's final decision, and may enter only on that understanding.



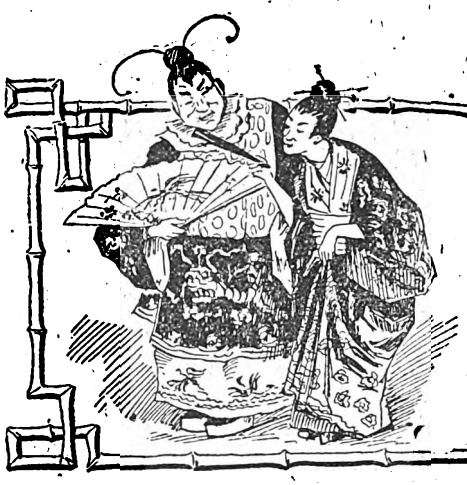
Fun.





Fear.

Digitized by Google



Mr. Bowser's Tribulations.

XXXII.—HE DOES A BIT OF HOUSE CLEANING WHILE MRS. BOWSER IS AWAY.

Mrs. Bowser had gone to her mother's in the country for a few days for a change of air, and Mr. Bowser and the family cat had been left at home to keep house and look after things.

Before leaving she extracted a solemn promise from him that he would not disturb things while she was absent, but on the evening before she was expected home, and while he sat just outside the door in the back-yard, a cigar in his mouth and the cat seated on another chair beside him, a sudden feeling of pity for Mrs. Bowser came over him. When she returned from her holiday, she would have to start at once on house-cleaning, and by the time she had finished, all the benefits of the country air would be dissipated.

"By George, I'll have a go at it to-morrow morning!" exclaimed Mr. Bowser as he remembered that business was a little slack and he could spare a day or two from the office. "Yes, I'll pitch in directly after breakfast and knock the socks off this house-cleaning business in less'n forty-eight hours. That little wife of mine shan't come home to break her back hunting the moths and dust out of this house."

There was a sound of gurgling and chuckling close at hand, and he turned to look at the cat. It was she, but she put on such an innocent expression that he laid the chuckling to a boy on the other side of the fence. He went to bed early to get a good start in the morning. He was alone in the house, and as he slept he dreamt that a big cat sat on his breast and grinned into his face.

At eight o'clock next morning he had coat, vest, collar and tie off and was ready for the fray. The first thing to be done, as he imagined, was to take all the parlour furniture into the back-yard and give him some room to spread himself.

He had decided that the woodwork ought to be gone over with a light coat of paint, and after getting the furniture out he went looking about for old paint cans. He had painted the verandah and the flower-pots in the summer, and he found some of the mixture left. It was a tender pink, which would have looked too lovely for anything on the cheeks of a bride, but it needed thinning down.

He knew that practical painters never used water, vinegar, cold tea or coffee to thin out paint, but his knowledge stopped short there. It was when his eye rested on the paraffin can that he solved the puzzle.

When the paint had been duly prepared for use, a little oil was added from the sewing machine can to give it a gloss, and Mr. Bowser went to work.

It takes some men years to become an artist with the brush. It didn't take him over ten minutes. The peach-colour not only stood out over the white groundwork, but the oil brought out a real bloom on the peaches.

As he stood back and surveyed his first door he could almost imagine that he saw rare ripe peaches hanging to trees out in the country. The odour wasn't exactly agreeable, but he decided to throw that in free gratis and for nothing. It was a job that would have taken an average painter a full day, with his going to the shop for putty, and sandpaper and round the corner for beer, but at noon Mr. Bowser stood in the middle of the room and put out his tongue and looked about him and saw that his work was finished.

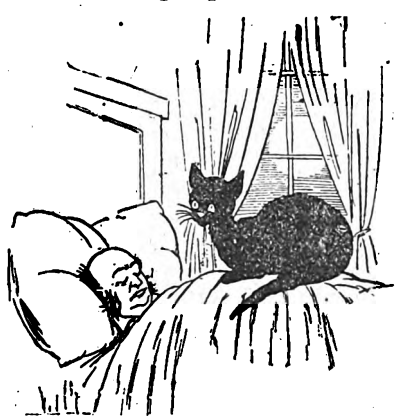
In addition to the bloom on the peach-colour, the oil had brought out thousands of bubbles, but he did not regard them as drawbacks. On the contrary, he rather prided himself on having struck something new in the line of high art painting.

* * * *

Mrs. Bowser had complained of moths. Yes, he remembered that she had been fighting moths for years and that it had been hard work to keep them down. Whether she had used the axe, the crowbar, or hot water, he could not remember, but she had slaughtered them without pity and left their corpses unburied.

Before he went out to a restaurant for his lunch he made a hunt for moths, and his search was ably seconded by the cat. It was the cat who finally found one hiding in a dark corner, and Mr. Bowser's resolution was taken.

The moths or the carpets or



As he slept he dreamt that a big cat sat on his breast.

Digitized by Google

something must be exterminated. He didn't go to a chemist's when he went out and ask for a remedy. Believing that a waiter in a restaurant ought to know all about moths, he confided his troubles to the man and was answered:

"Yes, sir, I can tell you what to do. I've known all about moths ever since I was knee high to Tom Thumb. You want to sprinkle that carpet with a compound made of water, lime and paraffin. Make up about six gallons of it and don't be stingy about putting it on. The idea is to kill the moths all at once and have no long drawn out suffering about the house."

* * * *

Mr. Bowser got the ingredients and made a six gallon saucepan full, and then, taking the garden watering can he went over the carpet and started every moth on the fly out of the neighbourhood. After the cat had walked across the carpet once she also started, and it was late in the afternoon before she returned with sore feet and a reproachful look.

When the sprinkling had been finished and just as the back parlour was to be attacked, a tramp rang the doorbell and asked for something to eat. Mr. Bowser felt complacent and liberal hearted. In place of food he gave the man sixpence and then said:

"I don't claim to be a professional artist, but I've just finished a little job here I'd like you to look at. In travelling about you must see more or less artistic work."

"I do, sir," replied the tramp as he followed him into the parlour and looked at the freshly-painted woodwork. "This is what I calls a beauty, sir, a real beauty. You've used paraffin and oil with the paint, and the neighbours will all be jealous of you. You should have been an artist, sir."

There was a tinge of sarcasm in his tones, but Mr. Bowser added another sixpence and bowed him out.

It was now noticed that the blue and red in the carpet began to look freckled, but there was no time to investigate. The furniture of the other room was hurried into the back-yard, and the work of putting on the peach-colour began.

* * * * *

Mr. Bowser had been painting and admiring for an hour when he heard the dull rumble of thunder. His artistic soul was not disturbed by it, nor did he heed the rain which presently began to pour down and continued for two hours. When he had finished his painting, he made another mixture of moth-killer and drenched the carpet of that room as well, and he chuckled with satisfaction as he imagined the mob of moths fleeing with terror, like the Boxers before the allied army. He had just got through and was contemplating his work with the satisfaction of a good husband when Mrs. Bowser arrived and came in to him.

"Welcome home, my dear," he said as he extended his painty arms.

She didn't rush into them. She looked at the bubbling painted woodwork, at the freckled carpets, out of the window at the upholstered furniture which had soaked for two hours in the back yard, and then she sat down on the floor and started crying.

M. QUAD.

"I've just finished a little job I'd like you to look at."

[NEXT WEEK.—*He Buys a Fire Extinguisher and Proceeds to Extinguish.*]

MOTHER: "Did you try to make yourself agreeable at Mrs. Hightone's?"

Little Daughter: "Yes, mamma; I told her all the funny things our callers said about her, and she seemed to be so much interested."

"WE'LL miss the play," she said impatiently. "We've been waiting a good many minutes for that mother of mine."

"Hours, I should say," he replied somewhat acrimoniously.

"Ours?" cried she rapturously. "Oh, George, this is so sudden."

LADY OF THE HOUSE: "Listen, cook. I am going to give a supper and a dance. Now, you will have to show what you can do, so as to keep up the credit of my establishment."

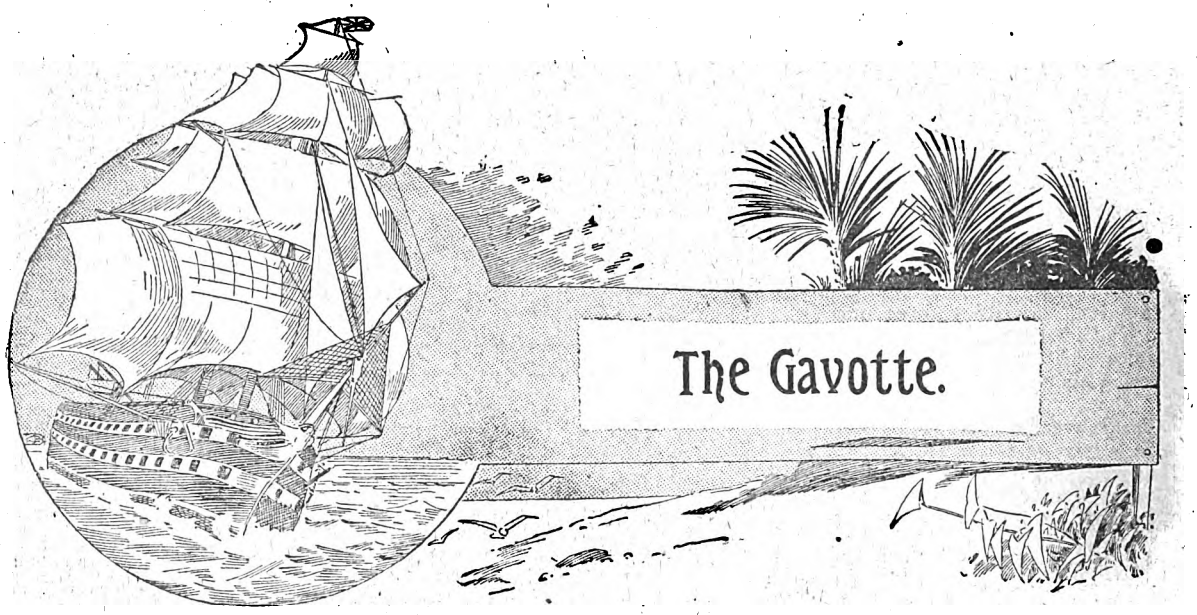
Cook: "With pleasure, ma'am; but I can only dance the waltz and the polka. You will have to excuse me from the quadrilles."

THE priest had been giving Pat and Nancy a little advice on some differences of opinion that had sprung up between them. And to illustrate his remarks he pointed to a dog and cat sleeping together by the fireside.

"See, my children, how agreeable these two little animals are."

"Yes, your Reverence," replied the woman; "but tie them together, and you'll see what they'll do."

Digitized by Google



The Gavotte.

THE worthy curé of Chauvigny knocked somewhat hesitatingly at the door of the spacious room in which he knew that the still more worthy bishop of his diocese was about to partake of his plain mid-day meal. In answer to a loud invitation to walk in, he opened the door and entered.

"Ha, my dear curé, you are very welcome!" cried the prelate heartily. "That is," he added hastily, "provided that you have not come to ask me to pardon your graceless nephew."

"Monseigneur, I trust that I shall be none the less welcome on that account, for that is precisely the object of my visit," responded the curé humbly, as he approached the other and bowed.

"Then I am afraid that your visit will not be a success," returned the bishop.

He spoke with determination, but there was something in his tone and manner that showed affability to the uncle as well as severity towards the nephew.

"Your nephew is a pupil at the seminary and I was hoping, quite as much as you, my dear friend, that he would become a member of the clergy. Now, what happens? He has to leave the institution to do his six months' military service; just as he is leaving he goes to a dance—and not only dances with a pretty girl, but also kisses the hand of that pretty girl at the conclusion of the dance! You see," shaking an admonitory finger at the curé, "I am well informed."

"But, monseigneur——"

"I tell you," continued the prelate, still shaking his forefinger vigorously, "that your nephew, when he has done his six months, had better enlist or settle down and marry; I fear that as a member of the clergy he might be flighty." And the speaker shook his head slowly, as if in grave apprehension.

"I hope that you will deign to reconsider your decision, monseigneur," pleaded the visitor. "If you persist, Jeannet's career will be spoilt; he is intended by nature for the priesthood and is devoted to the calling. He is young and, although I have no wish to palliate his offence, yet I must say that there is no wrong in the lad. It was a slip."

"No more; let us leave the subject," was the reply.

"My good friend, I am delighted to see you and I must ask you to do me the further pleasure of sharing my dinner. It will be ready directly, and in the meantime you must take this arm-chair—you'll find it a comfortable one—and draw it up closer to the fire. That's it. There, you will be quite close to the table and will merely have to draw the front legs round a few inches when my old servant brings in the dinner. But I cannot promise you a royal feast; I live very plainly. I know that you, my dear curé, in your secluded parish, have a better time of it than I do."

"I agree with you," replied Jeannet's uncle with conviction. "I know by experience that, despite your exalted position, you do not have the good things which fall to my lot. My parishioners love me and they keep me well supplied with such things as one gets more easily in the country than in the town. In fact, they keep me too well supplied, and I am able to bring some of the delicacies for monseigneur. I handed them to your servant, Marion, when I came in—some trout, two partridges and a dozen of wine. Some of the fish and one partridge are cooked, and I took the liberty of asking your servant to put them on the table. A cold repast, certainly, but none the less enjoyable."

Before the bishop could speak, the door opened and Marion came in with a tray. The dinner was served and the two men seated themselves at the table and lost no time in beginning the attack on the food placed before them.

"A dinner for a king!" exclaimed the prelate with the most evident enjoyment. He was a good man, giving away a large portion of his small stipend in charity and living in the simplest manner; he did not often sit down to a dinner like that.

The meal finished, both men lay back in their chairs and felt happy; the fish had been good, the partridge had equalled it in excellence and the wine had, at least, not been inferior to the comestibles in quality.

"My dear curé, you must not come to see me often if you bring such things with you, or you will tempt me into the wish to change places."

Digitized by Google

"I have something more than those to console me for my seclusion. I play the flute, and I find in that instrument a charming companion."

"I have been given to understand that you are a most expert player. When I come your way, I shall insist upon hearing you."

"My friends exaggerate my skill," said the curé modestly, almost shyly. Yet there was a certain eagerness in his manner. "I have my flute with me, and I should like to show you exactly what I can do, but I fear that you would think it a mere noise, not music."

"By all means give us a selection," cried the bishop, taking another sip at the wine. "There is nothing I should like better, and I should not be surprised if the playing attracted my old servant into this room on the pretext of clearing the table—she is fond of music. Come, come; Don't be shy! Out with the instrument and begin!"

The curé, with seeming timidity, produced the flute from the recesses of his coat and began to play.

As the bishop had predicted, Marion appeared in the doorway before many bars had been played, but neither her master nor the curé noticed her at first; the bishop was charmed by the music, and the player was too occupied in producing it, and in watching his superior.

The curé was an excellent performer; he made the instrument give forth full, rich tones, and he moved his fingers with the dexterity of a skilled player. Suddenly the bishop discovered that the curé was rendering an old-fashioned gavotte and his attention increased.

"Ah," he exclaimed, speaking softly in order not to utter the remark audibly.

"How well I remember that gavotte! What memories it recalls! It takes me back to the old days in Auvergne; many a time have I danced to that tune!" and his feet kept time to the tune.

"You could not dance it now, monseigneur," cried the curé, stopping in his playing to make the observation. "Your legs have grown too stiff for that."

"Nonsense," exclaimed the prelate. "Anybody would fancy I was a centenarian to hear you talk. Can't dance it now indeed! If I had a partner I'd show you!"

He looked about the great room with a face flushed with vexation and his eyes fell upon Marion standing in the doorway.

"You'll do, Marion!" he cried to the old woman. "Do you know how to dance the gavotte? A little? Come here, I'll show you how to do it. Play up!" he continued, turning again to the curé. "You shall see!"

Again the notes of the flute sounded in the room. Marion, quite flustered at this unexpected turn of events, approached her master diffidently; he took her hand and showed her what to do.

"Lift this foot," so ran the instruction. "Now the other—like this; now whirl round. A little skip, then round you go again. Now catch hold of the fold of your dress and bow. Very good!"

The curé continued to play, and the next minute the bishop and his elderly domestic were dancing with great vigour.

Round the room they went, the curé putting more wind into the instrument as they receded, and playing *diminuendo* as they returned. They kept it up until the dancers were out of breath and tired, when the music finished with a triumphant swell.

"Splendid!" cried the bishop. Then, with the utmost gallantry, he raised Marion's shrivelled hand to his lips.

"Monseigneur!" exclaimed the curé, in pretended horror. "Why, you have committed the same sin as my nephew!"

"What do you mean?" asked his superior in amazement.

"You have been dancing and you have kissed your partner's hand," replied the other. "I fear me as a member of the clergy you are likely to become too flighty!"

"But it is quite different!" protested the bishop. "I—that is——"

"Yes, it is very different. Just imagine yourself thirty years younger, with a good band instead of an old flute, with youthful blood in your veins and with a pretty partner instead of a wrinkled dame arrived at years of discretion. Think of the enjoyment you have just had, and then imagine yourself in the other circumstances which I have just mentioned. Ah, it was excusable on the part of Jeannet, and you must pardon him,"

The bishop looked perplexed and vexed; he did not wish to be hard on anyone, but he had his calling much at heart. Still, he was fairly caught, and, when he saw the sly twinkle in the eyes of the curé, he laughed good-humouredly, and yielded.

"I'm afraid that you are a very cunning old man, my dear curé," he said with a smile. "Very well, we will look over the little indiscretion of your nephew, and you may tell him he is forgiven. But neither of us must lapse again!"

CHARLES FOLEY.

"If anyone should call this afternoon, Mary, say that I am not well," said a mistress to her newly-engaged servant. "I'm afraid I ate a little too much of that rich pudding for lunch, and it, or something else, has brought on a severe headache. I am going to lie down."

A few moments later the mistress, from her room near the head of the stairs, heard Mary say to two aristocratic ladies who called for the first time:

"Yes'm, Mrs. Browne is at home, but she ate so much pudding for lunch she had to go to bed."

AN INTERESTING BOOK.

CONSULT THE ORACLE;

or,

HOW TO READ THE FUTURE.

Crown 8vo. Price 1s. Post Free, 1s. 3d.

Some of the Chapters are:

Chap. I.—The Meaning of your Dreams.
Chap. III.—Omens, Charms, and Spells for Lovers.
Chap. VII.—Judging Character by the Hands and Fingers.
Chap. XV.—Married Life Begun as it Should Be.
Chap. XXIV.—Table-Turning.
Chap. XXVIII.—Mystery and Danger of Mesmerism.
Chap. XXXIII.—Things Seen by Second-Sight.
Chap. XXXIX.—Looks showing your Character.

C. ARTHUR PEARSON LIMITED, Henrietta Street, W.C

Digitized by Google

THE LOST LADY DELIA.

BY LOUIS TRACY.

Author of "The Final War," "An American Emperor," etc., etc.

SUMMARY.

LADY DELIA LYLE leaves her house one foggy November afternoon, and is seen at Victoria Station, on the Underground Railway, by Mr. Reginald Brett, a barrister friend of her husband, who gets her ticket and puts her in the train for Richmond, where she says she is going to see her sister.

She does not return home at night, so in the morning her husband, Sir Charles Lyle, wires to her at her sister's, only to find that she has not been there.

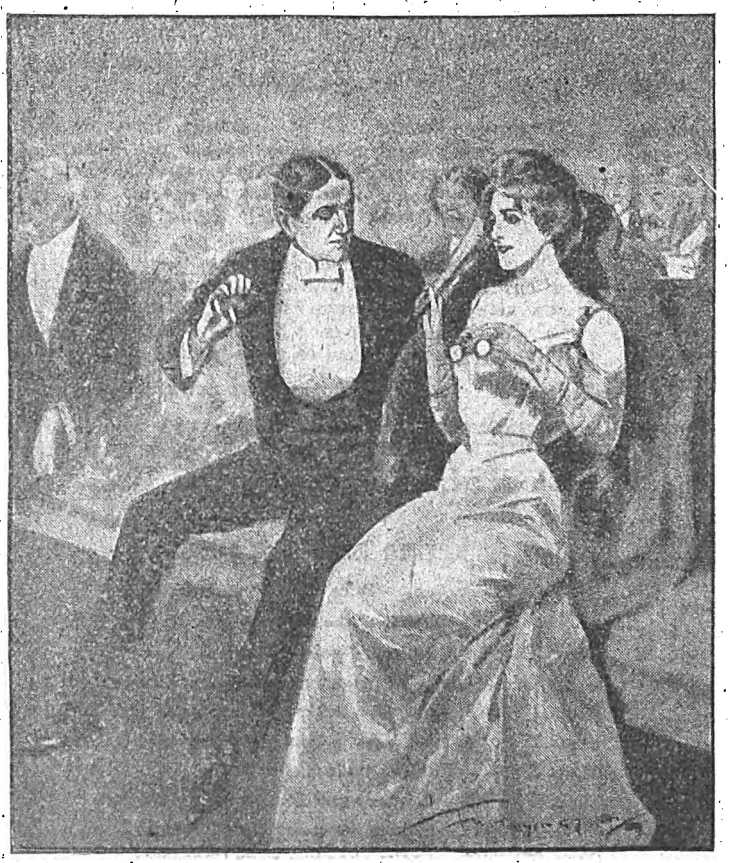
Later in the day Brett happens to meet Sir Charles, and tells him that he saw Lady Delia on the previous evening, and is surprised to learn that nothing has been heard of her since.

After some days have passed, without bringing any news of Lady Delia, Sir Charles puts the matter into the hands of detectives, Inspector Winter taking charge of the case.

Brett also promises to do all he can, and he finds out that Lady Delia, on the night of her disappearance, instead of going to Richmond, alighted at Sloane Square, and went to a block of flats called Raleigh Mansions.

Towards the end of the month the body of a woman, evidently murdered, is found wedged beneath a drain-pipe in the Thames at Putney, and, though Sir Charles does not identify the body, Brett imagines it to be that of Lady Delia. Shortly after this discovery Lady Delia's maid, Jane Harding, disappears.

Brett now starts investigations at Raleigh Mansions, and he fixes on two residents there as being likely to have been connected with Lady Delia. These are a Mr. Sydney H. Pyne, who is not at present in residence, and a Mrs. Hillmer, whom he finds to be Pyne's sister, and with this lady Brett arranges to dine and spend the evening at the theatre.



"Fie, Mr. Brett. You are taking altogether too much notice of one of the fair ladies in front."

CHAPTER V.

AT THE JOLLITY THEATRE

By tacit consent, Reggie and his fair companion dropped for the hour, the rôles of inquisitor and witness.

They were both excellent talkers, they were mutually interested, and there was in their present escapade a spice of that romance not so wholly wanting in the humdrum life of London as is generally supposed to be the case.

Brett did not ask himself what tangible result he expected from this quaint outcome of his visit to Sloane Square. It was too soon yet. He must trust to the vagaries of chance to elucidate many things now hidden. Meanwhile a good dinner, a bright theatre, and the society of a smart, nice-looking woman were more than tolerable substitutes for progress.

As a partial explanation of his somewhat eccentric behaviour he volunteered a lively account of a recent *cause célèbre*, in which he had taken a part, but the details of which had been rigidly kept from the public. He more than hinted that Mr. Sydney Pyne had figured prominently in the affair; and Mrs. Hillmer laughed with unrestrained mirth at the unwonted appearance of her brother in the character of a Lothario.

"Tell me," said Brett, confidentially, when a couple of glasses of Moët '89 had consolidated their friendly relations, "what sort of fellow is this brother of yours?"

"Not in any sense a bad boy, but a trifle wild. He will not live an ordinary life, and at times he has been hard pressed to live at all. As a matter of fact, it is this scrape he got into with Messrs. Dodge and Co. that induced him temporarily to masquerade under an assumed name."

"Then what is his real name?"

"Ah, now you are pumping me again. I refuse to tell."

"But they are generally serious reasons that induce a man to disguise himself in such fashion."

"The reason he gave me was that he dreaded being writted for liability regarding the shares I mentioned to you. It was good enough. Now you come with this story of meddling with somebody else's wife. Surely that is an additional reason. I supplied him with funds until we quarrelled, and then he went off in a huff."

"What did you quarrel about?"

"That concerns me only." Mrs. Hillmer was so emphatic that Brett dropped the subject. When they drove to the theatre Mrs. Hillmer, on alighting at the entrance, said to her coachman, "You can return home now, and bring Dobson to meet me at 11.15."

Digitized by Google

"May I venture to inquire who Dobson is?" said Reggie.

"Certainly. Dobson is my maid."

This woman puzzled Brett the more he saw of her. He was now quite positive that she lived on the fringe of Society. Her status was, at the best, dubious. Yet he had never heard of her before, nor met her in public. None of his friends were known to her, and she mentioned no one beyond those popular personages who are known to all the world. She was obviously wealthy and refined, with more than a spice of unconventionality. At times, too, beneath her habitual expressions of lively and vivacious interest, there was a touch of melancholy.

For an instant her face became even sad when her eyes rested on a typical family party of father, mother, and two girls who occupied seats in the row of stalls directly in front of her.

For some reason, Brett felt sorry for Mrs. Hillmer. He regretted that the exigencies of his quest forced him to make her his dupe, and he resolved that, if by any chance her scapegrace brother were concerned in Lady Delia's death, Mrs. Hillmer should, if possible, be spared personal humiliation or disgrace.

Indeed, he had formed such a favourable opinion of her that he had made up his mind to conduct his future investigations without causing her to involuntarily assist in putting a halter round her relative's neck.

Nevertheless, it was impossible to avoid getting some further information, as the lady herself paved the way for it. Her comments betrayed such an accurate acquaintance with the technique of the stage that Reggie said to her, "You must have acted a good deal?"

"No," she said, "not very much. But I was stage-struck when young."

"But you have not appeared in public?"

"Yes, some six years ago. I worked so hard that I fell ill, and then—then I got married."

"Do you go out much to theatres, nowadays?"

"Very little. It is lonely by oneself, and there are so few plays worth seeing."

Brett wondered why she insisted so strongly upon the isolation of her existence. In his new-found sympathy he forbore to question, and she continued:—

"When I do visit a theatre I amuse myself mostly by silent criticism of the actors and actresses. Not that I could do better than most of them, or half so well, but it passes the time."

"I hope that you do not regard killing time as your main occupation?"

"It is so, I fear, however hard I may strive otherwise." And again that shadow of regret darkened the fair face.

Someone in front turned round and glared at them angrily, for the famous comedian, Mr. Prospect Ricks, was singing his deservedly famous song, "It was all because I buttoned up her boots," so the conversation dropped for the moment.

Reggie focussed his opera-glasses on the stage. Whilst his eyes wandered idly over the pretty faces and shapely limbs of the coryphées his brain was busy piecing together all that he had heard. The odd coincidence of the dates of Lady Delia's murder and the speedy departure of the self-styled Sydney Pyne for the Riviera would require a good deal of explanation by the latter gentleman.

True, it was not Brett's method to jump at conclusions. There might be a perfectly valid motive for the journey. If the man did not desire his whereabouts to be known, why did he leave his adddress at the post-office?

And, then, what possible reason could Lady Delia have in voluntarily and secretly visiting him at his chambers in Raleigh Mansions? This virtuous and high-principled lady could have nothing in common with a careless adventurer, taking the most lenient view of his sister's description of him. And as Brett's subtle brain strove vainly to match the queer fragments of the puzzle, his keen eyes roved over the stage in aimless activity.

He strove to shield his portly form in the portico of a neighbouring restaurant.

Suddenly they paused. Brett's powers of vision and mental analysis were alike inadequate to the new and startling fact that had obtruded itself, unasked and unsought for, upon his sight.

Among the least prominent of the chorus girls, posturing and moving with the uneasy motions and visible anxiety of the novice who is not yet accustomed to the glare of the footlights upon undraped limbs, was one in whose every gesture Brett took an absorbing interest.

He was endowed in full measure with that prime requisite in the detection of criminals, an unusually good memory for faces, together with the artistic faculty of catching the true expression of anyone he had once seen for any length of time.

Hence it was that, after the whirl of a dancing chorus had for a few seconds brought this particular member of the company close to the proscenium, Brett became quite sure of having at least developed one branch of his inquiry within measurable distance of its conclusion.

The girl on the stage was Jane Harding, Lady Delia's maid.

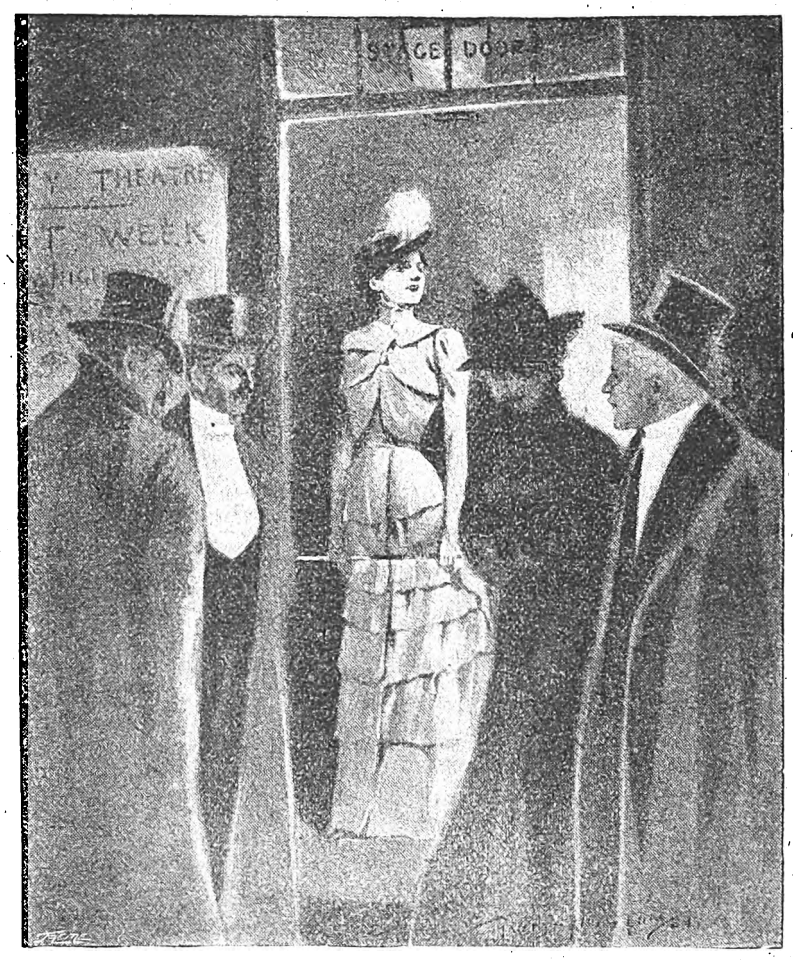
When her features first flashed upon his conscious gaze he could hardly credit the discovery. But each instant of prolonged scrutiny placed the fact beyond doubt. Not even the make up and the elaborate wig could conceal the contour of her pretty if insipid features, and a slight trick she had of drooping the left eyelid when thinking, confirmed him in his belief.

So astounded was he at this sequel to his visit to the theatre that he utilised every opportunity of a full stage to still further examine the appearance and style of this strange apparition.

When the curtain fell and Jane Harding had temporarily vanished he was brought back to actuality by Mrs. Hillmer's voice:

"Fie, Mr. Brett. You are taking altogether too much notice of one of the fair ladies in front. Which one is it?

Digitized by Google



At last the lady's maid appeared, dressed in a showy winter costume.

The tall standard-bearer or the little girl who pirouettes so gracefully?"

"Neither, I assure you. I was most taken up by wondering how a young woman manages to get employment in a theatre for the first time."

"I think I can tell you. Influence goes a long way. Talent occasionally counts. Then, a well-known agent can, for a fee, get an opening for a handsome, well-built girl who has taken lessons from either himself or some of his friends in dancing or singing, or both."

"Is such a thing possible for a domestic servant?"

"It all depends upon the domestic servant's circle of acquaintances. As a rule, I should say not. A theatre like this requires a higher average of intelligence."

This, and more, Reggie well knew, but he was only making conversation, whilst he thought intently, almost fiercely, upon the latest phase that had presented itself.

During the third act he devoted more time to Mrs. Hillmer. If that sprightly dame was a little astonished at the celerity with which he conducted her to her carriage and the waiting Dobson, it was banished by the nice way in which Reggie thanked her for the pleasure she had conferred upon him.

"The enjoyment has been mostly on my side," she cried, as he stood near the window of her brougham. "Come and see me again soon."

He bowed, and would have said something if an imperious policeman had not ordered the coachman to make way for the next vehicle. As it was, Mrs. Hillmer vanished into the traffic.

From force of habit, Brett glanced casually at the crowd struggling through the exit of the theatre, and he caught sight of Mr. Winter, who, too late, averted his round eyes and strove to shield his portly form in the portico of a neighbouring restaurant.

Reggie did not want to be bothered by the detective just then. He methodically lit a cigarette, and Mr. Winter slid off quietly into the stream of traffic, finally crossing the road and jumping on to a Charing Cross 'bus.

"So," said Reggie to himself, "Winter has been watching Raleigh Mansions, and me too. 'Pon my honour, I shouldn't wonder if he suspected me of the murder! I'm glad I saw him just now. For the next couple of hours I don't want any thick-headed detectives interfering with me."

Waiting for a few moments to make sure that Winter had not detailed an aide-de-camp to continue the surveillance, Brett fastened his overcoat to the chin, tilted his hat forward, and strolled round to the stage-door of the Jollity Theatre.

CHAPTER VI.

Miss Marie le Marchant.

The uncertain rays from a weak lamp, struggling through panes dulled by dirt and black letters, cast a fitful light about the precincts of the stage-door.

Elderly women and broken-down men, mostly slovenly and unkempt, kept furtive guard on the exit, waiting for the particular "super" to come forth who would propose the expected adjournment to a favourite public-house. Some smart broughams, a four-wheeler, and a few hansoms, formed a close line along the pavement, which was soon crowded with the hundred odd hangers-on of a theatre—scene-shifters, gasmen, limelight men, members of the orchestra, dressers, and attendants—mingling with the small stream of artistes constantly pouring out into the cold night after a casual inquiry for letters at the office of the doorkeeper.

This being a fashionable place of amusement there were not wanting several representatives of the gilded youth, some obviously ginger-bread or "unleavened" imitations, others callow specimens of the genuine article.

Brett paid little heed to these as they impudently peered beneath each broad-leafed and high-feathered hat to discover the particular favourite honoured by their chivalrous attentions.

Yet the presence of this light-headed brigade of cavaliers helped the barrister far more than he could have foreseen or even hoped.

At last the ex-lady's maid appeared, dressed in a showy winter costume and jaunty toque. She was on very friendly terms with two older girls, on whom the stage had set its ineffaceable seal, and the reason was soon apparent.

"Come along," she cried, her words being evidently intended to have an effect on others in the throng less favoured than those whom she addressed; "let us get into a hansom and go to Scott's for supper. Here, cabby!"

She was on the step of a hansom when a tall, good-looking

Digitized by Google

boy, faultlessly dressed, and with something of Sandhurst or "the Shop" in his carriage, darted forward.

"Hallo, Milly," he said to one of Jane Harding's companions. "How are you? A couple of fellows have come up on leave with me for the night. Let's all go and have something to eat at the Duke's," thereby indicating a well-known club usually patronised by higher class artistes than this trio.

After a series of introductions by Christian names, amongst which Brett failed to catch the word "Jane," the party went off in three hansoms, a pair in each.

Reggie was not a member of the "Duke's," though he had often been there. But there was a man close at hand who was a member of everything in London that in any way pertained to things theatrical. Everyone knew Billy Sadler, and Billy Sadler knew everyone. A brief run in a cab to a theatre, a restaurant, and another restaurant, revealed the large-hearted Billy, drinking a whisky and soda and relating to a friend, with great gusto and much gesticulation, the very latest quarrel between the stage-manager and the leading lady.

"'Pon my soul, Brett, old chap, haven't seen you for an age. Where have you bin? An' what's the little game now?"

Mr. Sadler was fully aware of the barrister's penchant for investigating mysteries. The two had often foregathered in the past.

"Are you busy?" said Brett.

"Not a bit. By-bye, Jack. See you at luncheon to-morrow at the Gorgonzola. Well, what is it?"

"I want you to come with me to the 'Duke's.' There is a young lady there I'm interested in."

Billy squeezed round in the hansom, which was now bowling across a corner of Trafalgar Square.

"You!" he cried. "After a girl! Is she in the profession? Has mamma got frightened about her angel? The correct figure for breach just now, my boy, is five thou'."

"Oh, it's nothing serious. I will tell you all about it when matters have cleared a bit. This is a mere item in a really big story. But, here we are. Take me straight to the supper room."

As they entered the comfortable, brightly-lit club the strains of a band came pleasantly to their ears, and in a minute they were installed at a corner table in the splendid room devoted to the most cheery of all gatherings—a Bohemian meal when the labours of the night are past.

Brett soon marked his quarry. Jane Harding was in great form—eating, drinking, and talking at the same time.

"Who is that, Billy?" said Brett, indicating the object of his question.

Sadler carefully balanced his pince-nez on his well-defined nose, gazed at the girl, and laughed: "Goodness knows. She's a new-comer, and not much at the best. Do you know where she carries a banner?"

"At the Jollity."

"Oh! then here's our man"—for a Mephistophelian gentleman was passing at the moment. "Say, Rosenheim, who's the new coryphée over there?"

Mephistopheles halted, looked at Jane and laughed. "Her name is Miss Marie le Marchant; but as she happened to be born in London she pronounces it Mahrie Lee Mahshunt, with the accent on the 'Mahs.' Anything else you would like to know?"

"Yes, I'm stuck on her! Where did you pick her up?"

"She's a housemaid, or something of the sort. Come into money. Want's to knock 'em on the stage. That is easy."

"Say, Rosenheim, who's the new coryphee over there?"

"Has she been with you long?" put in Reggie, as their informant was the under-manager of the Jollity.

Mr. Rosenheim glanced at Brett. Sadler, he knew, had no interest in the girl, and the barrister did not quite possess the juvenile appearance that warranted such solicitude.

"She joined us just before Christmas. What's up? Is she really worth a lot of 'oof?"

"I should imagine not," laughed Brett; and Mr. Rosenheim joined another group.

Supper ended, Marie, and Millie, and eke Flossie, attended by their swains, discussed coffee and cognac in the foyer.

Chance separated Miss le Marchant, as she may now be known, momentarily from the others, and Brett darted forward.

"Good evening," he said. "I am delighted to meet you here."

The girl recognised him instantly. She would have denied her identity, but her nerve failed her before those steadfast, penetrating eyes. Moreover, it was not an ill thing for such a well-bred, well-dressed man to acknowledge her so openly.

"Good evening, Mr. Brett," she said, with a smile of assurance, though her voice faltered a little.

Reggie resolved to make the situation easy.

"We have not met for such a long time," he said; "and I am simply dying to have a talk with you. I am sure your friends will pardon me if I carry you off for five minutes to a quiet corner."

With a simper Miss le Marchant took his proffered arm, and they went off to an unoccupied table

Digitized by Google

"Now, Jane Harding," said Brett, with some degree of sternness in his manner, "be good enough to explain to me why you are passing under a false name and the reasons which led you to leave Sir Charles Lyle's house in such a particularly disagreeable way."

"Disagreeable? I only left in a hurry. Who had any right to stop me?"

"No one, in a sense, except that Sir Charles Lyle may feel inclined to prosecute you."

"For what, Mr. Brett?"

This emancipated servant girl was not such a simpleton as she looked. It was necessary to frighten her and at the same time to get her to admit the facts with reference to her sensational flight from Wensley House.

"You must know," said Reggie, "that Sir Charles Lyle can at least proceed against you in the County Court to recover wages in lieu of notice, and this would be far from pleasant for you in your new surroundings."

"Yes, I know that. But why should Sir Charles Lyle, or you, or any other gentleman, want to destroy a poor girl's prospects in that fashion?"

"Surely, you must feel that some explanation is due to us for your extraordinary behaviour?"

"No, I don't feel a bit like it."

"But why did you go away?"

"To suit myself."

"Could you not have given notice? Why was it necessary to create a further scandal in addition to the disappearance of your unfortunate mistress?"

"I am sorry for that. It was thoughtless, I admit. If I had to act over again I should have done differently. But what does it matter now?"

"It matters this much—that the police must be informed of your existence, as they are searching for you, believing that you are in some way mixed up with Lady Delia's death."

The girl started violently, and she flushed, rather with anger than alarm, Brett thought, as he watched her narrowly.

"The police, indeed," she snorted; "What have the police to do with me? A nice thing you're saying, Mr. Brett."

"I am merely telling you the naked truth."

"All right. Tell them. I don't care a pin for them or you. Have you anything else to say, because I wish to join my friends?"

The girl's language and attitude mystified Brett more than any preceding feature of this remarkable investigation. She was, of course, far better educated than he had imagined, and the difference between the hysterical witness at the coroner's inquiry and this pert, self-possessed young woman was phenomenal.

Rather than risk an open rupture the barrister temporised. "If you are anxious to quarrel with me, by all means do so," he said; "but that was not my motive in speaking to you here to-night."

Miss le Marchant shot a suspicious glance at him. "Then what was your motive, Mr. Brett?" she said.

"Chiefly to reassure my friend, Sir Charles Lyle, concerning you; and, perhaps, to learn the reasons for your certainly very strange conduct."

"Why should Sir Charles bother his head about me?"

"As I have told you. Because of the coincidence between your departure and Lady ——"

"Oh, yes, I know that." Then she added testily: "I *was* a fool not to manage differently."

"So you refuse me any explanation?"

"No, I don't. I have no reason to do so. I came in for some money, and as I have all my life longed to be an actress I could not wait an hour, a moment, before I—before I——"

"Before you tried to gratify your impulse."

"Yes, that is what I wanted to say."

"But why not at least have written to Sir Charles Lyle, telling him of your intentions?"

The fair Marie was silent for a moment. The question confused her. "I hardly know," she replied.

"Will you write to him now?"

"I don't see why I should."

"Indeed. Not even when it was you who gave some of Lady Delia's underclothes to Mr. Winter, by which means he was able to identify the body found at Putney as that of your mistress?"

She bounced up, fiery red, pluming herself for the fray.

"Mr. Winter told you that, did he?"

"He did."

"Then you had better get him to give you all further information, Mr. Brett, as not another word will you get out of me."

She bounced up, fiery red, pluming herself for the fray.

"Will you not communicate with Sir Charles Lyle?" said Brett, utterly baffled by Miss le Marchant's uncompromising attitude.

"Perhaps I will and perhaps I won't. Mr. Winter, indeed!" And off she ran to join her friends.

The barrister drove quietly home to his chambers. This was his summary of the evening's events: "I have found two women. When I know all about them I shall be able to lay my hand on the person who killed Lady Delia."

(To be continued.)

Digitized by Google

SHORT STORIES ABOUT TORTOISES.

We devote, every week, two pages of *Short Stories* to pithy, humorous anecdotes similar to those which appear in these columns. A prize of £1 1s. will be sent to the reader who submits the best storyette this week, and a copy of "Heronford," by S. R. Keightley, to each of those whose attempts are used. The anecdotes may be either original or selected; in the latter case the source *must* be stated. The prize of One Guinea offered for the best Storyette in this competition has been won this week by Mr. John Whitaker, 40 St. Andrew's Terrace, Bradford. Attempts this week must deal with Stories about ANY SUBJECT, and must reach the Storyette Editor, *Short Stories* Office, Henrietta Street, Strand, London, W.C., by Monday, December 31st. Post-cards only, please.

Then Hoskins Exploded.

THE other day, Hoskins brought home a tortoise; while the same week Mrs. Hoskins brought home a new servant.

A few days after this, just as Mr. Hoskins was settling down for his after-dinner nap, in walked Mary with the tortoise in one hand, and a small key in the other.

"If you please, sir," she said, "would you be so kind as to show me how to wind this 'ere thing up? I've been trying for half-an-hour, an' I can't find the key-hole nowhere!"

"Gad!" shouted Mr. Hoskins. "What do you take it for, Mary?"

"'Ain't it one of them 'ere toy jumping frogs?" said she.

Then Mr. Hoskins shot out his legs in his excess of hilarity, and for a few minutes he couldn't speak a word. At last he managed to say:

"For goodness' sake, Mary; go downstairs, or I shall choke!"

Mary did go downstairs; and now Mrs. Hoskins wants a new servant. J. W.

Mr. Timmins Beetle Destroyer.

MR. TIMMINS bought a tortoise from a man in the street.

"Now, madam," said he on arriving from the City with his purchase, "you have been making my peaceful life unbearable with your nagging about the beetles and cockroaches who hold their 'at-homes' in our kitchen. Unable to stand it any longer, I have bought this wonderful animal—I mean insect—er—tortoise, madam, and to-morrow there won't be a beetle nearer than the house next door."

After placing the tortoise in the kitchen with a saucer of milk to quench its thirst after devouring a few hundred cockroaches, Mr. T. retires to rest.

Evidently the tortoise preys on his mind. About 3 a.m. Mrs. T. wakes in time to see her husband stealing downstairs with a candle in his hand; two minutes later a crash shakes the house, and Mrs. T. and the cook, on rushing downstairs, find Mr. Timmins has stumbled over the tortoise and is reclining against the wall with his head in the coal-scuttle, with about a dozen dead beetles underneath him, which he has crushed in his fall.

After accusing Mrs. Timmins of attempting his life for the hundreth time, he goes to bed. Next day a ton of insect-powder is delivered, and the tortoise has hidden itself in the garden.

A. E. H.

Misunderstood.

"WE must not forget," concluded the teacher at the end of the day's lessons, "what our fathers have taught us. On Monday I shall ask each of you boys to give me an example," and the class was dismissed.

On the following Monday one little fellow arrived and deposited a brown paper parcel on the teacher's desk, with a request that it might be returned, as it was a pet.

"Good gracious! whatever is this?" exclaimed the astonished master as he cut the string and revealed the contents.

"It's my father's tortoise, sir," replied the youngster proudly, "you said you wanted an example and I'm the only boy that's got one." A. H. J.

Mr. Bowser and the Tortoises.

HAVING failed in his mission of attempting to set things right, and being no longer infatuated with the charms of cycling, Mr. Bowser looked around for a new hobby; and finally decided to go in for natural history.

His plans being settled, he lost no time in hunting up specimens to form the nucleus of his zoological collection, and when he arrived home the other evening the budding naturalist brought with him a box containing a couple of tortoises.

"Whatever have you got there?" asked Mrs. Bowser, as he carried the box through the kitchen to the back garden.

"This, madam," he replied, "is the first instalment towards Bowser's twentieth century Noah's ark," and raising the lid he lifted out the tortoises and set them down on the grass before her.

"They seem to be mighty slow on their feet," said the cook after watching their movements critically for a time.

"Yes, you're right there," returned Bowser, "the speed at which they travel is painfully suggestive of the average messenger boy."

"And what funny creatures they are!" exclaimed his wife. "They seem to be encased in a sort of bomb-proof shelter. What is it supposed to be for?"

"Madam," replied Mr. Bowser, paving the way for a pun, "that bomb-proof shelter, as you call it, is to protect them from the constant siege to which they are exposed."

"But to what siege are they exposed?" she inquired, "and what is it that you mean?"

"I mean," he answered with a chuckle, "that the tortoises existence must be one long siege, since it is its lot to be always heavily shelled."

The joke missed fire, but Mr. Bowser was happy.

A. V.

Digitized by Google

An Insect.

Mr. Buckland was travelling by train one day to give a lecture in the country and conveying a live rabbit. When tickets were examined he was asked for one for the rabbit, being told it was charged as a dog. Buckland immediately pulled a tortoise from his pocket, saying: "You'll be telling me this is a dog next!"

"Don't know, sir," said the porter, scratching his head. "I'll ask the station-master."

He soon returned, and delivered himself with the following astounding piece of natural history:

"No, sir; cats is dogs and rabbits is dogs, but a tortyise is a hinsec!" W. C. L.

Unprofitable.

Not long ago the captain of a small vessel gained a good livelihood by trading between certain places on the east coast of the United States.

On one occasion he thought he saw a good opportunity of making a fair sum out of a lot of tortoises, and he purchased as many as twenty dozen, paying for them at the rate of four dollars a dozen.

The tortoises were of all sizes, from those only a few days old to full grown ones.

At the next place at which he called after making his purchase, a hotel landlord came on board and asked the captain how he sold his tortoises. The captain replied:

"If you pick them out I shall have to charge you at least six dollars for each dozen; if you let me pick them, you can have them for three dollars a dozen."

"All right," said the hotel man, "you pick them out."

The captain selected several dozen of the smallest, when the man said: "Go ahead, I want more."

The captain was now among his largest tortoises, and wished the man would stop, but he still said: "Go on."

The captain saw the point at last. The man kept him selecting until he purchased the entire lot at the loss of twenty dollars to the owner.

After this the captain sold tortoises on a different plan. R. T.

Only His Nipper.

Some years ago, when travelling from Cardiff to Shrewsbury, I witnessed a most ludicrous scene.

In the same compartment with myself was an old lady and a sailor, the latter sitting just opposite the lady, and, spreading his bulky pockets out on the seat each side of him, was very soon sound asleep.

Presently, glancing over my book, I observed a movement in the man's pocket, and a slight rustling sound was plainly perceptible; it ceased for a time and then commenced again.

This was plainly unnerving to the old lady, who eyed the man and his moving pocket with evident alarm.

Resuming my book I was deep in an interesting passage when a loud scream caused me to jump up instantly, but no quicker than the old lady who, standing on the seat in the corner, with her skirts drawn up around her and her eyes fixed on a small tortoise, which had emerged from the man's pocket, was looking a picture of abject terror and apparently ready to faint.

The "salt," waking up, took in the situation at a glance, and securing his captive, said, with a broad grin:

"You've no cause to be afeard, mum; it's only my little 'nipper!'"

This, I suppose, meant his pet, but it took me a long time to convince the frightened old lady that the wee torty was perfectly harmless. H. H.

Pussy.

In 1864 I lived in Pimlico in a house reputed to be haunted by a "woman in black," whom both my mother and aunt declared they had seen.

Gathered in the anteroom one night, we had been discussing this subject. The clock struck midnight, and with the last stroke we were started by the swish, swish, as of the silken dress of someone descending the stairs from the top floor. Alarm was depicted on each face.

The sound came on steadily and regularly, but without any accompanying footstep. Past the room we were in, down into the hall, and through the swing-door into the kitchen it took its way.

Seizing a light, I followed to clear up the mystery and discovered the cat with some pasted wall-paper edging sticking to its foot, which it had brought from the top, where the paperhangers had been at work, and which produced the rustling as of a silk dress.

J. C.

RESULT OF "TRANSPOSED LETTER" COMPETITION.

The most complete list in this competition was sent in by Mr. H. C. Heathcote, 159 Trevelyan Road, Tooting, S.W., who has therefore been awarded the first prize of £5. As the next two most complete lists contained an equal number of words, the second and third prizes have been divided between Mr. E. D. Jones, 10 Brooklands Terrace, Swansea, and Mr. C. H. Poynter, 22 Exmoor Road, Southampton, each of them receiving thirty shillings.

RESULT OF BRAIN GYMNASIUM COMPETITION.

Nos. 253 to 258.

The first prize of £2 has been awarded this week to Master H. G. Pugh, of 92 Chepstow Road, Maindee, Newport, Mon., whose attempt was the first correct one dealt with.

A copy of "The Pauper Millionaire," by Austin Fryers, has been sent to each of the following:

C. Wise, The School, Bringewood, near Ludlow.
S. Fletcher, 11 Gaythorne Road, West Bowling, Bradford.
J. W. Shaw, Shillington, Hitchin.
Mrs. Ayers, 86 Birkbeck Road, Leytonstone.
Mrs. Ticken-Smith, 26 Garden Street, Wakefield.
Dr. A. Spearing, Springfield, Patricroft, Manchester.
A. Carn, 77 Henderson Road, Forest Gate, E.
W. H. Bailey, 54 Milton Street, Westoe, South Shields.
G. D. Taylor, 3 Pryme Street, Hull.
H. Turner, 29 Inwood Road, Hounslow.

IT MAKES YOU SCREAM
WITH LAUGHTER.

What does?

Why, watching a man try to do the Twenty Teazer.

There's nothing calculated to titillate the risual palate more effectively than Twenty Teazer.

BUY IT, 6d.
TRY IT,
DO IT.

The first two things are easily accomplished. But the third—no, you cannot do it, can you? If you do succeed let us know how long it took you.

Digitized by Google

WE FOUR.

We were sitting in conclave. It was not at all a remarkable thing for us four sisters to be sitting in conclave, because we did it over everything, from a proposal of marriage to the choice of a new bonnet (the latter event of much more frequent occurrence than the former), but somehow to-day we seemed to be more in conclave than usual.

No wonder either, when the absorbing topic under discussion was the approaching proposal of marriage for Joan, from our cousin, Max Carew—not that we were calling him cousin then; when we did so it was only because he was present.

Joan was suffering so acutely from the re-action consequent upon her recent Edinburgh gaieties, that she did not work, or even pretend to do so. She only sat idly staring at our needles, as she enlarged upon her visit to the married sister of Max; told us how Max himself had come every day from his chambers in the city, to take her to see some new lion, and every night had escorted her to the opera, or a concert or theatre.

While Joan rehearsed these dissipations of hers, and sighed over their recollection, Dorothy and Patience and I worked away all the harder, just to show we didn't care a bit about them all in the way of being jealous.

We had had our turns in Edinburgh, when Max had been pleasant and attentive to each; and though we had never had such tales of his devotion to bring back as Joan had now (and we all knew it), we would sooner die than recall the fact aloud before her.

Why should Max have chosen Joan before anyone had chosen either Dorothy, or Patience, or me? She was by no means the most attractive of us. She wasn't half so sensible or domestic as Dorothy, nor half so handsome as Patience, nor half so—well, at any rate she wasn't *nicer* than me! And the whole three of us ought to have been married before Joan. There was Dorothy, our eldest, in the corner of the couch on Joan's right, she was eight and twenty, only nobody knew it but ourselves.

Then, there was Patience opposite her, sitting, as usual, upright in her chair. She was the beauty of the family, as everyone knew—as she knew, at any rate; and there was myself on Joan's left, quite on the shady side of twenty, which Joan hadn't reached yet. Why, of course we all ought to have been married before her. Yet we had now to entertain the prospect of officiating at her wedding first of all.

It *was* mortifying, to say the very least of it.

"What's the matter, Barbara?" inquired Patience, suddenly. I suppose because she saw my eyebrows raised and my mouth down at the corners.

"I was thinking what a good thing it is that there is the probability of Max marrying one of us. We are such an overwhelming number. It must require superhuman courage in a man to propose to one of four marriageable sisters; he must feel like proposing to them all."

"Why is it," mused Dorothy, putting in her needle very deliberately, "that four should seem such an enormous number when it bears upon unmarried sisters? We shall not seem even half so many when we are three."

"And the others go off so much more easily when one is married," I put in, consolingly. "The married one marries off one more—of course. That's her first duty. Then there are two houses to visit; and if one unmarried one stays at each, they marry directly."

"Yes, I do believe," said Patience, with meditation, "that many matches are brought about through visiting a brother-in-law."

"It often happens, too," asserted Joan, with an air of experience, "that the best man at a wedding falls in love with——"

"The best bridesmaid. That always happens. Which of us will it be?"

Patience, from her lofty pedestal, looked scornfully across at me when I made that remark. Of course, she would be the best bridesmaid so far as appearance went—she knew that; but then, Patience was—well, her godfather and godmothers at her baptism had not been gifted with any remarkable prescience.

"I suppose Dorothy will be the first of us to marry. She naturally ought to be," sighed Joan, with a sentimental air of resignation for which I could have choked her, because she evidently felt so sure of being the first herself unnaturally.

"No; it would be Patience first," replied Dorothy with just as much resignation.

But Patience sighed resignedly, too, and said that under any circumstances (she didn't specify the circumstances) she should be sorry to take precedence of her elder sister.

Of course it sounded very well, but I would not like to have tested her.

"It was so kind of Max to bring me home, wasn't it?" inquired Joan, naively, "and he was so careful of me on the journey."

"He certainly has the knack of making things pleasant for one," spoke Dorothy, "and making one pleased with oneself as well as with him."

"The oftener one sees him the better then," said I, sententiously.

"Yes," assented Patience, "I'm not sorry that he is coming next week."

"I suppose you are quite sure he said he was coming; eh, Joan?" inquired I; always the sceptical one of the family.

"Quite sure," returned Joan, resuming the lackadaisical pose of her head; "and quite sure that he told me on the way home that he had something particular to

Digitized by Google

say to us—he didn't say to me, because it would have been so very marked."

"It will be a pleasant change to have a gentleman about the house for a bit," put in Dorothy, with placidity.

"It always seemed so nice to have him about the house in Edinburgh," sighed Joan, "and he was always so indulgent to me; forever planning some amusement for me, or some change."

Then somebody said—and I cannot be sure who it was—that it would be well for one of us to write to Max, and say that we should expect him by the afternoon train every day next week—I mean, of course, we should expect him every day until we saw him. Then, naturally, the question arose which should write.

"I suppose I ought," said Joan, complacently.

"Why so?" asked I, with a snap. "Who so fit as Dorothy—being the eldest?"

"Or Patience?" proposed Dorothy; "she writes the best hand."

Patience accepted the position under protest; yet after all, the task was tacitly conceded to Joan. And then and there I made a firm determination not to help her with a single idea, as I regretted having done on many previous occasions.

"I should think, Joan," said I, with great determination, when I had relieved my mind by this resolution, "Max cannot be coming to see you, because you have been together so lately. I wonder which of us he is coming to see—Dorothy, I expect."

Dorothy smiled at the idea. But Patience looked unutterable discernment about whom she thought it more natural he should come to see.

Then, after a good while, we fell back into our first chat about Joan's wedding; for, though we didn't quite see the fun of giving tamely up to our youngest sister the only suitor who seemed to be forthcoming, we were too fond of each other to regret the probable triumph of one; and too fond of ourselves not to be quite aware that the marriage of one—even though that one must be the youngest—would be a benefit to all. So we discussed it all as a definite thing for Joan, and hid our own private opinions.

Joan had brought from Edinburgh a glowing description of the little Dolly Varden aprons which had just come into fashion, and had minutely described one with pink trimmings which Max had admired. This narrative had sunk deep into my mind, and from that time I devoted all my leisure moments—in sol tude and my own room—to the manufacture of a similar one.

Oh! the heartburnings I suffered when steps were heard in the passage while I sat closeted there, with a lapful of ribbon ends and loops, and an open bandbox at my feet ready to swallow the materials *en masse* on the approach of prying eyes.

But, above all things, oh! the nervousness of appearing in it first on that Monday evening just before the train from Edinburgh was due, for of course it would never have done to keep it hidden, until Max had actually arrived, and then have had suddenly to appear in it, while the girls interchanged glances and put me out for the whole evening.

I could not venture that, so I boldly put it on and went into the drawing-room, assuming an expression that was intended to be unconscious, but was really defiant in the extreme, and rapidly uttering some very irrevelant observation for the purpose of turning every one's attention from my new and startling garment. But the remark and the expression of countenance were alike depressing failures. I might just as well have rushed in exclaiming at the very top of my voice, "Look here! Look at my new apron! I made it all myself, in secret, and at great expense; and for no earthly purpose but to captivate Max."

I might just as well have said it out that way in full, so plainly was it repeated in all the faces. Stupids! The more I tried to eye them down in my intense defiance, the more the six eyes glared at it. The bows grew limp under the trying scrutiny. I hopelessly felt that no such a caricature of a person had ever before rushed into their midst armed (to no purpose) with an irrelevant observation.

The apron grew, to my disordered fancy, ugly and enormous, and I could, with supreme satisfaction to myself, have pitched it on the fire. But then what a defeat that would have been, and after all Max *had* admired one just like it. If I could but just live down this first ordeal, presently, perhaps, my Dolly Varden would assume its natural proportions, and my mind its natural equilibrium.

I went boldly into the midst of the astonished eyes, and then I saw my opportunity and seized it. With one glance I took in the fact that Patience had made an investment, too. She had at least a guinea's worth of extra plaits on her head this afternoon for the first time, and these served beautifully as a means of removing the other four glaring eyes from my pink bows.

The plaits weren't becoming to Patience, their falseness being quite evident in a strong light; but I didn't mention this in consequence of the relief they had given me.

"What have you got new, Dorothy?" I asked, growing presently courageous, "plaits or aprons? Or have you branched out into a new line?"

"I have branched out into a new line," acquiesced Dorothy, good-humouredly, "and got *nothing*."

"I wouldn't," put in Patience, a little bit severely, "stoop to hide my investments, if I were you, Dorothy" (which was quite true for Patience never stooped).

And we didn't say a word more, though there upon the grate stood the little drawing-room kettle, with china handle, which she had been into town that morning on purpose to buy.

Housekeeping always was Dorothy's weak point, and Max was known to be very keen on appreciating the convenient or elegant appliances of a meal.

Well, every day that week, at the same time, we prepared for Max; in our plaits, and pink bows, and with tea laid for five, and the glistening little kettle singing on the trivet.

Five days out of the six passed, and the preparations had so far been wasted; except that they had grown familiar to us now, and we wore them without uncomfortable consciousness. But on the Saturday morning, when we came down to breakfast, there lay one of Max Carew's letters on the table—unmistakable with its handsome crest and bold address, "Miss Pendlethorpe."

"Good gracious!" I cried, with the keenest enjoyment, "It's Dorothy he means, after all."

"Don't be a goose, Barbara," reproved Patience, who had entered the room with me, and now advanced with her stately step to look over my shoulder. "Of course, if he writes to say he is coming, he would naturally address to Dorothy, as we have no mother."

"And if he is in love with her, he would naturally address to her too," I added, not quite seeing why Dorothy should be laid upon the shelf just yet.

Digitized by Google

"Come, Dorothy, don't keep us waiting," cried Joan; "I'm in an unbearable state of excitement."

But Dorothy would not hurry. I believe in my own mind that she preferred the suspense to the certainty. So, as we saw this, we made a great effort to hide our own eagerness, and began weakly and abortively to talk on other topics.

I never remember noticing before how desperately slow Dorothy is in opening a letter. I thought she never would have finished breaking the seal of this one; and, when at last it was broken, she deliberately looked between the leaves, and turned the sheet round twice.

"Oh, the signature is there all right," remarked Patience, just a little tartly. "What comes before the signature?"

"Of course he only writes to say when he is coming," returned Dorothy, with indifference so supreme and unnatural that it was plain enough to see it was feigned. "I suppose you can all wait while I read it," she added, looking at us over the paper with great aggravating enjoyment.

And to prove how utterly indifferent we all were to the contents of this absurd letter, we turned entirely away, and helped ourselves to tongue and bread and butter—*ad libitum*—just for two moments and a half. Then somehow we found our attention again concentrating itself upon Dorothy, who was reading steadily now, and in utter silence. I couldn't help it—I didn't try, but I felt quite sure that I couldn't have helped it if I had tried—I went near enough behind her to read over her shoulder, and the first two words I saw gave me an extraordinary sensation.

"My wife."

My heart bumped and thumped against my side. Which was it to be? Sure to be Joan. Yet, after all, it might be Dorothy. No; it would be Patience, of course—which of us looked anything beside Patience? Yet, why not me? I could remember hundreds of flattering and affectionate speeches Max had made to me. It was just as likely to be me.

It wasn't human power (feminine) to resist temptation any longer. While Dorothy read on, not vouchsafing us a word of explanation, we tacitly burst the bounds of polite conventionality and—one at a time first, then altogether daringly—hovered so near that we could distinguish the words.

I don't know whether Patience and Joan read it all straight through as I did, or whether they stopped dead at the first as I felt inclined to do. All I know is that *I* read it through from the ominous first line, My—Dear—Cousins, down to the flourish after the signature; and felt not at all mollified by the performance.

Dear me, couldn't he have chosen one to write to, and not swallowed up our individuality in such a distasteful gulp? Well, after saying that—My dear cousins—he said he had hoped to be able to run over to tell us the news himself, but had been unavoidably prevented.

On the first of the next month he was going to marry Minnie Frere, whom Joan would recollect having met in Edinburgh, and he was sure we should give him our valued sympathy, and kind and generous good wishes. His greatest desire just then, he added, was that we would extend to his wife the delightful friendship which had always been so much prized by him.

I believe there was more—lots more!—but wasn't that enough? We simultaneously attacked our breakfast, without uttering a word which related to Max; with faces set to an unnatural expression of beaming self-satisfaction, and voices tuned to joyous hilarity.

There was one circumstance attending the arrival of that letter which gave me unbounded satisfaction. It had *not* come by the afternoon post, to find us all expecting Max himself.

My apron—with all its pink bows opened jauntily—was at any rate out of sight in my bottom drawer; and this congratulation was not even marred by the consideration that Patience reaped an equal benefit. She could never have borne her position half so well if the new guinea plait had not been—I suppose in the same sarcophagus in which it lay undisturbed for weeks after that.

Certainly Dorothy's new kettle was asserting itself conspicuously by warbling away on the fire; but we didn't mind so much, because a few minutes before, in consequence of Dorothy's putting it down pettishly in the very hottest part of the fire, its china handle had cracked all across and fallen half away, so that it looked decapitated enough now to take away its sting.

MARK HARDCASTLE.

THE WHITE LADY'S CURSE,

A TALE OF GEORGIAN DAYS.

BY HENRY T. JOHNSON.

Appears in this week's "BIG BUDGET."

This powerful story will shortly be produced in its dramatised form at one of the best known London theatres.

"I struck a match and looked quite close into the sockets without any eyes, the teeth with no lips to cover them."

You will be able to read more about this striking scene in

THE WHITE LADY'S CURSE,

which will appear next THURSDAY in

"THE BIG BUDGET," 1d.

Digitized by Google

A CORNER IN CAMPHOR.

Being a Chapter in the Unwritten History of China

"I'll allow there are rogues in all countries, and of all colours and all complexions," said the man in the cabbage-palm hat, with his hand on the door; "but for pure unadulterated iniquity 'the Heathen Chinee is peculiar, as my illustrious countryman out West has very tersely put it. But I guess the resources of civilisation are not exhausted, Mr. Watson." With which oracular remark Mr. Rufus K. Umphelby opened the door and left the apartment.

Mr. James Watson, resident manager at Shanghai of the big Fung Yang Syndicate, whose headquarters were in East India Avenue, Leadenhall Street, was sitting in his office on the water-front in a very depressed condition of spirit and a correspondingly dejected attitude of mind. Too limp even to find consolation in the very excellent cigar which his colleague, Mr. Rufus K. Umphelby, of the American Settlement, across the muddy Soo-chow creek, had recommended to him as a never-failing panacea for all earthly ills, he had allowed the cheroot to go out after Umphelby's departure, and now sat chewing the end thereof, sublimely unconscious of everything save the one, dull, cold, paralysing fact that financial ruin and commercial disgrace were within measurable distance, and advancing with strides that must soon overtake him and bring him crashing to the ground.

Nothing could save him—nothing, he had told Umphelby, short of a miracle, unless it were one of those heaven-directed combinations of time, place, and circumstance, which in the melodrama dear to the heart of his youth had so often been the salvation of distressed virtue on the old Adelphi boards.

But alas for the weaknesses of human nature. Jemmy knew too well that the virtue which was rated highest by the Fung Yang Syndicate was hardly the sort for which he could expect a *deus ex machinâ* would intervene in the day of trouble.

Moral excellencies are not exactly the sort of goods which commercial syndicates care to stock. Financial successes are a better line, and Mr. Watson's ventures hitherto had been eminently successful; but in an evil hour he had been tempted to touch camphor. He had gone into the camphor deal cheerfully, and had stayed in till he couldn't see his way out.

His speculations in the odoriferous drug were hardly covered by £50,000. He had been selling it in every market in both hemispheres. He had sold it in Canton and Hankow. He had sold it in London and sold it in Paris. He had sold it in New York and sold it in San Francisco. He stood to make a very handsome pile out of the camphor deal when he was through; but the elaborately-constructed machinery had not been running a week before Jemmy made a discovery. He was "cornered."

Jemmy had bought and sold, bought and sold, on the strength of reports made to him by his native agents on the probable yield of the camphor laurel—Rufus K. Umphelby standing in with him over the Yankee deal; but as that didn't figure out at more than 20,000 dollars on a total of 250,000 it didn't take much off the dead weight of the "carry"—and now, after the operation had been in progress for several months, Watson found that he had oversold himself to an extent that spelt ruin. While orders for delivery were pouring in daily there wasn't an ounce of the stuff to be had in the market. The stocks Jemmy held had been exhausted in a week.

In vain he urged the native growers and manufacturers who had put out contracts to deliver. They pleaded—first, that they were only bound to deliver at the nearest treaty port, which they were quite ready to do; next, that the local governor had placed an export duty on all camphor going for shipment, which they were not willing to pay; then that the laurels had failed and the crop was short; lastly, that as the Fung Yang Syndicate was not taking the camphor they had contracted for the factors were unloading it on the inland market, and should look to the Syndicate to recoup them the difference in price.

It was enough to make a man say things that were unfit for publication. But when Jemmy learnt that Kwang Sen, the Taotai of Shanghai, had been the principal purchaser for the home and foreign market the situation at once became clear and intelligible.

Years back, at Canton, Kwang had been removed on a complaint of Watson's. At Shanghai, whither they had subsequently found themselves, their relations had never been strained, and had always been outwardly cordial. The Englishman bore no ill-will, and believed the Chinaman harboured no malice. Kwang Taotai had been biding his time. The Englishman had first to be lulled to sleep.

Digitized by Google

Englishmen, argued Kwang Sen, thought less of their lives than of their honour. If now he could make this Englishman suffer in his honour, could humiliate him in his own country and before his own kind, strip him of his wealth, stamp him as a beggar—a man dishonoured and disgraced—it would be a revenge worth striving for, a revenge worthy of the cause—the Yellow Man against the White.

Through Yo-Chow, Watson's chief native agent, Kwang had learnt all about the camphor contracts and laid his plans accordingly. It was an agent of Kwang's who had first opened the deal to Watson; it was Kwang himself who was now pressing for delivery, not only in the home market but on the banks of the Thames; not only in Paris but in New York and San Francisco. The wires were pulled at Shanghai, and the puppets moved obediently on the shores of the Seine and in the Empire City, in London Town and at the Golden Gate. Kwang was a merchant prince, and had agents at all the chief centres of European commerce.

With the reputation of being a good hand at a deal, with a shrewd insight into men, and a ready comprehension of the exigencies of the moment, Jemmy found himself completely cornered by the artlessness of the child-like and bland, whose knowledge of time-bargains, shortages, and sales for future delivery, was fearfully and wonderfully displayed to the everlasting undoing of the Englishman.

How was he to get out? How indeed! That was the question he had been considering when Rufus K. Umphelby had dropped in. It was the question he was still considering when Rufus K. Umphelby had gone out.

Rufus had made certain suggestions, to which his parting remark had distinctly pointed; but Jemmy, while not inexperienced in practical politics, thought China was hardly the country on which to try Central American fashions. It was not that he was unwilling, but the risks were much greater. So Umphelby had taken his leave thinking the strangest thoughts, and Watson had stayed behind doing ditto, but the longer Jemmy thought the less able was he to scheme, to evolve any plan that he would be willing to bet on.

That oily, simpering, old devil, Kwang Sen, was giving the screw another turn every day. He had seen him only that morning, and with much washing of hands with invisible soap in imperceptible water, Kwang had told him how he had been obliged to send to Pingloo for the camphor which the Fung Yang Syndicate should have delivered this week, that the price had sprung several points since last quotation, and that carriage would cost nearly twice as much more.

He was grieved to the very centre of his internal economy—the old hypocrite—for the Honourable Syndicate, and his heart—never knew a Chinaman to have one, had been Jemmy's mental comment at the moment—was broken into ten thousand pieces on account of his illustrious friend; but was it not written in the Book of Wise Maxims that "success cometh not by striving but is sent to every man according to his works?"

Jemmy smiled bitterly at the recollection, and thought unutterable things. A Scotsman, Burns' hackneyed line about the plans "o' mice and men going oft agley" naturally occurred to him. His plans for a camphor scoop had gone very far agley; but the consolation he might at another time have found in Robbie Burns was not to be gathered from him to-day.

Jemmy thought he understood now how Sampson felt when he was brought forth to make sport for the Philistines.

It irked him to feel that he was the toy and plaything of this yellow "iniquity" with the ever-lasting simper upon his soulless face.

The loss in £ s. d. would be bad enough, but the loss in prestige, in *savoir-faire* and commercial caste, would be infinitely worse.

Never again would James Watson, Esq., of London and Shanghai, be able to hold up his head on the China market if these shambling, shifty Celestials scored off him over the camphor contracts. And do it they would, unless——

"Yes," muttered Jemmy, catching at an idea which had been vaguely floating in his mind, "camphor must be accumulating somewhere since so little is coming into the market. Yes, Rufus K. Umphelby's suggestion might be worth considering if——Hang it all," he burst out angrily, "there's always some confounded if in a man's way whenever he wants to do anything. The trump cards are held by Kwang and his friends. Before I get a chance to cut they'll have won the game. They mean to force up prices, compel the Syndicate to buy at the inflated figure, pay the differences, or settle for a fixed sum. Then, having finished the squeeze, they'll unload the stuff, and there'll be camphor on offer all over the shop." Jemmy flung his unfinished cigar across the room and groaned aloud. "Stocks must be accumulating somewhere," he repeated with desperate energy, beginning to pace up and down.

At that moment Jemmy's chief *compradore* appeared on the threshold.

"Can see? All light? Talkee pidgin?" said Yo with an evil smirk on his yellow features.

"Come in, Yo," said Jemmy, who had an idea in his head. "Plenty much talkee. You savvy?"

"Can do. Kwang Sen velly bad man," muttered Yo.

Jemmy raised his eyebrows. His idea seemed likely to germinate without forcing.

"Yo wishee happiness, wishee peace, wishee prosperity number-one-English-pidgin-man," and kow-towing elaborately, Yo came forward as requested, while Jemmy grinned, put a bottle of *samshu* on the table, and lit a fresh cigar.

The conversation which followed was long, complicated, and involved. It was carried on in that horrible jargon known as pidgin-English, which is wearisome to reproduce when it is easy to understand. In Yo's case, however, much of it would be unintelligible to an outsider, and not being required for the telling of the story, may be dispensed with altogether.

Jemmy had sojourned in the Flowery Land quite long enough not to deceive himself over the motives which had induced Yo Chow to offer up Kwang Sen as a sacrifice to the injured feelings of the Englishman, and to do the Chinaman justice he made no assumption of virtues to which the yellow race is a complete and utter stranger.

It was love of pelf, greed of gain, which had opened Yo's eyes to the wickedness of Kwang Sen. A lively sense of favours to come is the only power which exercises any influence over the actions of John Chinaman, when it is not fear, abject and direct. Give John reason to believe that he has nothing more to expect and though he may have served you for half a lifetime, he will immediately transfer his talents—to your worst enemy by preference.

It was, therefore, not without a strong sense of the

Digitized by Google

sardonic that Jemmy listened to the tale which laid bare the iniquity of Kwang Sen. It was told without the exhibition of a single human emotion by a man who confessed himself stripped of all his possessions, even to his wife and—coffin.

Like all good Chinamen, Yo was a devoted disciple of fan-tan and an ardent admirer of che-me, forms of gambling which he had pursued with varying success since the days of his youth. But since Han Yan from Whampoa appeared on the scene "the devil had been in the dice," and whether it was fan-tan or che-me, Yo had lost, lost, lost, till he had nothing left to lose, even the coffin which had cost him so much and the wife who had cost him so little—"she veer cheap" had been Yo's principal reason for marrying her—even these prime necessities to a Chinaman had been staked and lost.

"Me nothing. Allee gone," said Yo, smiling serenely at Jemmy.

It was not till he realised the fact that his sole possession was a bit of information of no use to anybody but the manager of the Fung Yang Syndicate that Yo Chow awoke to the enormity of the wickedness of Kwang Sen.

"And this camphor is at Swatow and at Tai-nan, in the island of Formosa?"

Yo made a sign in the affirmative.

"Six thousand yen on the mainland and nine thousand on the island? H'm! Come to me at 7 a.m. to-morrow, Yo, and I'll give you an answer."

In less than fifteen minutes after Yo had left the go-down, Jemmy was at Honkiew, the American Settlement across the creek. Rufus K. Umphelby, who was strolling down Broadway, guessed that "the resources of civilisation were not exhausted," and mended his steps. Both men entered the hong at the same moment.

"Don't spoil the best chance you ever had, Mr. Watson, and forfeit the gratitude of the whole community. It's a dead cert, sir. They want a lesson, and that's a fact. The rascals will never dream of resisting. Confine yourself to words, and you may as well write off your losses, for lie they will through thick and thin till the worse appears the better cause, and all who haven't learnt John's little ways will cry shame on the brutal Englishman. But nobody out here will. Not a white man in China but will cry 'Bravo, bravissimo,' let the folks in London howl as they will. And after all's said, it's you who take the risks, not they."

"Don't think I hesitate on my own account, Mr. Umphelby," said Jemmy with a curious smile. "I was at Whampoa you know in '69. But to make war on China is rather a big order for a private trader. I don't want to get the fellows out here into trouble with the big-wigs at home, and if the job didn't come off right——"

"Do you think the big-wigs at home, in London or Washington, understand so much as the A B C of Peking politics?" put in Umphelby.

"No, I don't, and that's where the harm comes in. Supposing now——"

"I tell you these muddy-peaked, rat-eating Asiatics will never dare to resist the resources of civilisation."

Jemmy laughed.

"The stuff is unquestionably mine," he said after a pause. "It's been sent to Swatow and elsewhere simply to prevent me getting hold of it. Undoubtedly I have the right to seize it; but—it may mean war with China."

"Waal, all I can say to that, Mr. Watson, is that if my people had a crowd o' gunboats gettin' in each other's way on this yere heathen coast for want of a job I should find them one durn'd quick, and that's a fact."

"I'll tell you now how I think the trick might be worked," said Jemmy in confidential tones. Penfold, our consul at Swatow, is a friend o' mine. There's a coaster going down to-morrow. I'll take Yo along, get him to swear an information as to the ownership of the camphor stocks, and see if Penfold hasn't got a chum on the station—an enterprising young lieutenant, say—who, putting a liberal interpretation on somewhat doubtful instructions, would make an armed demonstration in front of Tai-nan. Less likelihood, p'raps, of a row on the island than on the mainland. It might frighten Kwang into releasing enough stuff to enable me to fulfil my western contracts, and might also——"

"Remove him to another sphere," chipped in Rufus K. Umphelby cheerfully. "We're going to put this thing through, Mr. Watson, for the benefit of the white population in China, and that's surely worth taking a little risk over. If the pepple at home don't know their book I guess you're going to teach 'em."

A fortnight after Mr. James Watson and Rufus K. Umphelby had foregathered in the office of the latter at Honkiew, Shanghai.

A British gunboat had appeared off Tai-nan, Island of Formosa, and made a formal demand for the camphor stored there to the prejudice of the Fung Yang Syndicate, the lawful owners.

It was refused, whereupon the lieutenant commanding had opened fire on the town. Half-a dozen lives had been lost, the yamen of the magistrate destroyed, and much property injured. Result, consternation at Peking and Hong Kong. But an order was sent down promptly from Shanghai to release the camphor.

In a time so short that it seemed incredible, Jemmy found himself able to meet all engagements, even forcing Kwang Sen to accept delivery at prices which left him on the wrong side of the account.

Long after the camphor contracts had become a memory amongst the white community at Shanghai, long after Kwang Sen had been degraded as one consequence and Jemmy Watson promoted as another, long after the Fung Yang Syndicate had paid a heavy dividend out of the camphor scoop, and Jemmy was contemplating a big deal in brick tea, messages were still passing between Peking, Hong Kong, and London over "the affair at Formosa," which, however, London never understood, and the Admiral and the Minister were content to leave it so.

"Let the talking-shop at Westminster look after its manners," said the Admiral one day at the Country Club, out on Bubbling-Well Road, "and the Navy will look after theirs, and take uncommon good care that 'Chop-Dollar Jack' looks gay and smart after his."

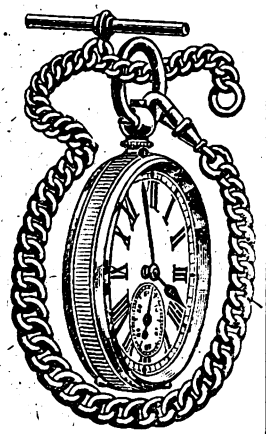
And in this fashion history is made.

H. Hunter.

Digitized by Google

SEND NO MONEY. WE TRUST YOU.

FREE.



£2 10s. £2 10s.
REAL SILVER.

We give you your choice of either of these handsome presents for selling NINE articles of Jewellery at 1s. 6d. each. (Regular price 2s. 6d.)

WE DO NOT WANT YOUR MONEY.

Just send us a STAMPED ADDRESSED ENVELOPE, and say that you will either sell the Jewellery or return it to us if you fail to sell it. On receiving your letter we will at once post you the Jewellery.

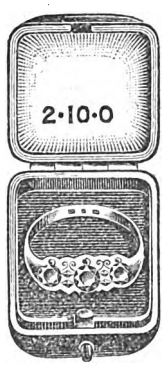
When sold, send us the 13s. 6d. you have received for same, and we will at once send you, **Absolutely Free**, our £2 10s. Real Silver Watch, with Chain, or the Gold Ring, whichever you desire.

A Written Guarantee for Ten Years sent with each watch.

You can sell our Jewellery in a few minutes at 1s. 6d. each article. We have thousands of testimonials as to the quality and value both of our Jewellery and Presents.

SEND NO MONEY. WRITE TO-DAY.

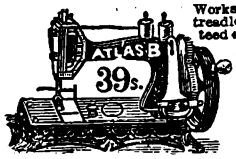
FREE.



REAL GOLD AND REAL DIAMONDS.

BRITISH GOLDSMITHS CO (DEPT. 29), 48 GRAY'S INN RD., LONDON.

ATLAS LOCKSTITCH MACHINE.



Works by hand or treadle. Guaranteed 4 years. Equal in quality and size to any machine 39/-
To ensure satisfaction, we will send machine on receipt of 5/- P.O. for ONE MONTH'S TRIAL. Balance can be paid 5/- Monthly. Call or write for designs and Samples of work.

THE ATLAS SEWING MACHINE CO.,
184s High St., Camden Town, London, N.W.,
63 Seven Sisters Rd., N.; 14 High Rd., Kilburn.

2/9 CHALLENGE TO THE WORLD—OUR WARRANTED TIMEKEEPER, 2/9

With a guarantee to keep correct time for three years, will be sent to any address on receipt of P.O. or stamps value 2/9 and three stamps extra for postage. To every purchaser during this month we give with it ABSOLUTELY FREE a strong Mexican SILVER CHAIN. All we ask of you is to show them to your friends, as by doing so you advertise our business.

GENEVA WATCH IMPORTERS,
148 Old Street, London, E.C.

POST FREE THREE STAMPS

A Treatise on the Modern and Successful Treatment of Nervous Diseases and Exhaustion, by local absorption.

Fully up to the advanced ideas on the subject

THE MARSTON CO.,
59 and 60 Chancery Lane, London, W.C.

HAVE YOU TRIED KEATING'S LOZENGES FOR YOUR COUGH?

ANY DOCTOR WILL TELL YOU "there is no better Cough Medicine."—One gives relief if you suffer from cough try them but once: they *will* cure, and they *will not* injure your health; an increasing sale of over 80 years is a certain test of their value. Sold in 1s¼d. tins.

SULPHOLINE LOTION,

For clearing the skin from Spots, Blemishes, Redness, Roughness, giving a Beautiful Complexion and pleasing appearance.

SHILLING BOTTLES.

VARICOCELE.

Every man suffering from Varicocele and the allied troubles, should send for treatise, describing their Causes, Symptoms, Results, and Successful and Painless Treatment without surgical operation or the use of cumbersome trusses and electrical appliances. Will be sent sealed, post free, three stamps.

S. S. MURRAY,
7 Southampton Row, London, W.C.

THE MOST NUTRITIOUS.

EPPS'S

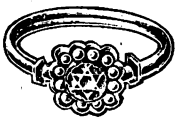
GRATEFUL—COMFORTING.

COCOA

BREAKFAST—SUPPER.

SPECIAL OFFER TO READERS OF "SHORT STORIES."

GOLD CLUSTER RING (Stamped)



3/9 Post Free.
Send size of finger.

with a fine imitation Ruby, Sapphire, or Emerald centre surrounded by 12 Real Pearls. Orders for these rings sent off by return post. H. E. JONES, Manufacturing Jeweller, The Junction, Hulme, Manchester.

Unsolicited testimonial of this ring.

Lincoln, December, 1900.

Dear Sir,—I received the ring this morning, with thanks to you; it is very pretty.—Yours respectfully, M. F.

Bankers: Williams, Deacon, Manchester and Salford Bank Ltd. Mention *Short Stories*.

TWENTY FUN FOR THE WINTER EVENINGS. TEAZER. 6D.

HAVE YOU TRIED THE

TWENTY TEAZER?

—??????????—

THE BEST PUZZLE IN 50 YEARS.

—!!!!!!!!!!!!—

Read the following letter:

"BY A FLUKE the first time I did it in five minutes, the second time in half an hour, but since then I have not been successful, although I have tackled it for five nights." So writes A VICTIM.

6d. At all Messrs. SMITH'S BOOKSTALLS, and of EVERY NEWSAGENT. **6d.**

FREE. FREE.

Our £2 10s. Real Silver Watch (with chain), or A Real Gold Ring Set with REAL DIAMONDS and other stones.

SEND NO MONEY.

NO MONEY REQUIRED. WE TRUST YOU.

We give you your choice of either of these handsome presents for selling NINE articles of Jewellery at 1/6 each. (Regular price 2/6).

We do not want your money.

Just send us a stamped addressed envelope and say that you will either sell the jewellery or return it to us if you fail to sell it. On receiving your letter we will at once post you the jewellery.

When sold, send us the 13/6 you have received for same, and we will at once send you ABSOLUTELY FREE our £2 10s. Real Silver Watch with Chain, or the Gold Ring, whichever you desire.

A WRITTEN GUARANTEE for TEN years sent with each watch.

You can sell our Jewellery in a few minutes at 1/6 each article. We have thousands of testimonials as to the quality and value both of our Jewellery and Presents.

Send no money. Write to-day.

BRITISH PREMIUM SYNDICATE (Dept. 5).
282 CENTRAL CHAMBERS, GLASGOW.

Digitized by Google

Pulsifer Maginley's Christmas.

It was the day before Christmas. Pulsifer Maginley was seated in his office, upon his face an expression of agony that would have been worth £5 a week to him as an undertaker.

Pulsifer Maginley was an operator on the Stock Exchange. Sometimes he operated not wisely but too well. This was one of the times. Some weeks before he had fancied that he scented from afar a tremendous rise in the market. He converted all his available assets into stock of the X.Y.Z. Railway. As soon as he had done so the stock began to drop, and it was still dropping.

"The blessed Christmastide is at hand," mused Pulsifer; "the streets are filled with busy, happy throngs; the small boy is in a state of feverish anticipation; the church bazaar is getting in its deadly work; and I have but 15s. left. What becomes of my propitiatory gift to old Mortimer Bluff?"

Pulsifer Maginley loved and was beloved. Mary Jane Bluff was responsible for this unfortunate state of affairs. She was the daughter and sole heiress of Mortimer Bluff, Esq., who was known to be a millionaire. She could not help this, and Pulsifer was willing to overlook it.

Old Mr. Bluff did not favour young Maginley's suit. He wanted his daughter to marry a plumber or a bank cashier. And here the matter rested at the time our story opens.

"I will go round and try to borrow a fiver from old Jenkins to stand me over till after Christmas," said Pulsifer, rising at last with a heavy sigh.

* * * * *

When Pulsifer Maginley reached the more or less palatial mansion of his friend Malvolio Jenkins, he was ushered into the reception-room by a haughty menial.

As he sat awaiting the entrance of the man from whom he intended to procure the means to celebrate the coming holiday in a fitting manner, his attention was attracted by the sound of voices in the adjoining room. With unstudied grace, an ingenuous smile upon his features, he sank upon his knees and applied his ear to the keyhole.

In five minutes he rose, his face beaming with a smile of generous dimensions.

"Who would have suspected it?" he remarked in an inquiring voice. Malvolio Jenkins glided into the room.

"I overheard all," was Maginley's greeting.

"Then you know—"

"That Petruchio Dowd, of the old firm of Petruchio Dowd and Co., bankers, of which you are a member, has fled to the land of Jabez Balfour."

"It is true," said Mr. Jenkins; "but we do not want the papers to get hold of it until the latest possible moment—not until after Christmas. May I rely upon your secrecy?"

"You may. Lend me £10 will you?"

Malvolio Jenkins handed over the money without a word.

"Did Mr. Dowd leave nothing?" inquired Pulsifer.

"Ah, he was not wholly bad," said Jenkins, in a voice choked with emotion. "He left the carpets and furniture."

"Nothing else?"

"Nothing."

"Your private fortune, then——?"

"Is in my wife's name."

"But what will the depositors get?"

"Left," replied Jenkins, with a silvery laugh.

Pulsifer Maginley was a man of large mental resources. Before he courted sleep that Christmas Eve he had planned all the details of a great scheme for his worldly advancement.

* * * * *

On Christmas morning Pulsifer sought and obtained an audience with old Mortimer Bluff.

"My dear sir," he said, "I am aware that you are deeply interested in the Home for Incurable Prudes. I, too, have the welfare of that institution at heart, and, as I have been singularly fortunate of late, I wish to give to it, through you, the trifling sum of ten thousand pounds as a Christmas gift."

He handed the old gentleman a cheque for the amount named on the banking house of Petruchio Dowd and Co.

Mr. Bluff was evidently greatly surprised and moved.

"You—you bank with them?" he stammered.

"All that I have in the world is in their bank."

"They are men of sterling integrity."

Pulsifer smiled broadly. It was, however, an internal smile, and was not visible to the naked eye.

"I have been somewhat mistaken in you," said Mr. Bluff. "I know you better now. I have also a Christmas gift for you. Mary Jane is yours."

* * * * *

When the news of the utter and complete failure of the firm of Petruchio Dowd and Co. was published, Mr. Bluff felt sorry for the Prudes' Home, but sorrier for Pulsifer Maginley. He offered to lend him money, and Pulsifer did not make any strenuous objections.

Before he could learn the truth, Mr. Bluff accommodatingly died of apoplexy.

When a year had elapsed Pulsifer Maginley led Mary Jane to the altar.

This little story teaches us that virtue is its own reward.

W. E. Percy.

Digitized by Google

TO LADIES.

A
NEW
MAGAZINE
FOR
YOU.

PARTICULARS · NEXT WEEK.

Digitized by Google

PEARSON'S WEEKLY

FOOTBALL PICTURE PUZZLES.

1st Prize - - £50 in Gold.

Last Day: TUESDAY, January 1, 1901.

2nd Prize - - - - £10 Note
3rd, 4th, and 5th Prizes - 3 £5 Notes
6th to 20th Prizes - 15 Sovereigns
21st to 40th Prizes - 20 Half-Sovs.

Send your attempts to Pearson's Buildings, Henrietta Street, W.C., in an envelope marked "FOOTBALL," to arrive not later than Tuesday, January 1st.

Below will be found ten pictures; each picture representing the name of a well-known football player.

If you look at the picture in the margin you will see that the name is Maxwell. What are the other names?

If you cannot find all the names, ask your friends to help you.

All you have to do is to write underneath each picture, in the space provided, the name of the player you believe the picture to represent. The names are those of both Rugby and Association players.

Only one solution is allowed under each picture.

Where two men bear the same surname, but different christian names, the christian name or initial is indicated in the picture.

The prizes will be paid to the competitors from whom we receive the correct, or most nearly correct, solutions.

No more than one prize will go to any competitor.

Example.

Maxwell.

It must be taken as a condition of the competition that anybody competing therein agrees to abide by the Editor's final decision.

Intending competitors in the above would do well to procure a copy of "The Football Who's Who," which contains the names of about a thousand of the best known players. This book will be found of great service in discovering the names depicted. It only costs a shilling, and may be obtained of all booksellers, and post free for 1s. 3d. from the publisher, 17 Henrietta Street, London, W.C.

No. 31.....

No. 32.....

No. 33.....

No. 34.....

No. 35.....

No. 36.....

No. 37.....

No. 38.....

No. 39.....

No. 40.....

I send in this coupon as a competitor for the prize advertised in this paper, and subject to the conditions printed on this page:

Name and address.....

THINGS TO REMEMBER.

1. Coupons may be sent either from "Pearson's Weekly" or "Short Stories."
2. Do not send in your coupons till we tell you.
3. All coupons are sent at senders' risk, and if they go astray, from whatever cause, we do not accept responsibility.
4. Competitors must attach their private address to their attempts. No prize will be sent to any post-office, refreshment rooms, or other places at which letters are called for. Attempts bearing such addresses will be disqualified.

Printed by Horace Cox, Bream's Buildings, London, E.C., and published by C. Arthur Pearson Limited, Pearson's Buildings, Henrietta Street, London, W.C.

Digitized by Google

NEW YEAR'S GIFTS.

Everyone can afford to give his Father or Mother, his Sister or Brother, his Cousin or Friend, the most magnificent present that could possibly be obtained in the whole world. Last year it would have cost him £15, £18, or £20—perhaps even more than that. To-day, to readers of *Short Stories*

IT ONLY COSTS 5/-

Thousands who now possess these magnificent Bicycles proclaim them to be worth double the money we charge. **£8 17s. 6d.** for a perfect Bicycle is **5¾d.** a day when spread over twelve months, or one tenth the cost of hiring an inferior worn out old cycle of an 1896 pattern.

NO INSTALMENT ON DELIVERY.

A Beautiful Cycle secured for 5s.

It is gravely questioned whether there will be a penny net profit, unless 100,000 **Express Cycles** are sold during the season. It is an established fact that three months ago, Cycles not nearly so good were being sold at **£18** and **£20.** We charge you considerably less than half this sum.

5¾d.

A DAY

FOR A

CYCLE.

SCIENTIFIC REPORT

Of Mr. HENRY J. T. PIERCY, M.I.M.E.,

One of the ablest and most practical mechanical and consulting engineers of the day.

53 and 54 Broad Street, Birmingham.

I have visited your works, and have looked through the processes by which you produce the various cycle parts. I found the machinery of good construction, and the operators manipulating it with judgment and care. I have also examined the various parts of cycles, some in the rough and some finished. The material used in these parts is certainly the best, and the workmanship carefully and judiciously executed, and well calculated to cause the cycles to run easily and to wear well. I found necessary precision had been observed throughout, and wearing parts satisfactorily hardened. I have also examined a finished cycle. The design is modern, and built on good lines, and the appearance of the machine generally is pleasing. The adjustments are well-arranged and easy of manipulation. The frame is not only light, but rigid, and capable of resisting great strain, and the general character of the machine is such as to give confidence to the rider.

(Signed) HENRY J. T. PIERCY, M.I.M.E.

On View at 21 & 22 Temple Chambers, Temple Avenue, E.C.

PARTS OF THE MACHINE.

FRAME.—Steel Tubing (Best), Hudson Bros. Ltd. WHEELS.—Westwood Rims, J. T. James. CHAIN.—Perry & Co Ltd., Birmingham. SADDLE.—Lycett Ltd., Highest Grade. Pedals.—Optimus Pedal Co., Birmingham. GEAR CASES. (Ladies') Harthill Gear Case Co. SPOKES.—Patent Turned Spoke Co., Alcester. TYRES.—"Express." (cost £3).

Secure your Cycle by Sending To-day.

CYCLES SENT ON APPROVAL.
ENTIRE MACHINE GUARANTEED.

5/-

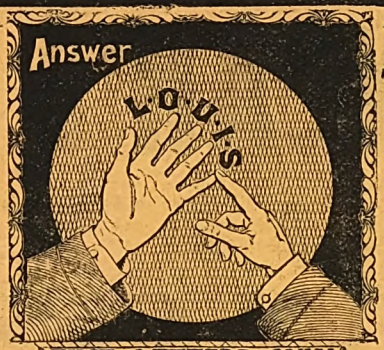
NO INSTALMENT ON DELIVERY.
NEXT PAYMENT MONTH AFTERWARDS.

Address the Manager "Express" Cycles, S.S. Dept., Temple Chambers, Temple Avenue, London, E.C.

Digitized by Google

HOW DO YOU SPELL

VELVETEEN?



Don't Forget this when you buy.

EVERY YARD IS STAMPED

L-O-U-I-S.

Reckitt's PARIS Blue.

The Best is the Cheapest.

THREE INTERESTING BOOKS.

NOW READY. THIRD EDITION.

"BESIEGED WITH B.-P."

A Complete Record of the Siege and Relief of Mafeking.

BY J. EMERSON NEILLY,

War Correspondent of the "Pall Mall Gazette" in Mafeking.

"Mr. Neilly tells admirably the thrilling story of the Siege."—*Scotsman.* "As a realistic picture of how things actually happened, no less than as a worthy record of one of the most splendid incidents of our history, "Besieged with B.-P." is a notable book."—*Pall Mall Gazette.*

Crown 8vo, price 1s. net; post free, 1s. 3d.

NOW READY. CHEAP EDITION.

A Splendid Novel.

THE INVISIBLE MAN.

By H. G. WELLS,

Author of "The Time Machine," "The War of the Worlds," &c.

Price 6d Post Free, 8d.

"The story is told with that fertility of imaginative resource which has made Wells conspicuous in this domain of fiction."—*Daily Chronicle.*

"Written in the author's merriest and most provoking mood."—*Sunday Times.*

THE ART OF BEAUTY.

By A TOILET SPECIALIST.

Crown 8vo, cloth, post free, 1s. 2d.

SOME OF THE CHAPTERS ARE:

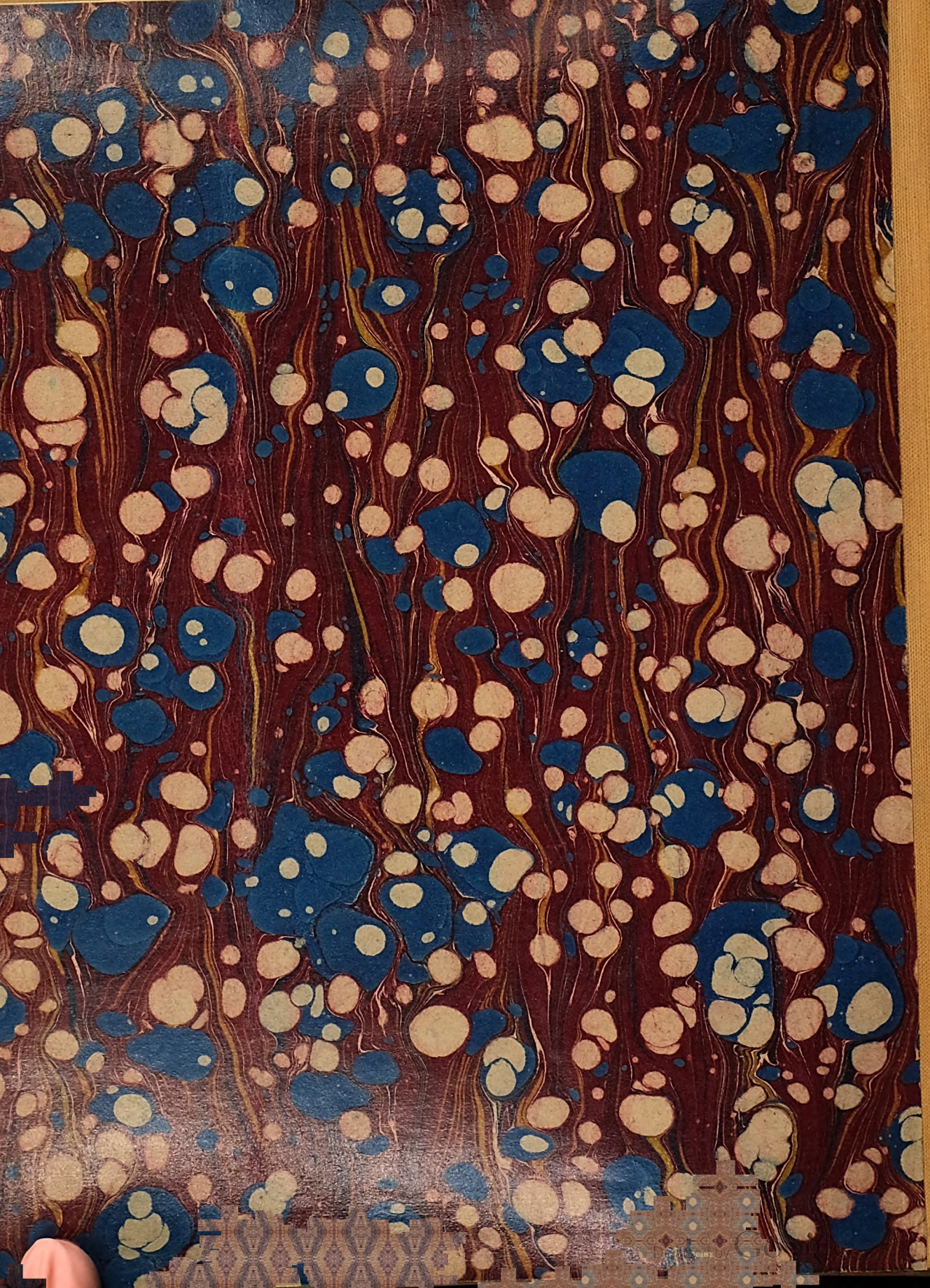
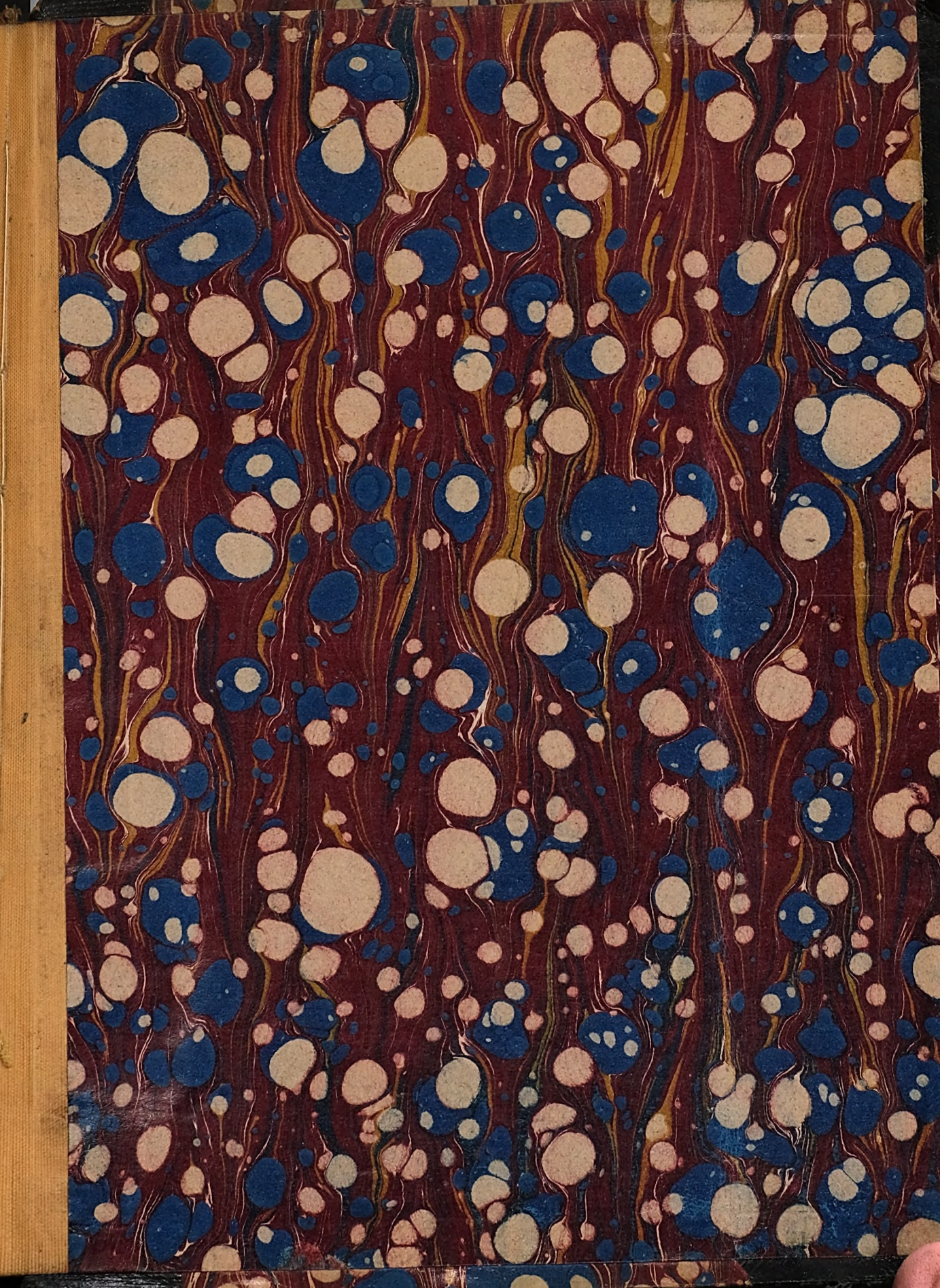
The Cure of Stoutness	Chap. I.	Bad Complexions: How to Cure Them	Chap. V.	The Hair in Ill-Health ...	Chap. VIII.
The Cure of Leanness	,, II.	The Complexion	,, VI.	Moles, Warts, and Superfluous Hair	,, XIII.
The Figure	,, IV.	The Hair in Health	,, VII.		

At all Bookstalls and Booksellers, and of C. ARTHUR PEARSON Ltd., Henrietta Street, London, W.C.

Advertisements should be sent to "Short Stories" Advertisement Department, Henrietta Street, London, W.C.

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google